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Cultivating Sustainability: The Role of Generative Leadership, Green Passion, and Green Work Behavior in Pakistan's Tourism Industry

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Abstract: This research is intended to investigate how generative leadership influences sustainable performance in Pakistan's tourist industry, utilizing green passion and green work behavior as mediators. This study gathered data from 343 frontline workers and 120 managers in various Pakistani tourist firms, utilizing a non-probability sampling technique and standardized measurement scales. Employing SPSS PROCESS macros (model 4), this study meticulously scrutinized both the direct and indirect associations among the variables. The results of this study reveal a robust connection between generative leadership and sustainable performance. Furthermore, green passion and green work behavior are found to partially mediate the relationship between generative leadership and sustainable performance. These findings empirically endorse the significance of generative leadership in instituting sustainable practices in the tourism industry, as well as the role that employee attitudes and behaviors play in mediating this relationship. However, it is important to note that this study's scope is limited to the Pakistani context, and further cross-cultural investigations may be needed to generalize these findings. Additionally, practical implications suggest that organizations in the tourism sector can benefit from fostering generative leadership to promote sustainability, offering valuable insights for industry practitioners and policymakers looking to encourage sustainable practices not only within Pakistan's tourism sector but also in similar contexts worldwide.

Keywords: sustainable performance; generative leadership; green work passion; employee green behavior; social learning theory; tourism and hospitality industry



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1. Introduction

Every year, over 8 million tons of plastic end up in our oceans, choking marine life and altering delicate ecosystems [1]. Meanwhile, our forests, the lungs of our planet, are disappearing at an astonishing rate of 15 billion trees per year [2], and the global average temperature continues to rise, fueling extreme weather events and jeopardizing the stability of our climate [3]. These challenges, from pollution and biodiversity loss to public health crises and ozone layer depletion, are not mere abstractions; they are pressing issues that demand our immediate attention. Consequently, it is crucial to delve deeper into these problems and put policies in place to lessen the negative effects of these challenges, which include pollution, acidification of oceans, loss of biodiversity, difficulties in public health, ozone layer depletion, deforestation, and global warming [4,5]. These issues have a substantial impact on both developed and developing economies [6]. Developing countries, such as Pakistan, are predominantly exposed and susceptible to the repercussions of environmental degradation, including threats to biodiversity and the

aggravation of environmental concerns such as deforestation, water and pollution, global warming, and land degradation [6]. The more knowledgeable the general public becomes about these issues, the more concerned they become about their environment. They become more mindful of their purchase decisions with an urge to reduce the negative environmental impact. This, in turn, is motivating the companies to produce eco-friendly products [7]. In this vein, it is crucial for businesses to enthusiastically devise environmental management strategies to create and sustain a positive image and gain a competitive advantage in the marketplace.

This imperative is further underscored by the escalating climate change, where sustainability has become a paramount concern for both society and businesses [8–10]. Brundtland [11] contends that sustainability revolves around satisfying the requirements of contemporary organizations while making sure that future generation can fulfill their own needs. As a result, business organizations have undergone considerable transformation, shifting away from a singular focus on profit maximization to a triple-bottom-line approach that prioritizes people, profit, and the planet [12]. Sustainability programs are widely recognized as a crucial aspect of strategic development by leading corporations, as they provide a unique competitive advantage while ensuring environmental conservation and promoting social welfare besides economic performance [8,13].

This perspective shift is reflected in the evolving priorities of decision makers who have traditionally focused on the economic aspect of sustainability. Presently, there has been an elevating stress on the environmental aspect, particularly through the analysis of environmental life cycle impacts [14]. However, while legislative issues and human safety and health have received considerable attention, the social dimension of sustainability has not been defined well and has often been given less attention by researchers. Furthermore, ethical and cultural considerations, which are equally important components of social sustainability, have been ignored and have not received the attention that they deserve [14,15]. The Brundtland [11] report acknowledges that developing countries face considerable pressure to utilize their natural resources for economic benefits and highlights the problems these countries face when their economies heavily rely on these resources. However, the report also suggests that these countries often neglect the social effects of their actions. The literature on the social aspect of sustainability, particularly focusing on the health and well-being of stakeholders, is rare. Therefore, this study aims to delve into the concept and find out the factors that promote social sustainability. Additionally, it seeks to explore the economic and environmental pillars of organizational sustainability in the Pakistani tourism and hospitality industry, which plays an essential role in the economy of the country, ultimately contributing to earnings through foreign exchange, employment generation, and poverty alleviation [16]. This business, however, provides substantial difficulties to sustainability because of its high resource consumption, social ramifications, and environmental repercussions [17]. Therefore, it is essential to study the sustainable performance (SP) of the tourism and hospitality industry in Pakistan.

Developing and maintaining sustainable operations can be challenging and requires the collaboration and commitment of all stakeholders [18]. Sustainability entails balancing social, ecological, and environmental goals, which may lead to differing perspectives and opinions among employees, who play an essential role in enhancing individual and organizational performance [19,20]. Achieving sustainability involves taking actions with uncertain outcomes, and a willingness to take risks can support SP [21]. The level of risk tolerance within organizations is influenced by both organizational strategy and resources, as well as the mindset and perspectives of employees [22]. Thus, leadership and employees need to share common environmental and social goals to effectively promote sustainable development [23].

Leaders within an organization play a critical role in the pursuit of sustainability by developing and implementing strategies, acquiring and utilizing necessary resources, and motivating staff to strive toward the attainment of sustainable goals and organizational objectives [19]. They are responsible for demonstrating sustainable ideas and motivating

employees to indulge in environmentally responsible behaviors that advance sustainability performance and enhance the organization's competitive advantage [24]. A leadership style that embodies the apt attributes can meaningfully boost an organization's capacity and capability. It fosters the cross-learning of employees and establishes voluntary environmental behaviors, values, and norms. Collectively, these factors contribute to superior financial, environmental, and social performance [25,26].

Although there is a widely recognized impact of leadership style on the different dimensions of organizational performance, there is a significant lack of research on the influence of leadership style on strategic performance in ambiguous, volatile, and uncertain situations [27]. The existing literature primarily focuses on responsible leadership [28], sustainable leadership [19,28], and ethical leadership [29] and their influence on sustainable performance. Nonetheless, it is important to recognize that certain leadership styles may not be optimal in contexts of uncertainty, ambiguity, and volatility [25,27,30,31]. In this regard, Bushe [27] and Surie and Hazy [30] propose that the generative leadership (GL) style is particularly well suited for such circumstances. The reason is that organizational environmental performance is highly dependent on the mindset and behavior of employees, and a GL understands that organizations consist of ongoing conversations; to address intricate issues, it is necessary to transform these conversations and the underlying beliefs that individuals hold. They are attuned to this sensitivity towards the power of language and discourse [26,30]. Since the tourism sector of Pakistan is facing high volatility, uncertainty, and ambiguity due to various challenges, such as security concerns, political instability, natural disasters, and changing global economic conditions [16,17], these challenges create a complex and unpredictable environment that makes it difficult for tourism and hospitality leaders to plan and operate effectively. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has created unprecedented volatility, uncertainty, and ambiguity for the tourism and hospitality industry of Pakistan, as it has globally [32–34]. For instance, in 2019, Pakistan welcomed 1.9 million international tourists, but by 2020, arrivals dropped to 487,000. The tourism sector employed 3.9 million people in 2019, but the pandemic led to significant job losses and a drop in its GDP contribution from 5.7% to 4.4% [35,36]. Travel restrictions, lockdowns, and social distancing measures have severely obstructed the industry, leading to a significant decline in tourist arrivals and revenue [16]. Therefore, it would be interesting to study the role of GL in improving the SP of tourist companies operating in an environment characterized by uncertainty, volatility, and ambiguity.

Furthermore, due to the lack of research generally in the realm of organizational SP and GL, particularly in the tourism industry, there is a weak understanding of the underlying mechanisms through which GL can elevate SP among employees. Therefore, it is vital to grasp in depth the mediating mechanisms through which firms can realize the benefits of GL on SP and the conditions under which these processes are most effective.

To fill this significant lacuna, we refer to the indirect research approach of social learning theory (SLT) [37] as our theoretical lens. We propose that employees' green work passion (GWP) and employee green behavior (EGB) may be the basic mechanism between GL and SP. GWP denotes the level of engagement and enthusiasm that employees have toward their jobs and the organization they work for, specifically concerning environmental sustainability [38]. Employees who are passionate about green work are more likely to be motivated, productive, and inclined toward the achievement of organizational goals in terms of environmental sustainability [39]. They are also more likely to participate in environmentally friendly behaviors, such as conserving energy and resources, waste reduction, and promoting sustainable behaviors in the workplace. The active participation of leaders or managers is crucial in promoting and motivating employees to develop a keen interest in environmental conservation. This is because leaders possess the ability to stimulate emotional responses in employees [40].

On the contrary, employees' green behavior relates to the actions and practices that employees participate in to endorse environmental sustainability within the organization [41]. This can include things like conserving energy and resources, reducing waste, and promot-

ing environmentally friendly practices. Encouraging and recognizing employees' green behavior can help to create a culture of sustainability within an organization, which can benefit both the company and the environment [42].

Our study adds to the germane literature in several ways. Primarily, our research adds to the literature on SP by integrating environmental, economic, and social performance, which was earlier limited to only environmental and economic performance, as also mentioned in previous studies [10,14,19,29]. Next, our research adds the concept of GL as a predictor for SP in the hospitality and tourism industry, thus expanding the modest body of research on this topic. Thirdly, to explore how GL can contribute to SP, our study investigates the mediating roles of "GWP" and "EGB." Our research distinguishes itself from previous studies in this domain by introducing the social performance attribute to the concept of SP, incorporating the concept of GL, and exploring the two original mediators.

2. Literature Review

The literature review and hypothesis development are given as follows:

2.1. Generative Leadership

GL is a unique leadership style operating to build a future that is different and healthier than the present [43]. It is distinguished by an emphasis on generating new possibilities, generating innovation, and enhancing the ability of individuals and organizations to meet future challenges and issues [30]. GL embodies a forward-thinking proactive approach and focuses on creating a vision for the future and then endeavoring to manifest that vision. GLs are identified by their skill in motivating and inspiring others and cultivating a sense of shared purpose among the members of the team. They establish an environment conducive to learning and growing, dedicated to the improvement of the talents and skills of team members to help them achieve their objectives [31]. In the present-day context, the GL is a leader who drives companies to adapt and respond to the volatile environment by enhancing innovation, learning, and experimentation as well as by creating a culture of adaptation and resilience [27,30,31], while the conventional models of leadership usually emphasize upholding the status quo and achieving short term goals and objectives. The GL emphasizes building a better future for their organization and for the broader society.

In contemporary organizations, GL has become indispensable in modern businesses, as there is a shift toward sustainable business approaches and away from corporate self-interest [43]. Today's complex transnational challenges, such as climate change, scarcity of resources, and social disturbance, cannot be tackled by political institutions alone. Therefore, businesses need GL to balance short-term and long-term goals and generate value for various stakeholders [26,27]. GL is especially relevant in complex situations where rapid change and uncertainty are prevalent, and the emphasis is on the process rather than predetermined outcomes [30]. In a complexity science context, any form of leadership, including GL, must be implemented in a way that takes into account the impact on the simple, local rules that govern interactions among agents [27].

While GL has recently been recognized for its pro-environmental behavior [26,44] and promotion of innovation [31], research is relatively silent on exploring the role of GL in organizational SP. Furthermore, the process that leads GL towards organizational SP is still not fully explored. This study is, therefore, an effort to fill this gap.

2.2. Sustainable Performance

SP denotes the ability of an organization to balance social, economic, and environmental objectives to create value for its stakeholders in the long term [45,46]. This strategy approach goes beyond conventional financial performance indicators and takes into account a variety of elements, including governance, environmental influence, and social responsibility [47]. Organizations that place a high priority on SP are concerned with creating value in a way that is socially responsible while ensuring long-term financial stability. When it comes down to it, SP is frequently measured using key performance indicators (KPIs) such

as energy efficiency, carbon footprint, community impact, and employee engagement [14]. Organizations may also report on their SP and compare it to other companies using systems or mechanisms like the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI). SP is a method for businesses to achieve long-term value for their stakeholders by harmonizing and combining economic, social, and environmental goals into their decision making and operations.

SP in the tourist sector refers to balancing economic, environmental, and social issues to maintain survival and prosperity in the long term. Economic sustainability centers on the industry's economic health and profitability [48]. This involves lowering costs via resource efficiency and waste reduction, as well as boosting local economies by purchasing goods and services locally [49]. Environmental sustainability entails lowering the environmental effect of industry [10]. This covers things like lowering carbon emissions, preserving water and electricity, and decreasing waste. Tourism may also help conservation efforts by encouraging sustainable travel behaviors, supporting protected areas and species, and mitigating the detrimental impact of tourism on natural resources [50]. In contrast, social sustainability entails considering the effects of tourism on local populations [51]. This includes the promotion of local cultures and history, the provision of just and equal salaries and humane working conditions for employees, and ensuring that the benefits and perks of tourism are distributed among the local communities [52,53]. Additionally, by creating employment, offering education and training, and promoting cross-cultural exchange, sustainable tourism may catalyze societal development. Through this balance of social, environmental, and economic factors, the tourist sector may secure its long-term survival while contributing to sustainable development.

2.3. Generative Leadership and Sustainable Performance

Generative leadership (GL) is a leadership style that centers around the creation of new and innovative solutions to problems. It encourages creativity, experimentation, and collaboration and allows employees to take ownership of their work [30]. The tourism industry encounters a range of complex challenges concerning sustainability and needs this style of leadership [25,26]. By encouraging an innovative and cooperative culture, generative leadership may help tourism businesses create and put into practice sustainable practices that enhance economic, environmental, and social performance [26]. For instance, by creating an environment in which employees draw fresh concepts and solutions, GL may help tourism organizations remain competitive and adjust to shifting market conditions. This can, in turn, lead to higher sales, profit, and market share. GL may also assist tourism-related businesses in adopting sustainable practices such as waste reduction, energy conservation, and environmental impact reduction through encouraging sustainability and environmental responsibility. This can assist tourism companies in lowering their carbon footprint and aid in the protection of ecosystems and natural resources.

GL can also have a positive effect on the social performance of tourism enterprises by fostering a culture of inclusivity and social responsibility. GL can encourage employees to engage in social initiatives such as supporting local communities, promoting cultural heritage, and creating avenues for disadvantaged groups. This can aid tourism enterprises to nurture positive relationships with their stakeholders, enhance their reputation, and contribute to the social development of their destinations. From the perspective of social learning theory (SLT) [37], employees perceive their leaders as role models and tend to emulate their actions, values, and behavior aimed toward the cultivation of environmental behavior within the organization [54,55]. The leader assumes a critical responsibility in several aspects, such as modeling desirable conduct that inspires followers to exhibit constructive behaviors, advancing ecological benchmarks, and prioritizing environmental responsibilities that assist organizations in developing and executing sustainable strategies. They emphasize the importance of environmental stewardship and inspire participation in environmentally friendly initiatives [26,56]. Leaders who possess a high degree of generative concern are actively engaged in fostering cohesion, the restoration of ecological

systems, and the well-being of future generations [27,57]. Having said that, it is reasonable to expect GL to have a constructive influence on organizational SP.

H1. *Generative leadership has a positive impact on organizational sustainable performance.*

2.4. *Generative Leadership and Employee Green Work Passion*

Employee GWP may be positively impacted by GL by offering a feeling of purpose, meaningful work, and possibilities for growth and development in terms of environmental sustainability. For example, GL develops a common vision for a sustainable future that employees can be excited about and have a sense of purpose in working towards [58]. GL may establish a feeling of shared purpose and encourage workers to work together to achieve a common objective in terms of environmental sustainability by incorporating them into the visioning process and motivating them to take ownership of the vision. Furthermore, GLs promote a culture of innovation [26,30], experimentation, and learning, which may offer employees meaningful work related to environmental sustainability [30]. Generative leaders may offer chances for employees to learn and grow by pushing them to think creatively and take risks, which can enhance their engagement and enthusiasm for their green jobs [26]. GLs emphasize developing workers' future capacity for environmental sustainability through training, mentorship, and career development opportunities [27,58]. By investing in their workers' development, GLs may foster a sense of empowerment and ownership among employees, increasing their engagement and passion for their green jobs. Furthermore, GLs recognize and promote employee contributions to environmental sustainability projects, providing a culture of recognition and gratitude that can inspire workers to continue to engage in their green work with zeal [25,59]. By providing a common vision, promoting chances for creativity, learning, and growth in connection to environmental sustainability, and recognizing and rewarding employee contributions to sustainable activities, we believe that GL may play a vital role in boosting employee green work passion. This argument is reinforced by SLT, which holds that people learn by seeing and imitating the behavior of others, and leaders act as important role models for their workforce [37]. Therefore, the behavior and attitudes of leaders towards their work can have a significant impact on the work passion of employees. Leaders who are passionate about their work model a positive attitude and behavior towards work, which employees are likely to imitate [42,54,60]. When leaders demonstrate a high level of engagement and commitment toward sustainability, employees are more likely to develop similar attitudes and behaviors. Additionally, when leaders are perceived as credible and competent, employees are more likely to be motivated to imitate their behavior and attitudes. Thus, in view of the exhaustive discussion above, the following assumption is made.

H2. *GL has a positive impact on employee green work passion.*

2.5. *Generative Leadership and Employee Green Behavior*

GL, which is characterized by a focus on creating new possibilities and fostering collaboration [30,43,61], can have a positive impact on EGB. A culture of environmental responsibility and awareness can be developed within the organization when leaders set an example and encourage ecologically friendly practices [62]. This may encourage workers to engage in more eco-friendly habits, including recycling, conserving energy, and using eco-friendly products [26,63].

Furthermore, GL can also create various opportunities for employees to be a part of green projects and initiatives. These socially responsible behaviors can elevate employees' sense of ownership and their commitment to sustainability. In addition, by educating and training employees on green practices, GL can help them understand the importance of their actions, in turn making them adopt sustainable behaviors. This coheres with SLT, which advocates that individuals learn and adopt behaviors by observing others and imitating their actions [37]. Employees may be more inclined to notice and imitate their leaders'

ecologically beneficial actions in a GL environment, which could result in a rise in green behavior across the workforce. Additionally, GL can also promote the development and implementation of new environmentally friendly policies and practices, further encouraging EGB. Therefore, based on the above discussion, we assume the following:

H3. *Generative leadership has a positive impact on employee green behavior.*

2.6. The Mediating Role of Green Work Passion

GL, which is characterized by creating positive change and growth, can promote SP by providing a clear vision and direction for sustainable practices and by fostering a culture of innovation and continuous improvement [25,31,63,64]. Employee GWP, on the other hand, refers to an individual's emotional attachment to environmental issues related to their work [38,39]. This emotional connection and attachment tends to boost an employee's urge to engage in sustainable behaviors and can result in greater commitment to SP. In this way, employee GWP may act as a mediator between GL and SP. GL can provide the direction and motivation for sustainable practices [25,63], while employee GWP can provide the emotional drive and commitment to implement these practices. Together, GL and employee GWP may likely work in synergy to enhance SP within an organization.

In terms of SLT [37], employee GWP can mediate the connection between GL and organizational SP by influencing the process of learning and internalizing sustainable behaviors and attitudes. GL can offer possibilities for workers to learn about and put sustainable habits into practice since it acts as a paradigm for such attitudes and conduct [58,65,66]. Yet, the internalization of sustainable attitudes and actions is more likely to take place when staff members have a strong emotional connection to environmental challenges connected to their jobs [39]. While it improves their willingness to engage in sustainable behaviors and may result in a larger commitment to SP, this emotional attachment, or GWP, may further drive workers to adopt and internalize sustainable behaviors and attitudes and thus may be likely to contribute to sustainable performance.

H4. *The association between generative leadership and sustainable performance is favorably mediated by green work passion.*

2.7. Employee Green Behavior's Mediating Role

GL is said to promote EGB because of its focus on promoting growth and development and a bright future [25,27,57]. As a result, the organization's SP is enhanced. In other words, GL fosters an atmosphere that motivates staff to act in ways that advance sustainability, which ultimately raises SP for the whole company. Moreover, we argue that EGB, like lowering energy usage or introducing sustainable practices, may have a favorable effect on an organization's SP. This is so that the company may lessen its environmental effects and raise SP by empowering and encouraging its employees to engage in environmentally responsible conduct. Furthermore, encouraging environmentally responsible behavior among employees can increase their sense of commitment and involvement [42,67], which ultimately may result in increased organizational SP. EGB may help a company lessen its environmental effects, which is important for SP. EGB may also result in a drop in the cost for the business, such as energy conservation, management of waste, paperless initiatives, and water conservation, which may not only contribute to environmental sustainability but may also lead to better financial performance. In addition to environmental and financial performances, the tourism industry can improve its social performance by fostering sustainable destination practices, engaging with local communities, conserving the environment, preserving local cultures, collaborating with stakeholders, and implementing responsible employment practices.

Furthermore, SLT [37] also supports the argument by stating that employees learn and adopt new behaviors, such as green behaviors, through observing and imitating the actions of their leaders and peers. SLT suggests that if employees observe and imitate the green behaviors of their leaders and peers, they are more likely to adopt these behaviors

themselves. Additionally, if the organization rewards and recognizes green behaviors, employees may probably continue committing to those behaviors that might lead to SP. In this sense, EGB can be seen as a mediating factor that helps to link the relationship between GL and sustainable performance by inspiring and permitting individuals to take actions that contribute to the organization's goals of sustainability.

H5. *Employee Green Behavior positively mediates the relationship between GL and SP.*

2.8. Social Learning Theory

The social learning theory, often associated with the work of Albert Bandura, is highly relevant in the context of various studies, particularly those related to human behavior, education, and social influence. This theory posits that individuals learn by observing and imitating the behaviors, attitudes, and actions of others within their social environment. It suggests that people acquire new knowledge and skills not only through direct experiences but also through observing others and the consequences of their actions.

The social learning theory can be a valuable framework for understanding how individuals in the tourism industry acquire and implement sustainable practices. It highlights the importance of role models, social interactions, and the broader social context in shaping behavior and attitudes related to sustainability. Researchers can use this theory to analyze the dynamics at play and make recommendations for fostering sustainable practices within the industry.

Based on above discussion, conceptual framework of the study is given in Figure 1.

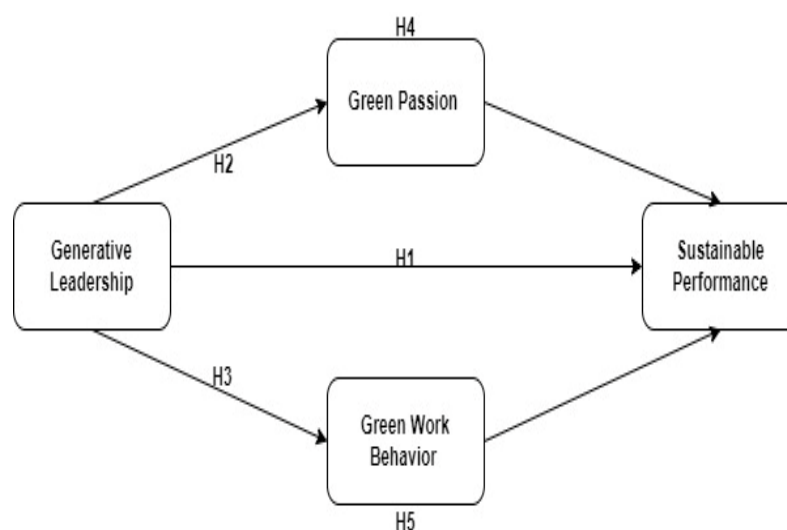


Figure 1. Conceptual framework.

3. Methodology

The research was designed to evaluate the influence of GL on SP and how this relationship is mediated by GWP and EGB using parallel mediation. The quantitative study was cross-sectional, and the data for this study were collected from the frontline employees and managers of three-, four-, and five-star hotels in KP. The philosophical stance of the current study is 'positivism' as the hypothesized model was proved using data collected from respondents.

To achieve this, the researchers partnered with a national organization responsible for registering hotel and hospitality establishments in the area. This organization facilitated the acquisition of contact details for the target entities. Upon obtaining these details, the research team initiated communication with these establishments, requesting the contact information of their employees. Out of the contacted organizations, 41 agreed to cooperate and provided pertinent information regarding 890 employees, including both frontline workers and their respective supervisors. At this stage, we employed convenience sampling

techniques and selected organizations that were easily accessible and willing to cooperate. The research team then proceeded to reach out to these frontline employees and their supervisors to collect data. Ultimately, 356 frontline employees participated and submitted responses, accompanied by evaluations from 120 matching supervisors. At this stage, we used a purposive sampling approach to select specific organizations and employees who fit this study's criteria. To facilitate data collection, an electronic survey questionnaire was prepared in English and distributed via email and WhatsApp to potential respondents. Multiple reminders were dispatched to encourage survey participation and enhance the response rate. The research team remained accessible throughout to address any inquiries regarding the survey process. After the data collection phase, 13 incomplete responses were excluded from the analysis. As a result, the final sample for this study comprised 343 frontline workers within Pakistan's hospitality industry. The frontline employees evaluated their management's GL and self-evaluated their GWP and EGB, whereas managers assessed the SP of the organizations. Before filling out the questionnaires, all the respondents were informed that they could quit the survey at any time. They were told that the data they would provide would only be used for this research purpose and would be kept confidential.

The research team spent 20 weeks in data collection and analysis. The initial phase of contacting and obtaining cooperation from 41 organizations took 8 weeks to complete. The second phase of collecting contact information and reaching out to employees and supervisors took 10 weeks to complete. After data collection, the next phase of data cleaning and analysis took 2 weeks to complete.

Table 1 illustrates the descriptive statistics derived from this study. Merely 16% of the sample consisted of females, aligning with the predominantly male-oriented nature of Pakistan's hospitality industry, as previously noted [17]. Close to half of the respondents (149) fell within the age bracket of 21 to 30. A significant majority of employees (70%) possessed either a university degree or had completed their education.

Table 1. Demographic properties of the respondents.

		N	%
Gender	Male	288	84%
	Female	55	16%
Age	Less than 20	35	10.2%
	21–30	149	43.4%
	31–40	89	25.9%
	41–50	40	11.6%
	50+	30	8.7%
Education	Elementary School	27	7.7%
	Secondary Education	54	15.5%
	Professional Diploma	23	6.6%
	Graduate	80	23.5%
	University	159	46.4%

Data for all the variables were collected using self-administrated standardized questionnaires adapted from existing studies. For measuring GL, the scale was adapted from the research of Alma [68]. It was 27 items with a 5-point Likert scale. A sample item of the GL scale is “My company believes that it is important to protect the environment”. The value of the coefficient of Cronbach's α for GL was 0.710. For measuring the SP of hotels, the scale was adapted from the study of [69]. It was 15 items with a 5-point Likert scale that generated a Cronbach's α of 0.77. Sample items of the SP scale include “my organization prioritizes profitability while considering the long-term economic impact on stakeholders”,

“My organization prioritizes the well-being and development of our employees”, and “My organization strives to minimize its environmental impact by adopting sustainable practices”. For measuring GWP, a 10-item scale was adapted from the study of [70]; it was also measured on a 5-point scale. A sample item is “I am passionate about the environment”. EGB was measured with three items adapted from the study of [71], and the coefficient of Cronbach’s α value was measured at 0.78. The sample items for EGB include “I performed tasks that are expected of me in environmentally friendly ways”. Further detail is given below in Table 2. The elaboration of the measures used for this study is as follows:

Table 2. Discriminant validity of the construct.

Variable	Items	Factor Loading	CR	AVE
Generative Leadership ($\alpha = 0.71$)	GL1	0.770	0.80	0.63
	GL2	0.702		
	GL3	0.787		
	GL4	0.871		
	GL5	0.773		
	GL6	0.776		
	GL7	0.787		
	GL8	0.715		
	GL9	0.771		
	GL10	0.776		
	GL11	0.787		
	GL12	0.879		
	GL13	0.77		
	GL14	0.776		
	GL15	0.787		
	GL16	0.879		
	GL17	0.91		
	GL18	0.723		
	GL19	0.745		
	GL20	0.764		
	GL21	0.873		
	GL22	0.923		
	GL23	0.754		
	GL24	0.81		
	GL25	0.894		
	GL26	0.782		
	GL27	0.761		
Sustainable Performance ($\alpha = 0.77$)	SP1	0.79	0.95	0.57
	SP2	0.777		
	SP3	0.717		
	SP4	0.781		
	SP5	0.712		
	SP6	0.723		
	SP7	0.745		

Table 2. Cont.

Variable	Items	Factor Loading	CR	AVE
Sustainable Performance ($\alpha = 0.77$)	SP8	0.784	0.95	0.57
	SP9	0.792		
	SP10	0.79		
	SP11	0.729		
	SP12	0.754		
	SP13	0.733		
	SP14	0.723		
	SP15	0.781		
	SP16	0.734		
	SP17	0.774		
Employee Green Behavior ($\alpha = 0.78$)	EGB1	0.714	0.96	0.61
	EGB2	0.823		
	EGB3	0.734		
	EGB4	0.798		
	EGB5	0.903		
	EGB6	0.777		
	EGB7	0.769		
	EGB8	0.815		
	EGB9	0.84		
	EGB10	0.734		
	EGB11	0.743		
	EGB12	0.754		
	EGB13	0.756		
	EGB14	0.846		
	EGB15	0.765		
	EGB16	0.756		
Green Work Passion ($\alpha = 0.8$)	GWP1	0.871	0.94	0.65
	GWP2	0.761		
	GWP3	0.761		
	GWP4	0.915		
	GWP5	0.761		
	GWP6	0.954		
	GWP7	0.711		
	GWP8	0.82		
	GWP9	0.722		
	GWP10	0.791		

Initially, all three-, four-, and five-star hotels were targeted. However, some hotels refused to provide data. Therefore, they were eliminated from the total population. Among the managers and frontline employees of the remaining hotels, 600 questionnaires were distributed. The frontline employees evaluated their management's GL and self-evaluated their GWP and EGB, whereas managers assessed the SP of the organizations. Before filling

out the questionnaires, all the respondents were informed that they could quit the survey at any time. They were told that the data they would provide would be used only for this research purpose and would be kept confidential. Out of 600 questionnaires, 463 (343 frontline employees and 120 managers) were returned completed in all respects and were considered for further analysis.

4. Data Analysis

In the current study, the model was set to test parallel mediation, and due to each mediation, it requires a specific indirect effect. So, in this study, Hayes's (2013) PROCESS method was used to evaluate the parallel mediation model. Model 4 of PROCESS was used to examine parallel mediation. Furthermore, for verification of the mediation relationship and significance, the Sobel test was also employed.

Utilizing Preacher and Hayes's (2008) suggestions, the scale's discriminant validity was tested. The results indicate that shared variance was less than AVE, demonstrating convergent validity. The values are shown in Table 1. The discriminating validity of the scale was further confirmed by the fact that all AVE values were higher than 0.50 and that the composite reliability for all variables was higher than 0.70. VIF and tolerance were utilized to detect the problem of multicollinearity, and it was discovered that for all the variables, VIF was larger than 10, and tolerance was less than 0.2 but greater than 0.1, which confirmed that there is no issue of multicollinearity. Furthermore, the low correlation values among the variables also confirmed the same stance. The correlation values are shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Descriptive and correlation values.

Variables	SD	Mean	1	2	3	4
GL	0.47	3.12	1			
SP	0.49	3.01	0.32 **	1		
GWP	0.42	3.17	0.39 *	0.21 *	1	
EGB	0.44	3.17	0.29 **	0.42 **	0.32 **	1

Note: * $p < 0.05$, two tailed; ** $p < 0.01$, two tailed; and SD = standard deviation.

CFA was used to evaluate the model's fitness. Alternative models were used to assess the model's fitness. The four-factor solution ($\chi^2 = 1298.12$, GFI = 0.92, CFI = 0.91, and RMSEA = 0.028) produced the best model fit. To assess the common method bias, the Harman test was used. Without rotating the items, all of the data were fed into an exploratory factor analysis, which revealed four distinct factors with eigenvalues larger than 1. The greatest component accounted for 17% of the variation, whereas 52% was the total variation explained by these four components. Thus, there was no CMV issue.

Table 3 shows standard deviation, mean, and correlation values. For all the variables, SD was below 0.5, and the mean value was above 3, which confirmed the normal distribution of data. It also reveals that all the respondents were aware of all the variables of the current study, and these concepts/variables were practiced at their respective hotels.

For testing the mediation model, direct and indirect effects were calculated at a confidence level of 95%. Further results are shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Results of regression analysis for direct effect.

Hypothesis	Relationship Variables	Effect	SE	LLCI	ULCI
H1	GL→SP	0.43 ***	0.04	0.54	0.61
H2	GL→GWP	0.55 **	0.06	0.48	0.56
H3	GL→EGB	0.27 **	0.05	0.02	0.17

GL: generative leadership; SP: sustainable performance; GWP: green work passion; and EGB: employee green behavior. ** $p < 0.01$; and *** $p < 0.001$; bootstrap sample size = 5000; and confidence interval = 95%.

GL has a positive and significant relationship to the SP of the hotels ($\beta = 0.43$, $p < 0.001$). Thus, H1 of the current study is supported by the data. This study also supported the H2

of the data that linked GL with GWP ($\beta = 0.55$, $p < 0.005$). For testing H3 of this study, regression analysis was conducted, and the results supported the proposed hypothesis ($\beta = 0.27$, $p < 0.005$).

To evaluate the indirect effect, Hayes's (2013) PROCESS and Sobel test were conducted, and the results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Indirect effect.

Hypothesis	Relationship Variables	Effect	SE	LLCI	ULCI	Results of Sobel Test			
						Effect	SE	Z	p
H4	GL→GWP→SP	0.14	0.03	0.08	0.21	0.14	0.03	3.61	<0.001
H5	GL→EGB→SP	0.10	0.04	0.03	0.16	0.10	0.04	3.01	<0.001

Bootstrap sample size = 5000; and confidence interval = 95%.

Indirect effect analyses show that there is a significant indirect effect of GL on SP through GWP ($b = 0.14$, CI [0.08, 0.21]). The same results are also verified by the Sobel test ($z = 3.61$, $p < 0.001$). Thus, the H4 of this study is accepted. Similarly, H5 was also tested using the Sobel test and PROCESS. The results demonstrated that there is a substantial indirect influence of GL on SP via EGB ($b = 0.10$, CI [0.03, 0.16]). Similarly, the Sobel test also confirmed the same finding ($z = 3.01$, $p < 0.001$). Hence, while inferring from these figures, it could be concluded that data support H5 of this study.

5. Discussion

H1. GL has a favorable effect on Pakistani tourist enterprises' SP.

This study's results accord with Hypothesis 1, which holds that Pakistani tourist enterprises' SP is positively impacted by GL. This result is aligned with the assumptions of social learning theory [37] and earlier studies, which discovered that leadership is crucial in determining organizational sustainability results [20,25,26,42,72–74]. This result underscores the significance of GL in the context of leadership styles, contributing a valuable perspective to existing scholarly work that has predominantly focused on other leadership paradigms. The positive impact observed in this study suggests that GL may offer a promising avenue for enhancing sustainable performance in the unique context of Pakistan's tourism businesses. In particular, GL is distinguished by an emphasis on long-term planning, a dedication to moral decision making, and a readiness to make investments in the training of personnel. Given Pakistan's distinct sustainability concerns, these qualities are expected to be especially crucial for the country's tourism businesses. Consequently, these findings contribute to a broader understanding of leadership's role in achieving sustainability and expand the discourse by introducing the concept of generative leadership as a valuable approach for addressing the specific sustainability concerns within the Pakistani tourism industry.

H2. GL has a positive impact on employees' GWP.

The empirical result supported the 2nd hypothesis by providing the significant impact of GL on GWP. The result is consistent with prior studies held in the domain that have emphasized the standing of leadership in pouring employees' commitment into sustainable, eco-friendly practices [39,75,76]. GL is a leadership style that accentuates empowerment, innovation, and collaboration. It is more likely to elevate employees' passion for sustainability by creating a supportive environment that encourages experimentation and boosts creativity [25,30,43]. Hence, employees may feel responsibility and a sense of ownership toward sustainability initiatives, resulting in increased motivation to be involved in environmentally responsible behaviors [63].

By validating the connection between GL and GWP, this study not only advances the current understanding of leadership's role in promoting sustainable practices but also underscores the distinctive value of generative leadership in fueling employees' enthusiasm

for sustainability. These findings contribute to the broader discourse on leadership's impact on sustainability within the workplace, shedding light on how GL's specific attributes can play a crucial role in driving eco-friendly behaviors among employees.

H3. *GL has a positive impact on EGB.*

The result of this research supports hypothesis H3. The same has been endorsed by the past research studies held in the domain of sustainable leadership [42,67,77]. GL is more likely to create a supportive environment that nurtures employee engagement and commitment to sustainability through its focus on empowerment, collaboration, and innovation [25,63,78]. Therefore, it is more likely to lead to an increase in EGB, as they feel responsibility for and ownership of the sustainability initiatives prevailing in the organization and are enthusiastic about becoming involved in environmentally responsible behaviors [41,67].

Furthermore, the positive effect of GL on EGB is in accordance with the SLT [37], which contends that employees pick up sustainable behaviors through seeing and imitating leadership behaviors (Zhao, Ahmed, and Faraz, 2020) [79]. As a result, GL practices like setting up clear expectations, giving feedback, and offering assistance are likely to be internalized by staff members, increasing participation in green work practices.

H4. *GWP mediates the relationship between GL and SP of tourism companies in Pakistan.*

This study's findings also corroborate Hypothesis 4, which holds that GWP mediates the connection between GL and SP of Pakistani tourism enterprises. According to Jia et al. (2018) [39], GWP is the emotional commitment that people have to environmental sustainability goals. GL can be particularly successful at igniting employees' green passion. Particularly, GL motivates employees to have a sense of meaning and purpose in their job, which in turn may translate into an improved passion for sustainability goals by emphasizing long-term planning and a commitment to ethical decision making [30,63]. Moreover, the finding of the mediating role of GWP is also supported by SLT (Bandura, 1977) [37], which suggests that employees learn and internalize sustainable practices through observation and modeling of leadership behaviors [79–82]. Thus, the positive influence of GL on SP may be attributed to the mediating role of GWP, as it is likely to lead to a more committed and engaged workforce that is willing to take ownership of sustainability initiatives and engage in environmentally responsible behaviors.

H5. *EGB mediates the relationship between GL and SP of tourism companies in Pakistan.*

Finally, the results of this research prove that EGB mediates the relationship between GL and SP in Pakistani tourism companies. EGB discusses the actions that employees demonstrate to encourage environmental sustainability in the workplace [15,31]). Our findings suggest that GL is predominantly effective at nurturing such behavior. Particularly, by stressing the importance of ethical decision making and long-term planning, GL fosters a culture in which employees feel empowered to support sustainability goals by taking action [83]. This finding is in accordance with previous research by [84] that endorses that leadership is a crucial factor that drives employee engagement in sustainability initiatives. While previous scholarship has explored the impact of various leadership styles on sustainability outcomes, this study sheds light on the unique value that generative leadership brings to the table in this context. This revelation highlights the substantial value that generative leadership brings to the sustainability discourse, demonstrating its effectiveness in galvanizing employees to actively participate in environmentally responsible behaviors and thereby enhancing Sustainable Performance within Pakistani tourism companies.

6. Contribution

This research study adds to the current research on sustainability, leadership, and the tourism industry. First, this study broadens the literature on GL by examining its impact on sustainability outcomes in the tourism industry context of Pakistan. While past

studies have highlighted the importance of other leadership styles in elevating sustainable practices in organizations [83–86], the present research provides empirical evidence of its impact on sustainability outcomes in a specific industry context. The findings add to a more nuanced understanding of the role of GL in promoting sustainability and underscore the importance of considering the unique contextual factors that may impact its effectiveness. Second, this study pinpoints the importance of both GWP and EGB as mediators of the relationship between GL and SP in the tourism industry. Previous studies in the domain have examined the impact of leadership on employee engagement in sustainability initiatives [20,26,87]; however, limited studies have examined the specific mechanisms through which this influence operates. By referring to both GWP and EGB as important mediators, this study contributes to an inclusive understanding of how leadership can drive sustainability outcomes in organizations. Finally, this study bears implications for the tourism industry in Pakistan and other developing countries where sustainability is a burning issue. By demonstrating the positive impact of GL on SP in this context, this study guides managers and policymakers looking to promote sustainable practices in the tourism industry. Particularly, the results imply that investing in leadership training and development programs may be a successful method for encouraging sustainability in travel businesses in Pakistan and elsewhere.

7. Limitations and Future Research Recommendations

This study has some limitations that should be considered while interpreting the findings. The limitations, along with recommendations for future researchers, are as follows: (1) The research was conducted in a specific context of Pakistan's tourism industry, and the sample size was limited to 463 respondents from different tourism companies in Pakistan. Therefore, the results of the current research study may not be generalized in other contexts and populations. Future studies can replicate this research in different contexts, such as other developing countries, developed countries, or across different industries. (2) A cross-sectional research design was employed, which makes it hard to create causal relationships between the variables. Future studies can employ longitudinal research designs to explore the influence of generative leadership on sustainability outcomes over time. (3) The present study focused on identifying the mediating mechanisms through which generative leadership impacts sustainability outcomes. However, other variables may also mediate this relationship. Future research can explore additional mediators to further understand the complex associations between leadership and sustainability outcomes. (4) This study stressed the mediating role of GWP and EGB in the relationship between GL and SP. Nevertheless, some tourism companies may engage in greenwashing, which may impact the relationship between these variables. Future studies can explore the influence of greenwashing on the relationship between GL and sustainability outcomes.

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