



ICMTT'25

The Impact of Employee Training on Eco-Friendly Behavior in Hotels: The Mediating Role of Green Skills

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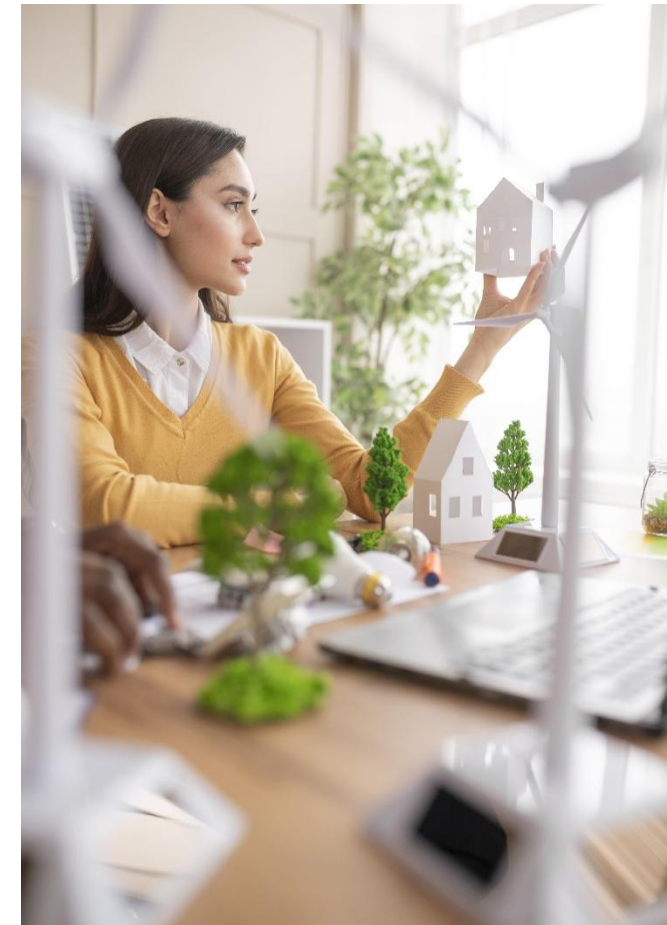
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Introduction

- Green Human Resources Management (GHRM) is all about incorporating eco-friendly practices into HR activities such as hiring, training, performance management, and company culture (Masri & Jaaron, 2017) to promote sustainability.
- When it comes to hotels as actors in the hospitality industry, they have increasingly embraced sustainable practices by recognizing the benefits of green consumerism.
- Research shows that adopting eco-friendly initiatives not only enhances competitiveness and innovation but also boosts financial performance, employee engagement, customer loyalty, and reduces carbon emissions, and aligns with the law (Chou, 2014).
- The aim of the study was to assess the mediating effect of green skills in the relationship between green training and eco-friendly behavior of hotel employees in Greece, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, and Serbia.
- The originality of the study arises from the fact that the relationship between green training, skills, and eco-friendly behavior was not found in contemporary literature.



➤ Green training

Green training provides employees with the necessary knowledge and skills to actively engage in environmental initiatives, enhancing their confidence and motivation. By developing a deeper understanding of sustainable practices, employees are better equipped to identify and participate in green opportunities within their teams and organizations (Pham, Tučková, & Chiappetta Jabbour, 2019).

➤ Green skills

Green skills encompass the professional, vocational, and general competencies, such as sustainable practices, innovation, and problem-solving, needed for emerging green jobs and the transition of existing roles across all industries such as the hospitality industry (Cabral & Lochan Dhar, 2019). These skills support efforts to address climate change and promote sustainability.

➤ Relationship between green training and green skills

According to Cabral and Lochan Dhar (2019), green training positively influences employees' green competencies such as green knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes.

H1

Green training has a positive influence on the green skills of hotel employees.

➤ Eco-friendly behavior

For Kim et al. (2019) eco-friendly behavior in hotels includes specific actions related to conserving energy, reducing water consumption, and minimizing waste.

➤ Relationship between green skills and eco-friendly behavior

The research of Ali et al. (2022) proved that various GHRM practices that develop green skills and knowledge have a positive influence on eco-friendly behavior. Green training not only equips employees with practical skills and knowledge but also cultivates a mindset focused on environmental responsibility, driving them to adopt and maintain eco-friendly behaviors not only at work but also outside the workplace (Usman et al., 2023).

H2

Green skills have a positive influence on the eco-friendly behavior of hotel employees.

- The mediating role of green skills in the relationship between green training and eco-friendly behavior

Pham et al. (2019) imply that green training practices enable hotel managers to enhance employees' eco-behavior through consistent training and education on sustainable practices within the hospitality industry.

Chaudhary (2020) indicates that green GHRM practices such as green training can foster the green behavior of an employee. Similarly, GHRM was found a positive predictor of eco-friendly behavior in both non- and green hotels (Kim et al., 2019) and tourism organizations (Ribeiro et al., 2022).

H3

The hotel employees' green skills mediate the relationship between green training and eco-friendly behavior.

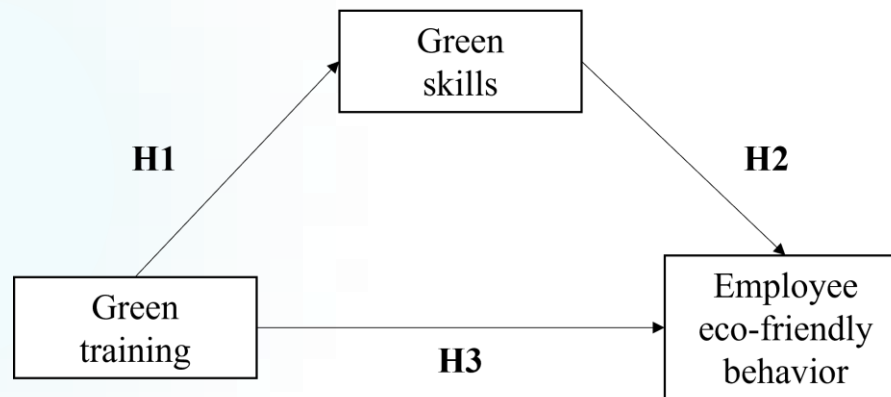


Fig. 1. The conceptual model.

➤ Participants

A self-reported questionnaire; hotel employees in Greece, Croatia, and Serbia; 2022; non-probability convenience sampling was utilized; 298 respondents; Google Forms and paper-based questionnaires; average were 33.62 years old (SD = 8.736), while their average work experience in years was 7.74 (SD = 7.106).

Table 1. Sample characteristics

	N	%
Gender		
Male	118	39.6
Female	180	60.4
Education		
High school or less	118	39.6
Bachelor degree	134	45.0
Master/PhD degree	46	15.4
Country of Residence		
Serbia	105	35.2
Greece	102	34.2
Croatia	73	24.5
Bosnia and Herzegovina	18	6.0

Research methodology

➤ Measurements

In this research questionnaire consisted of **two parts**. In the first part, the demographic characteristics of respondents were investigated. The second part of the questionnaire measured green training, green skills, and eco-friendly behavior.

Green training - Masri and Jaarons (2017); five items; the 5-point Likert scale from 1 - not at all to 5 - to a very large extent; An example "Hotel provide environmental training to the hotel's members to increase environmental awareness". Item GT5 removed; Cronbach's alpha coefficient 0.950.

Green skills - Cabral and Lochan Dhar's (2019); three items; the 5-point Likert scale from 1 - not at all to 5 - to a very large extent; An example "Hotel's employees acquired skills in energy conservation". Cronbach's alpha coefficient 0.943.

Eco-friendly behavior - Kim et al. (2019); seven items; 5-point Likert scale was used from 1 - totally disagree to 5 – totally agree; An example "Before I get off work, I turn off the electric appliances, such as computers, TV monitor, etc."; Cronbach's alpha coefficient for this variable is 0.966.

In this study, the CFA model generated a very good fit.

Results and discussion

- Statistical analysis: IBM SPSS v25; AMOS; PROCESS macro (model 4)

Table 3. Validity and reliability test with correlation analysis

Variable	AVE	CR	1	2	3
1 Green training	.826	.950	.909		
2 Green skills	.850	.943	.819**	.920	
3 Eco-friendly behavior	.798	.983	.332**	.390**	.893

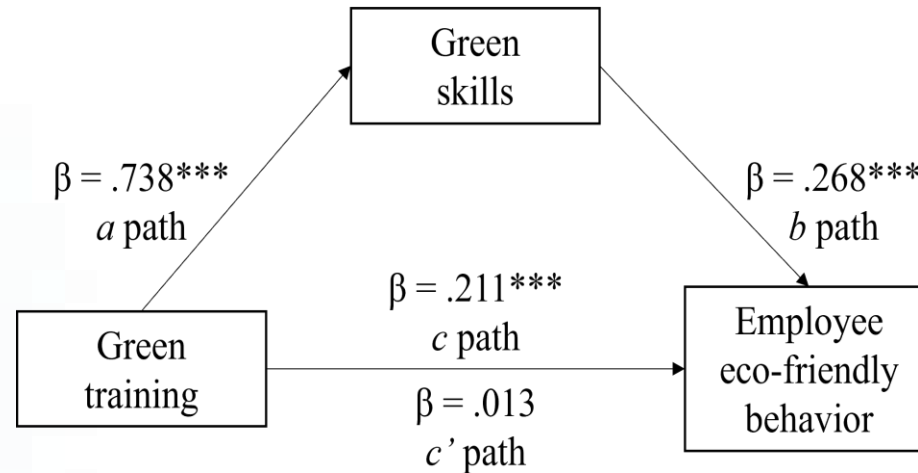
Note: AVE - average extracted variance, CR - composite reliability, on the diagonal is the square root of AVE, ** $p < .01$.

The average variance extracted as an indicator of convergent validity of the measurement scale should have values higher than 0.5, for discriminant validity its squared root values that are presented on the diagonals.

➤ Results

Table 4. Mediating model results

Relation	Effect	SE	t	p	CI
Indirect effect of X on Y (a × b)	.198	.061			[.085; .323]
Direct effect of X on Y (c')	.013	.061	.221	.826	[-.107; .134]
Total effect of X on Y (c)	.211	.036	5.888	.000	[.141; .282]

**Fig. 2.** Bootstrap mediating effect of green skills in the relationship between green training and eco-friendly behavior.

Results and discussion

➤ Discussion

Results are supported by the previous studies results on this topic.

For example, studies showed that hotel managers should take into account green training as a part of GHRM practices since it has a positive influence on employees' knowledge and skills and consequently on environmental behavior (Pham, Tučková, & Chiappetta Jabbour, 2019).

Chaudhary (2020) confirms that GHRM positively influences task-related and voluntary eco-behavior, while organizational identification occurs as a mediator in this relationship.

Usman et al. (2023) confirmed the importance of green training for both work and non-work-related eco-friendly behavior of workers in manufacturing and service sectors, while Gill et al. (2021) proved that green GHRM directly influences education employees' eco-friendly behavior.

Conclusion

- Green training and skills developed are crucial for implementing environmental management systems and educational initiatives aimed at sustainable development in the hotel industry.
- These results can serve the hospitality industry as an indicator of how to increase employees' eco-friendly behavior and give an answer that implementation of GHRM practices such as training can be helpful in the process of hotel employees' upskilling.
- **The theoretical implications** of the paper are increased awareness of green training and its effect on employees' green skills and aftermath on eco-friendly behavior and broadened the literature body on factors of employees' behavior.
- **The practical implications** of the paper depend on the level of competition in an industry such as hospitality. The pressure on the implementation of GHRM practices and the upskilling of employees for eco-friendly behavior can be detrimental to both environmental and financial performances in the hotel industry.
- This study contributes to the generalizability of the obtained results since it encompasses respondents from four countries.
- On the other hand, limitations of the study are seen in the number of GHRM practices analyzed and the representativeness of the research sample.



Thank you for
the attention!

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