




# Integration of Knowledge Management And Green Transformational Leadership in Improving Sustainable Performance: Pro-Environmental Behavior as Mediation

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**Abstract.** This study aims to explore the conceptual framework of the mediating role of Pro-Environmental Behavior (PEB) in the relationship between Knowledge Management (KM), Green Transformational Leadership (GTL), and Sustainable Performance (SP), adopting the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Transformational Leadership Theory. The methodology uses a structured conceptual framework, synthesizing literature from various relevant previous studies for the development and analysis of the conceptual model. The analysis results indicate that although KM and GTL have a direct influence on Sustainable Performance, empirical inconsistencies suggest the presence of unidentified mediating variables. It is proposed that PEB acts as the behavioral bridge that links knowledge and leadership to sustainability outcomes. The originality of this research lies in its emphasis on the integration of intellectual capital management and green leadership values, which have not been comprehensively examined together in this context. The practical implication of this research is the importance of designing organizational strategies that encourage knowledge sharing, environmental awareness, and employee engagement in green practices to strengthen sustainable performance.

**Keywords:** Knowledge Management, Green Transformational Leadership, Pro-Environmental Behavior, Sustainable Performance

## 1 Introduction

In recent decades, global paradigm shifts have had a significant impact on the way organizations view sustainability. Amid the challenges of climate change, scarcity of natural resources, and increasing public awareness of social issues, sustainability is no longer seen as an additional element in organizational strategy. Instead, sustainability has now become a core and strategic component that determines a company's competitiveness and survival in an increasingly competitive market

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[1] Organizations that fail to integrate sustainability principles into their operations and work culture risk losing relevance amid evolving expectations of consumers, stakeholders, and government regulations [1]. This transformation shows that sustainability is not only an external demand, but has also become a new paradigm that permeates all aspects of the organization [1]

In this context, knowledge management or Knowledge management plays a critical role as a strategic foundation in driving innovation, operational efficiency, and organizational culture transformation [2]. The realization and use of explicit and tacit knowledge resources is made possible only through effective knowledge management at organizations. Explicit knowledge (procedures, data and documents) can be structured to support efficiency and consistency in operations, while tacit knowledge (personal insights and work experience) is important for developing innovations and imaginative solutions to sustainability problems [3]. Thus, knowledge management is not only a tool for storing and disseminating information, but also serves as a driver of organizational transformation towards more environmentally friendly practices.

With the help of structured knowledge management organizations may create environment for continuous learning, where employees are learning through sharing of experiences and best practices however also capability building to respond to change in business environment [4]. This approach enables the organization to adapt more effectively to sustainability changes, waste disposal elimination, carbon emission reduction, as well as optimize natural resources and energy usage. This is how knowledge management forms a bridge between the sustainability objectives of an organization and what people do within that company. However, although “knowledge management as a support of sustainability has potential” this is not always the case and it depends very much on leadership in the organization.

Organizational leadership is one of the key factors in driving sustainability, especially through the formation of a work culture that is proactive towards environmental issues [5]. Green Transformational Leadership, as one of the modern leadership approaches, has the potential to create fundamental changes in employees' perceptions and behaviors towards sustainability [6]. Leaders with this transformational style not only provide direction or command, but also act as inspirers who are able to build a shared vision of a more sustainable future [7]. Through persuasive communication and concrete examples, transformational leaders are able to create a sense of collective responsibility among employees to support sustainability initiatives.

Green transformational leadership is also unique in the way leaders manage psychological and structural challenges that often hinder the implementation of sustainability strategies [8]. These challenges may be resistance to change, lack of support from middle management or resource constraints which in many organizations are the primary inhibitors. Leadership in this transformational style is key to lead the organization to adapt, by creating a sustainable work climate where employees feel that they are valued and supported to innovate in response to environmental challenges [9]. In reality, this builds agency not just at an individual level but buttresses the organization's collective capacity to meet ever-higher sustainability targets. A key feature of the success of organisations strategic sustainability activities is the demonstration and development of Pro-environmental behaviour which employees exhibit [10]. These acts portray person's involvement and intention to help in limitation of the bad influence on environment by the organization [11]. Periendothelialrance

behaviour can be relatively simple behaviours, such as turning off lights and electronic devices that are not in use to participating in a company's..... environmental activities programmes in terms of waste management, recycling ec energy conservation initiatives. It has been found in the literature that these behaviors are not only affected by individual characteristics, like environmental concern and personal values, but also by organizational factors such as working culture, management systems, and leadership. Here knowledge management and Green transformational leadership can serve as a significant factor influencing pro-environmental behavior in workplace [12].

However, the relationship between knowledge management, transformational leadership, and pro-environmental behavior has not been fully understood in the context of overall organizational performance. Continuous performance or Continuous performance the ultimate goal of various organizational sustainability efforts [13]. In many studies, sustainable performance has been identified as a result of the interaction between various factors, including the organization's internal resources, innovation capabilities, and sustainability orientation. However, most of these studies have focused only on the partial relationship between variables, without considering their effects simultaneously within a single comprehensive research framework.

This study is an opportunity to reveal the complicated interrelations between these factors into a single unified model. In this context, a resource-based theory Resource Based View (RBV) offers an appropriate theoretical basis to examine how the internal resources such as knowledge and leadership can be used by organizations in order to generate sustainable competitive advantage that leads toward increased performance [14]. Resource-based view (RBV) focuses on unique, rare, and valuable resources as one of the driver for competitive advantage. From a sustainability perspective, KM and TFL are treated as strategic resources that may be resourced to generate value.

The novelty of this research lies in the integration of knowledge management, green transformational leadership, pro-environmental behavior, and sustainable performance into one complete research framework. In addition, the study also highlights the context of developing countries, which have unique characteristics and are often faced with different challenges compared to developed countries. By integrating RBV theory perspective and transformational leadership theory, the current study also has a certain level of practice value that helps organizations to develop more appropriate sustainability strategies based on local situation as well as fill in some pieces of the jigsaw puzzle left in literature. [15]

Through a holistic and theory-based approach, this research is expected to make a significant contribution to the organizational sustainability literature while providing practical implications for leaders and policymakers in optimizing internal resource management to achieve superior sustainable performance in the modern era.

## 2 Literature Review

## 2.1 Resource-Based View Theory

Resource-Based View (RBV) and Transformational Leadership Theory are two of the main cornerstones in explaining how organizations can create sustainable competitive advantage. RBV emphasizes the importance of internal resources that are unique, difficult to replicate, and of high value in driving organizational sustainability [16]. In this context, knowledge management and transformational leadership play a role as strategic factors that support the effectiveness of organizations in the face of evolving environmental challenges. Knowledge management enables organizations to optimally manage, distribute, and utilize intellectual assets, both explicit, such as procedures and data, and tacit ones in the form of individual insights and in-depth work. Specifically, transformational leadership – and particularly that of Green Transformational Leadership – has a significant effect on the organisational culture for sustainability [17]. Transformational leaders do more than guide, they inspire and help develop a shared vision of the future; one that is more sustainable. They foster an atmosphere of innovation and mutual awareness with regard to environmental issues, as well as resolving potential barriers of implementation such as resistance and scarcity. In the field this approach succeeds in enhancing employee participation at both low levels of pro-environmental behaviour and high levels of active contribution towards strategic objectives. However, this relationship RBV-transformational leadership is better evident when related to sustainable performance, or sustainable performance (which is the main objective of the organization) . Three main factors of sustainable performance are economic, social and environment in which the company's value can be created by maintaining a balance between the three [18]. The organizations that they capable to manage well their internal resources and through its leaders can overcome the challenges will be increasingly based on change-adaptive, competitive and innovative in a highly complex global market. Hence, the RBV theory and transformational leadership are not only academically rich but also have a strong practical significance affecting the development of organizational sustainability strategies in all sectors of industry[19].

## 2.2 Knowledge Management

Theory The management of knowledge (Knowledge Management) is a strategic concept, which emphasizes learning and how organisations can understand, acquire, store, share and apply knowledge most effectively to better general business performance and competitiveness.[20]. In today's volatile business environment characterized by often unpredictable technology evolutions, global competition and fast changing customer expectations, learning is extremely important for an organization to adapt in order to survive.. This concept is not only concerned with the management of explicit information in the form of data and documents, but also involves tacit knowledge, which includes the experience, insight, and intuition of individuals in the organization.

Conceptually, KM is rooted in several fundamental theories, such as the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory and the Dynamic Capability Theory (DCT). RBV emphasizes that knowledge is a strategic resource that can provide a sustainable competitive advantage if managed properly [21]. Meanwhile, DCTs argue that

organizations must be able to develop, change, and adapt their knowledge quickly to deal with market dynamics [22]. By combining these two perspectives, KM is seen as a mechanism that enables companies to create value through the utilization of intellectual resources and sustainable innovation.

### **2.3. Green Transformational Leadership**

Green Transformational Leadership (GTL) is a leadership approach that integrates sustainability values in the organization's vision, strategy, and culture [24], [25]. At its core, GTL focuses on the role of leaders in seeding an organizational culture that values the environment. Managers with this type of leadership have a degree of influence in promoting green practices, including energy saving, waste reduction and green technology innovation within the organization [7]. In its implementation, GTL has several key characteristics. First, leaders must have a strong sustainability vision and be able to communicate that vision clearly to all members of the organization. Second, leaders must set a real example in implementing sustainability values, both in decision-making and in daily practice. Third, leaders need to encourage innovation and creativity in finding solutions to the environmental challenges faced by companies. Fourth, GTL is also oriented towards employee empowerment, where leaders seek to increase employee awareness, knowledge, and skills in carrying out greener business practices.

### **2.4 Pro Environmental Behavior**

Pro-Environmental Behavior (PEB) theory refers to individual behaviors that are consciously carried out to minimize negative impacts on the environment and contribute to the sustainability of ecosystems [28]. Conceptually, PEB is based on various psychological and social theories that explain the factors that influence a person in adopting environmentally friendly behaviors. One of the main theories supporting PEB is Planned Behavior Theory (TPB), [29] The TPB states that a person's behavior is influenced by intentions (intention), which is formed from three main factors: attitudes towards behavior (attitude), subjective norms (Subjective norms), and the perception of behavioral control (Perceived behavior control) [29]. In the context of PEB, positive attitudes towards the environment, social support, and individual belief in their ability to carry out environmentally friendly actions play an important role in determining the real behavior displayed.

### **2.5 Continuous Performance**

Sustainable performance is a multidimensional concept that includes a balance between economic, social, and environmental aspects in an organization's business strategy [33]. This approach not only focuses on achieving short-term profitability but also considers the long-term impact on stakeholders and the broader ecosystem. In an increasingly dynamic business environment, sustainable performance is a key factor that determines the competitiveness and sustainability of a company in the face of global challenges such as climate change, resource scarcity, and increasing social demands.

### **3 Methodology**

This study uses a conceptual approach to clarify theoretical constructs and develop new interpretations based on existing literature. According to prior conceptual review guidelines, this method helps identify research gaps and formulate frameworks for future empirical studies. Relevant literature is integrated to align with the research objectives, allowing a comprehensive understanding of relationships among key concepts. The outcome of this approach is a conceptual framework that can be empirically tested in future research. This framework aims to address several key questions: (1) Do Knowledge Management (KM) and Green Transformational Leadership (GTL) positively influence Sustainable Performance (SP)? (2) Do KM and GTL influence Pro-Environmental Behavior (PEB)? (3) Does PEB affect SP, and does it mediate the relationship between KM, GTL, and SP? The expected result is the establishment of a theoretical model that explains how intellectual capital management and green-oriented leadership jointly improve sustainability outcomes through the activation of pro-environmental behavior as a mediating mechanism.

## **4. Results & Discussion**

### **4.1 The Influence of Knowledge Management on Pro-Environmental Behavior.**

Knowledge Management is a systematic approach to managing, storing, and transferring knowledge in an organization so that it can be used effectively by individuals and groups, which can ultimately affect their behavior at work [20]. In the context of sustainability, Knowledge Management enables individuals in organizations to understand, adopt, and implement environmentally friendly practices that support sustainability [38], [39].

From the perspective of the Theory of Planned Behavior, a person tends to behave based on the information they receive and believe to be the right thing [40]. Therefore, when organizations actively manage and share knowledge about sustainability, individuals in the organization will be more motivated to demonstrate Pro-Environmental Behaviors, such as waste reduction, energy efficiency, and wiser use of resources [41]. In other words, Knowledge Management plays an important role in building a culture of sustainability in the organization, so that employees are more aware of the environmental impact of their actions and more motivated to behave pro-environmentally [10]. On the other hand, companies that ignore Knowledge Management in the environmental aspect tend to have difficulty in creating a culture of sustainability, which can ultimately hinder the organization's efforts to improve employees' Pro-Environmental Behavior [42]. Therefore, it is important for organizations to effectively manage knowledge related to green practices to shape employee behavior that is more environmentally responsible.

### **4.2 The Influence of Green Transformational Leadership on Pro-Environmental Behavior**

Green Transformational Leadership is a leadership style that encourages employees to have a strong environmental vision, inspires them to behave pro-environmentally, and creates a sustainability-oriented work culture [41]. Green Transformational Leadership plays an important role in shaping employees' awareness of environmental issues as well as increasing their involvement in pro-environmental activities in the workplace [43]. This leadership focuses on the development of green values within the organization, which will ultimately drive changes in employees' attitudes and behaviors towards the environment.

Planned Behavior Theory (TPB) explains that an individual's behavior is influenced by the intention and perception of control over the actions they take [38]. In the context of green leadership, a transformational leader can shape subjective norms and increase employees' perceived behavioral control over pro-environmental actions, thereby encouraging them to adopt more environmentally friendly behaviors [43]. Organizations that fail to implement Green Transformational Leadership tend to have low employee engagement in sustainability efforts, which will ultimately impact the company's overall environmental performance [42].

#### **4.3 The Influence of Pro-Environmental Behavior on Sustainable Performance**

Pro-Environmental Behavior (PEB) is an individual's behavior that is consciously carried out to reduce negative impacts on the environment, such as energy savings, waste reduction, and participation in the company's sustainability programs [44]. PEB plays an important role in supporting the achievement of the company's sustainability goals by creating a more efficient, environmentally friendly work environment and improving the organization's image in the eyes of stakeholders [45].

Employees who are active in pro-environmental behavior not only help companies in reducing their ecological footprint but also improve operational efficiency and sustainability innovation [46]. Companies that encourage and facilitate PEB through organizational culture, green policies, and training programs tend to achieve better sustainable performance, both in environmental, social, and economic terms [47]. Thus, PEB plays an important role in supporting the organization's sustainability strategy and ensuring that the company's performance remains optimal in the long term.

#### **4.4 The Influence of Knowledge Management on Sustainable Performance**

Management (KM) is a systematic process of managing, disseminating, and applying knowledge in an organization to increase operational effectiveness and efficiency [48]. In the context of sustainability, KM plays an important role in helping organizations develop strategies and innovations that support sustainable performance, including economic, social, and environmental aspects [49].

Effective KM implementation allows companies to integrate more environmentally friendly business practices, reduce resource wastage, and increase competitiveness through continuous innovation [13]. In addition, KM also supports increasing employees' awareness of sustainability, so that they can actively contribute to the implementation of green policies and improve operational efficiency [50]. Thus, organizations that implement KM well tend to have higher sustainable performance

compared to those that do not manage knowledge optimally.

#### **4.5 The Influence of Green Transformational Leadership on Sustainable Performance**

Green Transformational Leadership (GTL) is a leadership style that emphasizes environmental vision, inspiration, and employee empowerment in realizing organizational sustainability goals [6]. GTL-style leaders encourage employees to adopt more environmentally friendly behaviors, raise awareness of the importance of sustainability, and actively participate in resource conservation efforts and green innovation [38].

In the context of sustainable performance, GTL plays a role in creating an organizational culture that is proactive towards environmental and social issues, so that companies can integrate sustainability strategies into their business practices [43]. Green transformational leaders provide inspiration and motivation to employees to innovate in reducing environmental impact and improving operational efficiency [51] [52]. Thus, organizations led by green transformational leaders tend to have higher sustainable performance, both in economic, social, and environmental aspects..

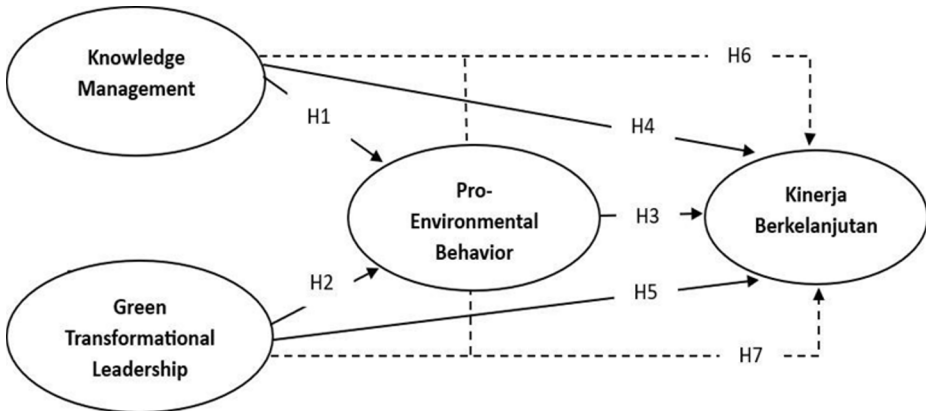
#### **4.6 Pro-Environmental Behavior mediates the influence of Knowledge Management on Sustainable Performance**

Knowledge Management (KM) is a systematic process of creating, sharing, and applying knowledge to increase organizational effectiveness [53]. In the context of sustainability, KM plays an important role in increasing employees' understanding of environmentally friendly practices and sustainable innovations that can improve company performance [54]. Organizations that implement KM effectively can integrate the concept of sustainability into their business strategy, thereby creating a more innovative and environmentally responsible work environment. Previous research has shown that PEB can act as a mediator between KM and sustainable performance. For example, research by [43] found that organizations that manage knowledge effectively tend to have more environmentally conscious employees, which in turn contributes to continuous performance improvements. In addition, [37] also emphasized that pro-environmental behaviors triggered by KM can be a key factor in the success of a company's sustainability strategy.

#### **4.7 Pro-Environmental Behavior mediates the influence of Green Transformational Leadership on Sustainable Performance**

Green Transformational Leadership (GTL) is a leadership style that focuses on motivating, inspiring, and guiding employees to behave in an environmentally friendly manner and contribute to the sustainability of the organization [12]. Leaders with GTL characteristics tend to embed environmental values into the company's vision and culture, thus encouraging employees to adopt pro-environmental practices in their work [6]. With strong leadership in the aspect of sustainability, organizations are better able to improve their sustainable performance, both from the economic, social, and environmental aspects [31]. Previous research supports that PEB plays a mediator role

in the relationship between GTL and sustainable performance. For example [57] found that leaders with a GTL style can encourage employees to care more about the environment, which ultimately improves operational efficiency and organizational sustainability. In addition, [58] assert that GTL has a greater impact on sustainable performance when employees actively implement pro-environmental behaviors in their daily lives.



**Fig. 1.** Conceptual framework

Figure 1. The conceptual framework was obtained from discussions and the integration of previous research. This conceptual study proposes that Knowledge Management (KM) and Green Transformational Leadership (GTL) have a positive influence on Sustainable Performance (SP), both directly and indirectly through the mediation of Pro-Environmental Behavior (PEB). This aligns with the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Transformational Leadership Theory, which emphasize the strategic role of internal resources and leadership in driving organizational sustainability.

Knowledge Management enables organizations to manage, share, and utilize knowledge effectively to enhance innovation, efficiency, and environmental responsibility. Meanwhile, Green Transformational Leadership motivates employees to internalize sustainability values through vision, example, and empowerment. Pro-Environmental Behavior serves as a behavioral manifestation of these processes. Employees who possess environmental knowledge and are inspired by green leadership are more likely to adopt sustainable actions in the workplace. Hence, communication, knowledge dissemination, and leadership modeling create a synergistic pathway toward improved Sustainable Performance.

## 5 Conclusion

This conceptual study provides a comprehensive framework that integrates Knowledge Management (KM), Green Transformational Leadership (GTL), Pro-Environmental Behavior (PEB), and Sustainable Performance (SP) through the lenses of the Resource-Based View and Transformational Leadership Theory. The proposed model emphasizes that KM and GTL function not only as strategic organizational

resources but also as behavioral enablers that stimulate employees' pro-environmental actions, which in turn enhance sustainable performance outcomes.

The primary theoretical contribution of this study lies in the development of a unified behavioral framework that bridges intellectual capital management and green leadership with sustainability outcomes through Pro-Environmental Behavior as a mediating mechanism. This integration extends prior fragmented studies by offering a more holistic explanation of how internal organizational resources are transformed into sustainable value creation.

From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that organizations particularly those operating in knowledge-intensive sectors, public institutions, higher education institutions, and sustainability-oriented enterprises should prioritize structured knowledge-sharing systems, environmentally oriented leadership practices, and the cultivation of employee pro-environmental behaviors to strengthen long-term sustainable performance.

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. As a conceptual paper, the proposed relationships are theoretically grounded but not empirically tested. Therefore, the framework does not yet capture potential contextual variations across industries, organizational sizes, or national settings.

Future research is strongly encouraged to empirically validate the proposed model using quantitative approaches such as PLS-SEM, multi-group analysis, or longitudinal research designs across diverse organizational contexts to enhance the generalizability and robustness of the findings.

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