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Sustainable Tourism Performance Through Green Talent Management: The Mediating Power of Green Entrepreneurship and Climate

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Abstract: This study investigates how green talent management influences green performance, green entrepreneurship, and the green organizational climate. Additionally, it analyzes the impact of green entrepreneurship and green organizational climate on green performance. The research also delves into the mediating roles of green entrepreneurship and green organizational climate within the framework of dynamic capability theory in the tourism and hospitality industries. Data were gathered from employees working in travel agencies and tour operators in Saudi Arabia, with a PLS-SEM analysis conducted on 788 valid responses. The results revealed that green talent management has a positive impact on green performance, green entrepreneurship, and the green organizational climate. Additionally, the study found that both green entrepreneurship and a green organizational climate positively influence green performance. Importantly, the findings underscored the partial mediating roles of green entrepreneurship and green organizational climate in the link between green talent management and green performance. This study enriches the literature by clarifying the mechanisms through which green talent management can be utilized to enhance green performance. Theoretically, the findings expand on dynamic capability theory by emphasizing the importance of green-focused human and organizational resources as dynamic capabilities that enable environmental adaptation and sustainable competitive advantage. Practically, these insights provide actionable implications for tourism and hospitality organizations seeking to improve sustainability practices through green talent management, green entrepreneurship, and a green organizational climate, thereby reinforcing the role of dynamic capabilities in achieving sustained green performance.

Keywords: green talent management; green performance; green entrepreneurship; green organizational climate; travel agency; tour operator

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1. Introduction

Green talent management (GTM) has become a pivotal strategy in tourism and hospitality organizations, highlighting the increasing focus on sustainability and environmental responsibility within the sector [1]. GTM entails incorporating eco-friendly practices into employee recruitment, development, and retention processes, with the goal of cultivating a workforce that is both skilled and dedicated to sustainable practices [2]. This approach is crucial as it enables organizations to cater to the rising demand from eco-conscious consumers, bolsters corporate reputation, and supports long-term sustainability objectives [3]. Furthermore, by emphasizing green skills and knowledge, organizations can drive innovation, enhance operational efficiency, reduce waste, and lower their carbon footprint. GTM also fosters employee engagement and satisfaction, as workers increasingly prefer employers whose environmental values align with their own [4,5].

GTM entails recruiting, training, and retaining employees who possess green skills and are committed to environmental sustainability, thereby directly boosting an organization's

green performance (GP) [6]. When employees are knowledgeable about sustainability practices and motivated to implement them, they contribute to more efficient resource use, waste reduction, and energy savings, which are essential indicators of GP [7]. Moreover, GTM promotes a culture of ongoing improvement and innovation in environmental practices by encouraging employees to develop and embrace new sustainable technologies and methods. This alignment between workforce capabilities and organizational sustainability goals enhances operational efficiency and reinforces the organization's reputation as a leader in environmental stewardship [2,8].

GTM is essential for promoting green entrepreneurship (GE) and creating a green organizational climate (GOC) [9,10]. By integrating environmental values and sustainable practices into their HR processes, organizations can cultivate a workforce that is both environmentally aware and innovative in generating eco-friendly solutions [11]. This alignment fosters employee engagement in GE, leading to the development of new sustainable products, services, and business models that enhance the organization's GP [12]. Furthermore, GTM plays a vital role in cultivating a GOC by integrating sustainability into the company's culture, policies, and everyday practices [13]. In such settings, employees are more apt to engage in collaborative green initiatives, exchange sustainable practices, and align with the organization's environmental objectives. This all-encompassing strategy not only advances the company's sustainability efforts but also strengthens its market reputation and competitive position [14].

The incorporation of GE and a GOC markedly improves GP in businesses [15,16]. GE fuels innovation by promoting the creation of eco-friendly products and processes, which helps mitigate environmental impacts and advance sustainability [17]. Simultaneously, a GOC fosters an environment where employees are inspired to adopt sustainable practices and work together on green initiatives. This unified dedication to sustainability enhances resource efficiency, minimizes waste, and improves GP. The combined effect of these factors generates a synergy that not only supports but also amplifies the benefits of sustainable business practices, resulting in enhanced GP [5,18,19].

The Dynamic Capabilities Theory offers a valuable perspective for examining the relationship between GTM, GE, GOC, and GP in tourism and hospitality sectors. DCT posits that an organization's capacity to adapt, integrate, and reconfigure both internal and external competencies is essential for maintaining a competitive edge [20]. GTM can be seen as a dynamic capability that allows organizations to adapt to and address the shifting landscape of sustainability. This green talent base, in turn, promotes GE by empowering employees to discover and pursue new eco-friendly business opportunities [21,22]. A supportive GOC, defined by shared values, norms, and practices focused on environmental sustainability, serves as a mediating factor that further encourages and supports green entrepreneurial efforts. When GE efforts are effectively embedded into an organization's operations, they lead to measurable enhancements in GP, including reduced emissions, improved resource efficiency, and the development of innovative sustainable solutions [12,23]. This, in turn, strengthens the GOC, establishing a positive feedback loop that promotes ongoing green advancement and boosts the organization's competitive advantage in the tourism and hospitality industries [24,25]. By capitalizing on the synergies among these interconnected elements, organizations can leverage their dynamic capabilities to attain exceptional environmental and financial results.

The tourism and hospitality industry encounters substantial sustainability challenges, creating an urgent need for organizations to implement green management practices to tackle environmental issues [19,26]. Further, existing research has investigated the individual relationships between GTM, GE, GOC, and GP. Previous research on GTM, GE, and GOC remains insufficient in the tourism and hospitality sectors due to limited exploration of these concepts within an industry context that has a significant environmental footprint and unique operational demands. While GTM, GE, and GOC have been studied in other sectors, tourism and hospitality present distinct challenges, such as high employee turnover, diverse customer interactions, and the intensive use of resources, which im-

pact the implementation and effectiveness of sustainable practices. Moreover, existing research often overlooks the ways in which these green management strategies interact to enhance environmental outcomes specific to tourism and hospitality. There is a need for industry-specific insights into how GTM can foster green entrepreneurship and build a green organizational climate, both of which are essential for reducing environmental impact and aligning with the increasing demand for sustainable tourism. Without a tailored examination of these green strategies in this sector, tourism and hospitality businesses lack clear, actionable frameworks to effectively leverage GTM, GE, and GOC in driving green performance (e.g., [2,15,23,27]). So, there remains a notable gap in studies examining the intricate interactions and synergies among these factors within the tourism and hospitality sector.

The current literature mainly addresses the direct connections between GTM and GP (e.g., [9,28]) or examines the individual mediating roles of GE and GOC. However, there is a gap in understanding how these elements interact and influence one another. Empirical evidence on the mediating mechanisms that link green talent management with GP in the tourism and hospitality sector is still limited. Moreover, the tourism and hospitality industry faces distinct sustainability challenges and opportunities that might necessitate a specialized approach to understanding the dynamic capabilities and organizational processes essential for achieving GP [29]. Theoretical frameworks and models developed in other industry contexts may not fully address the specific nuances and complexities of the tourism and hospitality sector. In light of this, this study seeks to answer the following main question: Do GE and GOC play a mediating role in the relationship between GTM and GP in tourism and hospitality organizations? The primary aim of the study is to determine if GE and GOC mediate the relationship between GTM and GP in tourism and hospitality organizations. Specifically, the study seeks to explore how GTM influences GP, GE, and GOC; assess the impact of GE and GOC on GP; and investigate the mediating roles of GE and GOC in the connection between GTM and GP.

This research makes valuable contributions by clarifying how GE and GOC mediate the link between GTM and GP in Saudi Arabia's tourism and hospitality industries. By showing that GTM can indirectly enhance GP through fostering GE and a supportive GOC, this study provides practical insights for advancing sustainable practices. For stakeholders, the findings highlight the importance of investing in green talent strategies and promoting a culture that supports eco-innovation and green entrepreneurship. Tourism and hospitality businesses stand to benefit by implementing GTM practices that not only enhance workforce skills and engagement but also boost both environmental and operational performance. Ultimately, this study equips businesses with actionable strategies to strengthen their competitive edge, align with national sustainability objectives, and better meet the rising demand for environmentally responsible travel experiences.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Dynamic Capabilities Theory

Dynamic Capabilities Theory (DCT) within the context of tourism and hospitality significantly enhances our understanding of how firms in this industry adapt to rapidly changing market demands, technological advancements, and environmental pressures [30,31]. DCT emphasizes an organization's ability to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal and external competencies to address shifting environments—an essential capability in the tourism and hospitality sector, where customer preferences and sustainability requirements evolve constantly [32,33]. Applying DCT in this context allows for a focused examination of how tourism and hospitality firms develop unique capabilities, such as agile talent management, eco-innovation, and responsive service offerings, to maintain competitiveness. For instance, in response to increasing demand for sustainable tourism, firms could leverage DCT to adapt their workforce strategies, enhance green organizational climates, and integrate eco-friendly technologies, thereby aligning themselves with consumer values and regulatory standards [10,34,35]. DCT asserts that organizations secure a competitive edge

by adeptly integrating, developing, and reshaping both internal and external resources to adapt to swiftly evolving conditions [36]. In the tourism and hospitality industry, where sustainability increasingly defines competitive success [37], DCT provides an insightful perspective for investigating how GTM enhances GP through intermediary factors like GE and a GOC. Also, GTM focuses on recruiting, cultivating, and retaining employees with essential green skills and expertise [9,38]. In line with DCT, the capacity to embed these skills into the organization's operational framework is vital. GTM guarantees that employees are not only knowledgeable about sustainable practices but also proficient in applying them, thereby boosting the organization's adaptability to environmental challenges [4,39].

DCT highlights the need for organizations to continuously develop and adjust their capabilities to sustain a competitive advantage. In this context, GTM is crucial, as it involves the ongoing enhancement of employees' skills to align with emerging sustainability standards and practices. This continuous skill development helps the organization stay agile and responsive to evolving environmental challenges and opportunities [1,40]. Additionally, GE—focused on recognizing and capitalizing on opportunities for eco-friendly innovations—aligns with DCT's emphasis on the reconfiguration and renewal of capabilities. Employees equipped with green talent are more inclined to spearhead and advance innovative projects that enhance sustainability. In this way, they serve as intermediaries that transform GTM into measurable improvements in GP [22,41]. By leveraging GE, tourism and hospitality businesses can enhance resource utilization and boost operational efficiency. This entrepreneurial strategy, bolstered by a workforce skilled in green practices, enables the creation of innovative products, services, and processes that minimize environmental impact, thereby improving overall GP [34].

Furthermore, a GOC cultivates a collective dedication to environmental objectives and values, creating an environment where sustainable practices become standard [16]. DCT underscores the significance of cultural and organizational routines in maintaining a competitive edge. By integrating sustainability into the corporate culture, GTM ensures that green practices are uniformly adopted throughout the organization [11,42]. A conducive GOC fosters collaboration and the ongoing enhancement of sustainability practices. This climate serves as a mediator by establishing an environment that motivates employees to innovate and execute green initiatives, thereby improving the organization's overall GP [43,44].

2.2. Green Talent Management (GTM)

GTM is a strategic framework that organizations use to attract, develop, and retain employees who are both highly skilled and dedicated to environmental sustainability. Unlike traditional talent management, GTM embeds green values and practices throughout the entire employee journey—from recruitment and training to performance evaluation and engagement. The goal of GTM is to cultivate a workforce that actively champions sustainability initiatives, such as reducing carbon emissions, increasing resource efficiency, and promoting eco-friendly behaviors within the company [45,46]. By integrating sustainability into job roles and expectations, GTM aims to build a culture where employees are motivated to advance environmental goals, develop innovative sustainable solutions, and support the organization's green mission [9]. In sectors like tourism and hospitality, where the environmental impact is considerable, GTM enables companies to align their staff with green principles, helping them meet regulatory standards, cater to environmentally conscious consumers, and ultimately improve green performance [47].

2.3. Green Performance (GP)

GP refers to an organization's ability to effectively meet sustainability and environmental objectives, which includes efforts to reduce negative ecological impacts and encourage eco-friendly practices. In the tourism and hospitality sector, GP is evaluated by examining how well a business manages its resources, minimizes waste, conserves energy, and reduces emissions. It also considers the successful implementation of sustainable initiatives, such as

recycling programs, sustainable sourcing, and environmentally friendly guest services [47]. A high level of GP signifies a proactive approach to environmental stewardship, aligning not only with regulatory requirements but also with the growing expectations of environmentally aware consumers. Furthermore, beyond mere compliance, GP showcases an organization's commitment to sustainable development, often resulting in cost savings, improved brand reputation, and enhanced competitive advantage [48,49]. Therefore, GP serves as both a strategic goal and a key indicator of the long-term viability and social responsibility of businesses in the tourism and hospitality industry [47].

2.4. Green Entrepreneurship (GE)

GE is the practice of establishing and managing businesses that prioritize environmental sustainability as a fundamental aspect of their mission and operations. Green entrepreneurs aim to tackle ecological issues by innovating products, services, or processes that lessen environmental impact, enhance resource efficiency, and foster sustainable development [50,51]. Within the tourism and hospitality sector, GE often manifests through the creation of eco-friendly travel experiences, sustainable accommodations, renewable energy solutions, waste reduction strategies, and community-oriented initiatives that promote environmental stewardship. These businesses extend beyond mere profit generation by integrating environmental values into their business models, thus playing a crucial role in catalyzing industry-wide shifts toward more sustainable practices. GE not only facilitates positive ecological advancements but also engages a growing demographic of environmentally conscious consumers, thereby generating value that encompasses both financial returns and social impact [52].

2.5. Green Organizational Climate (GOC)

GOC refers to the shared attitudes, values, and behaviors within an organization that emphasize and support environmental sustainability. This climate develops when an organization embeds green principles—such as resource conservation, waste reduction, energy efficiency, and eco-friendly practices—into its culture, policies, and everyday operations [16,53]. In a GOC, employees at all levels are motivated to engage in sustainable practices, often inspired by leadership's commitment to environmental responsibility, observable eco-friendly actions, and rewards for sustainable behavior [54,55]. In the tourism and hospitality sector, cultivating a GOC can have significant effects, influencing everything from guest interactions to operational procedures, ultimately enhancing the organization's green performance. A robust GOC aligns employees around common ecological objectives, fosters a united and proactive workforce, and enables businesses to respond effectively to the increasing demand for sustainable practices from both consumers and regulatory agencies [11,56].

2.6. The Effect of Green Talent Management on Green Performance

GTM involves a strategic approach to attracting, developing, and retaining employees with expertise in environmental sustainability. The goal is to create a workforce capable of advancing and supporting the organization's sustainability objectives [9]. The impact of GTM on GP, which includes an organization's environmental results, is complex and substantial [27]. It also encompasses the recruitment and selection of employees who possess robust environmental knowledge, skills, and a dedication to sustainability. By attracting and hiring individuals with a green mindset, organizations can develop a talent pool capable of recognizing, creating, and executing eco-friendly initiatives. The green expertise and environmental focus of employees can significantly enhance the organization's GP, including reductions in resource consumption, waste, and emissions [6,8].

Likewise, GTM involves offering specialized training and development initiatives designed to furnish employees with the knowledge, skills, and mindset required for driving green transformation. These programs may address subjects like environmental regulations, sustainable practices, green innovation, and change management, equipping employees

to actively engage with and advocate for green initiatives [57]. By investing in ongoing education and skill enhancement, organizations bolster employees' green competencies, empowering them to discover and apply more effective strategies to enhance the organization's GP [58]. Further, GTM includes strategies aimed at motivating and involving employees in the organization's sustainability initiatives. This might involve providing green-oriented incentives, recognition programs, and career advancement opportunities, which can boost employee morale, dedication, and active participation in green efforts [59,60]. Employees who are highly motivated and engaged in green practices are more inclined to exceed their job duties, proposing and implementing innovative green solutions that enhance the organization's GP [61].

Successful GTM strategies emphasize the importance of retaining and cultivating the organization's pool of environmentally focused talent [62]. By fostering an encouraging and gratifying work environment for employees dedicated to sustainability, organizations can reduce turnover and maintain a steady stream of green expertise and insights. This supportive atmosphere promotes the exchange of best practices, the spread of green knowledge, and the ongoing advancement of sustainable processes, which collectively drive long-term improvements in GP [18,63]. So, the following hypothesis is developed:

H1. *GTM positively affects green performance.*

2.7. The Effect of Green Talent Management on Green Entrepreneurship

GE entails developing and applying novel, environmentally friendly business practices, products, and services [64]. GTM focuses on attracting, cultivating, and retaining employees who possess a deep commitment to environmental sustainability. By recruiting and fostering individuals who are enthusiastic about eco-friendly practices, organizations can build a team that is inherently motivated to seek out and develop green business opportunities [18,65]. This environmental focus encourages employees to innovate and take entrepreneurial actions, leading to the creation of cutting-edge green products, services, or processes that enhance GP [66]. It also involves offering specialized training and development programs aimed at enhancing employees' green knowledge and skills. This investment in cultivating the organization's environmental expertise equips employees with the technical, managerial, and entrepreneurial abilities needed to identify, assess, and seize new eco-friendly business opportunities. With a strong foundation in green-specific knowledge and skills, employees are more inclined to participate in green entrepreneurial ventures, such as suggesting and executing innovative environmental solutions within the organization [67].

Innovative GTM practices emphasize creating a dynamic workplace where employees have the autonomy and empowerment to engage in sustainable initiatives. Allowing team members to independently explore and lead green projects fosters a culture rich in innovation and creative problem-solving, crucial for the success of GE [2,68]. This environment of supported risk-taking encourages employees to go beyond their usual duties to discover and implement new sustainable business practices, thereby driving the organization's GP forward [69]. Further, GTM plays a pivotal role in fostering environmental consciousness among employees, thereby enhancing their ability to spot green business opportunities. By strategically recruiting and training individuals with a profound commitment to environmental stewardship, organizations can develop a workforce skilled in identifying market gaps, unmet consumer demands, and opportunities for eco-friendly innovations. This keen sense of opportunity recognition is instrumental in generating a wealth of green entrepreneurial ideas and initiatives, enriching the organization's portfolio of sustainable projects [70,71]. Hence, the following hypothesis is adopted:

H2. *GTM positively affects green entrepreneurship.*

2.8. The Effect of Green Entrepreneurship on Green Performance

GE frequently results in the development and integration of novel technologies aimed at minimizing environmental damage. For example, advancements like renewable energy systems, energy-efficient devices, and eco-friendly materials enhance environmental sustainability by reducing carbon emissions and conserving resources [72,73].

GE fosters the creation of eco-friendly products, including biodegradable packaging, low-impact production techniques, and items crafted from recycled materials. These sustainable innovations can markedly improve GP by lessening the ecological impact throughout the product's lifecycle [74]. In addition to product innovation, green entrepreneurs also advance services like environmentally conscious transportation options, green consulting, and sustainable tourism practices. These services enhance GP by fostering sustainability across different sectors and practices [75].

GE cultivates a corporate culture focused on environmental stewardship. This culture motivates employees to embrace sustainable practices and fosters a more dedicated and engaged workforce, thereby improving GP [76,77]. Involving employees in green initiatives and motivating their involvement in sustainability efforts can result in more creative solutions and enhanced GP. For example, sustainability programs led by employees or green teams can introduce effective practices and technologies [5,78]. GE frequently entails embedding sustainability objectives into the core business strategy. By incorporating environmental goals into strategic planning, entrepreneurs ensure that all business operations and decisions are aligned with GP targets. This alignment improves the organization's capacity to achieve its GP goals effectively [17,79]. Therefore, the following hypothesis is suggested:

H3. *Green entrepreneurship positively affects green performance.*

2.9. Effect of Green Talent Management on Green Organizational Climate

GOC refers to the shared perceptions and beliefs among employees regarding the organization's environmental orientation, policies, and practices. It reflects the collective sense of environmental awareness, commitment, and behavioral norms within the organization [16]. GTM practices focused on attracting and developing environmentally knowledgeable employees significantly shape the organization's green climate. By recruiting and training employees with expertise in sustainability, these practices cultivate an environment supportive of green initiatives and behaviors [9,80]. This GOC fosters shared attitudes and behaviors towards sustainability goals among employees and leaders, integrating sustainability into daily operations and decision-making processes [61].

GTM is pivotal in promoting sustainable behaviors across organizations [70]. By embedding sustainability into recruitment, training, and performance evaluations, organizations underscore their commitment to environmental responsibility. This approach motivates employees to embrace and advocate for sustainable practices, leading to enhanced resource efficiency and reduced waste [81]. Furthermore, GTM shapes the organizational climate by emphasizing sustainability as a core value. This fosters employee engagement in proactive environmental initiatives, cultivating a culture of shared responsibility and accountability towards environmental goals [82]. By influencing the organizational climate, GTM ensures that sustainability becomes integral to strategic decision-making, aligning organizational objectives with environmental priorities. This integration not only drives immediate environmental improvements but also establishes a robust foundation for long-term sustainability and resilience against environmental challenges [28,80]. So, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H4. *GTM positively affects green organizational climate.*

2.10. The Effect of Green Organizational Climate on Green Performance

A strong GOC fosters shared commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainability among employees, positively influencing the organization's GP. When employees perceive the organization's dedication to sustainability, they are motivated to engage in green behaviors and support environmental initiatives. This collective effort often results in measurable enhancements to the organization's environmental impact and sustainable outcomes [16,83]. Moreover, a robust GOC promotes organizational learning and adaptation. Employees, inspired by the organization's sustainability commitment, participate in knowledge sharing, experimentation, and the development of new green competencies. These activities enable organizations to continuously refine and implement more effective green strategies, technologies, and practices, thereby driving ongoing improvements in GP [57].

A GOC significantly enhances GP, especially when it aligns closely with an organization's strategic priorities and goals for environmental sustainability. When sustainability is integral to the organization's mission and vision, the GOC effectively translates into tangible improvements in environmental outcomes [16,44]. Such organizations provide robust support and resources for continuous enhancements in sustainability practices, including investments in green technologies, comprehensive training on sustainable methods, and fostering interdepartmental collaboration to achieve environmental targets [57]. This supportive environment encourages ongoing learning and innovation in sustainability, leading to increased operational efficiency, cost savings through resource conservation, and a bolstered reputation as a responsible entity. By integrating sustainability into strategic planning and decision-making processes, these organizations achieve alignment between environmental objectives and broader organizational goals, promoting synergies that drive long-term sustainability and competitive advantage in the tourism and hospitality industry [84]. Hence, the following hypothesis is highlighted:

H5. *Green organizational climate positively affects green performance.*

2.11. The Mediating Role of Green Entrepreneurship in the Link Between Green Talent Management and Green Performance

GTM lays the groundwork for green entrepreneurial endeavors by providing employees with essential knowledge, skills, and motivation to explore and seize eco-friendly business opportunities [28]. As employees participate in green entrepreneurial activities, such as creating innovative green products, services, or processes, they directly enhance the organization's GP by minimizing environmental impact and boosting sustainability [85]. GTM can cultivate an environment of innovation and creativity, motivating employees to generate and pursue green business ideas [70]. Also, GTM provides employees with the expertise to maximize resource efficiency, including energy, water, and materials, within organizational operations. The green entrepreneurial initiatives driven by this skilled workforce can lead to the adoption of resource-efficient practices and technologies, thereby improving GP [8,86].

In addition, GTM equips employees with the resources, support, and autonomy needed for green ideation and experimentation. This support can include establishing dedicated innovation labs, providing funding for green projects, and offering mentorship and coaching to help employees develop their green ideas into actionable initiatives [18,87]. By empowering employees to explore and test their green concepts, organizations can cultivate a culture of innovation and risk-taking, which can lead to the adoption of green practices that improve the organization's GP [72]. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H6. *Green entrepreneurship mediates the link between GTM and green performance.*

2.12. The Mediating Role of Green Organizational Climate in the Link Between Green Talent Management and Green Performance

GTM positively impacts organizational GP by cultivating a workforce that is skilled and motivated in environmentally sustainable practices. Employees with green competencies and a commitment to sustainability contribute significantly to achieving organizational environmental goals. Additionally, GTM fosters a GOC characterized by shared environmental responsibility and sustainable practices. This climate enhances employee engagement, collaboration, and the adoption of green behaviors, thereby driving improved GP across the organization [9,88]. A positive GOC strengthens GTM by fostering a culture that values sustainability and supports green initiatives. This environment enhances the attraction, development, and retention of environmentally conscious and skilled employees. When organizational climate aligns with talent management practices, it ensures that employees are motivated to contribute effectively to GP goals [11,18]. Employees in supportive green climates are more likely to adopt eco-friendly practices, conserve resources, and innovate for better environmental outcomes, thereby translating talent management strategies into measurable sustainability achievements [9,22].

GTM practices, like recruiting, training, and rewarding employees for sustainability efforts, play a crucial role in shaping a positive green organizational climate. This climate serves as a vehicle for instilling sustainability values and practices across the organization. Employees who undergo GTM are more inclined to align their behaviors with environmental goals, especially in environments that support and reinforce these values [80,89,90]. A positive GOC supports adaptability and resilience, enabling employees to embrace change and innovate solutions to sustainability challenges. This adaptability strengthens the organization's capacity to navigate environmental regulations, meet market demands for sustainability, and address unforeseen environmental issues effectively [11,16]. Consequently, the following hypothesis is developed:

H7. *Green organizational climate mediates the link between GTM and green performance.*

Figure 1 indicates the study model.

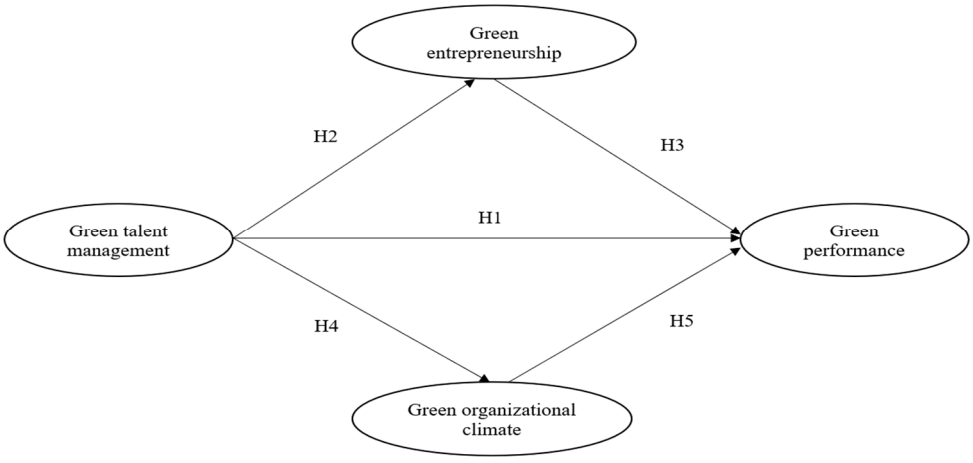

Figure 1. The study model.

3. Methods

3.1. Sampling and Data Collection

The study model was evaluated using data collected from employees at travel agencies and tour operators in Saudi Arabia from May 2023 to February 2024. This study adopted judgment sampling to ensure the sample closely aligned with its focus on green talent management and sustainability efforts within Saudi Arabia's tourism and hospitality industry. By applying clear inclusion and exclusion criteria, we specifically selected participants employed by Saudi travel agencies or tour operators who were actively engaged in or had substantial

knowledge of their organization's green practices. This approach ensured the relevance of participant responses to the study's objectives. Agencies with fewer than five employees, as well as those based outside Saudi Arabia, were excluded, allowing the study to concentrate on industry-specific dynamics unique to the Saudi context. This sampling approach provided a relevant, focused dataset that strengthened the study's alignment with its research goals. The authors of [91] suggest that sample sizes ranging from 200 to 300 respondents provide a sufficient margin of error and do not reach the point of diminishing returns. The researchers of [92] also recommended determining the sample size based on the number of variables being investigated, with a minimum acceptable ratio of 1:10 (item to sample size). Given that this study examined 29 items, the minimum required sample size was 290 participants. The travel agencies and tour operators involved in the study were assured that the questionnaire would be entirely anonymous and confidential. They were also informed that the data would be aggregated, with results reflecting collective trends rather than individual responses. Approximately 1187 paper questionnaires were distributed across 691 travel agencies and tour operators by three assistants hired for this task. The assistants visited various travel agencies and tour operators across regions in Saudi Arabia in person, promoting participation and supporting the data collection process. Out of these, 788 valid responses were received, resulting in a response rate of 66.4%.

3.2. Measures and Instrument Development

The questionnaire, designed to gather data from the study sample, was divided into five sections. The first section collected information on respondents' demographics, including gender, age, educational background, and years of experience. The remaining four sections evaluated the study's key variables: green talent management, green performance, green entrepreneurship, and green organizational climate (Appendix A). These variables were measured using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree; 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree). Green talent management (GTM) was evaluated using a 14-item scale developed by [2]. For example, one item was as follows: "My organisation offers me a considerable degree of autonomy when carrying out green related tasks". Further, green performance (GP) was measured using a 5-item scale adapted from [93]. For example, item was as follows: "The business activities significantly reduced overall costs". Green entrepreneurship (GE) was measured using a 5-item scale developed by [94]. For example, one item was as follows: "Our company has an attitude of adventure and proactiveness to green projects when faced with uncertainty". Finally, green organizational climate (GOC) was assessed using a 5-item scale from [95]. For example, one item was as follows: "Believes it is important to protect the environment".

3.3. Common Method Biases

Before advancing to further statistical analyses, a preliminary evaluation was conducted to assess the potential presence of Common Method Variance (CMV). CMV is a measurement issue that can arise when data on multiple variables are collected simultaneously, particularly through cross-sectional surveys, and may lead to artificially inflated or deflated correlations between constructs. This is especially important in studies where constructs are self-reported in a single survey session, as it increases the risk that any shared variance among variables could be attributed to the method of data collection rather than to genuine relationships among the constructs themselves [32,33]. To address this, the study employed two recognized techniques to detect CMV: the Harman single-factor test and principal component analysis (PCA). The Harman single-factor test involves conducting an unrotated factor analysis on all measurement items to determine if a single factor emerges or if one factor accounts for the majority of the covariance among items. PCA was similarly used to analyze the underlying factor structure and verify the distribution of variance across multiple factors rather than a single dominant one. The results from both the Harman test and PCA showed that no single factor accounted for more than 50% of the total variance, with variance instead distributed across several factors, indicating

that CMV is not a primary concern for this study. These findings suggest that the observed relationships between variables are less likely to be influenced by the method of data collection, supporting the validity of the subsequent statistical analyses.

3.4. Data Analysis

The hypotheses were examined using the partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) approach with WarpPLS software version 7.0 [96]. PLS-SEM is widely utilized in various fields, including tourism research [97]. The analysis proceeded in three stages: first, the "individual measurement model" was assessed for each construct; second, the "overall measurement model" was evaluated; and finally, the hypotheses and structural model were tested.

4. Results

4.1. Participants' Profiles

The results in Table 1 show that more than half of the sample were males (61.8%), while females represented 35.2% of the total sample. As for age, 37.7% of the respondents were between 40 and less than 50 years old, 36.4% between 30 and less than 40 years old, 17% were less than 30 years old, and 9.9% were 50 years old or more. More than two-thirds of the sample had a bachelor's degree (78.4%). As for years of experience, 29.3% of the respondents had 15 years of experience or more, 25.1% had 5 to less than 10 years of experience, 23.1% had 10 to less than 15 years of experience, and finally 22.5% had less than 5 years of experience.

Table 1. Participants' profiles.

Profile		Freq.	%
Gender	Male	487	61.8%
	Female	301	38.2%
Age	Less than 30 years	134	17%
	30: less than 40 years	287	36.4%
	40: less than 50 years	289	36.7%
	50 years and above	78	9.9%
Educational level	Less than bachelor	106	13.5%
	Bachelor	618	78.4%
	Postgraduate	64	8.1%
Experience	Less than 5 years	177	22.5%
	5: less than 10 years	198	25.1%
	10: less than 15 years	182	23.1%
	15 years and above	231	29.3%
Total		788	100%

4.2. Measurement Model

A four-factor model, including GTM, GP, GE, and GOC, was evaluated using confirmatory factor analysis with WarpPLS software version 7.0. The model fit was assessed based on the ten fit indices recommended by [96] (APC-P < 0.05; ARS-P < 0.05; AARS-P < 0.05; AVIF—acceptable if $\leq$5, ideally $\leq$ 3.3; AFVIF—acceptable if $\leq$5, ideally $\leq$ 3.3; GoF—small $\geq$ 0.1, medium $\geq$ 0.25, large $\geq$ 0.36; SPR—acceptable if $\geq$0.7, ideally = 1; RSCR—acceptable if $\geq$0.9, ideally = 1; SSR—acceptable if $\geq$0.7; and NLBCDR—acceptable if $\geq$0.7). The proposed four-factor model demonstrated a satisfactory fit to the data (APC = 0.317, $p < 0.001$; ARS = 0.589, $p < 0.001$; AARS = 0.587, $p < 0.001$; AVIF = 4.671; AFVIF = 2.116; GoF = 0.452; SPR = 1.000; RSCR = 1.000; SSR = 1.000; and NLBCDR = 1.000).

The reliability analysis results, detailed in Table 2, indicated that the composite reliability (CR) values for all research constructs exceeded the minimum acceptable threshold (greater than 0.70). Additionally, each item loading was above 0.60. Additionally, the average variance extracted (AVE) values for GTM, GP, GE, and GOC all exceeded 0.50, demonstrating convergent validity [92]. Moreover, variance inflation factors (VIFs) were calculated for each latent variable; a VIF value of $\leq$3.3 indicates that the model is free from common method bias [96].

Table 2. Measurement model.

Constructs	Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE	VIFs
Green talent management (GTM)		0.809	0.966	0.676	2.769
GTM1	0.809				
GTM2	0.866				
GTM3	0.811				
GTM4	0.804				
GTM5	0.853				
GTM6	0.834				
GTM7	0.806				
GTM8	0.799				
GTM9	0.767				
GTM10	0.817				
GTM11	0.826				
GTM12	0.805				
GTM13	0.884				
GTM14	0.829				
Green performance (GP)		0.789	0.917	0.690	2.554
GP1	0.783				
GP2	0.841				
GP3	0.822				
GP4	0.887				
GP5	0.819				
Green entrepreneurship (GE)		0.827	0.929	0.724	3.011
GE1	0.833				
GE2	0.819				
GE3	0.893				
GE4	0.821				
GE5	0.888				
Green organizational climate (GOC)		0.803	0.919	0.695	2.563
GOC1	0.834				
GOC2	0.871				
GOC3	0.861				
GOC4	0.798				
GOC5	0.803				

Discriminant validity for the study model was confirmed through multiple rigorous checks to ensure that each latent variable in the model was distinct from the others. First, the correlations between latent variables were examined and found to be well below one, indicating that the constructs were sufficiently separate. Additionally, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each variable exceeded the squared correlations with other variables,

fulfilling the Fornell–Larcker criterion as suggested by [33]. This criterion is essential as it demonstrates that each construct shares more variance with its own indicators than with other constructs, thereby supporting discriminant validity (refer to Table 3 for specific AVE values and correlations). To further substantiate discriminant validity, the Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) was calculated, which is particularly useful in verifying the adequacy of construct validity in complex models with closely related variables. HTMT values for each construct pair were below the conservative threshold of 0.85, as recommended by [92], indicating that discriminant validity was sufficiently established. This additional HTMT analysis strengthens the validity assessment by providing an alternative measure that mitigates potential biases in the correlation-based approach, thus enhancing confidence in the distinctiveness of the model's constructs (see Table 4 for detailed HTMT values).

Table 3. Fornell–Larcker criterion.

	GTM	GP	GE	GOC
GTM	0.822			
GP	0.601	0.831		
GE	0.447	0.711	0.851	
GOC	0.628	0.556	0.521	0.833

Table 4. HTMT for validity.

	GTM	GP	GE	GOC
GTM				
GP	0.454			
GE	0.528	0.602		
GOC	0.491	0.444	0.579	

4.3. Structure Model

As shown in Table 5 and Figure 2, all hypotheses were confirmed. The findings revealed that GTM has a significant and positive effect on GP ($\beta = 0.532$, $p < 0.001$), validating H1. Additionally, GTM significantly and positively influences GE ($\beta = 0.401$, $p < 0.001$), confirming H2. The results also demonstrated a significant and positive relationship between GE and GP ($\beta = 0.356$, $p < 0.001$), thus confirming H3. Furthermore, GTM was found to significantly and positively impact GOC ($\beta = 0.380$, $p < 0.001$), and GOC, in turn, significantly and positively affects GP ($\beta = 0.413$, $p < 0.001$), thereby confirming H4 and H5. The mediating roles were analyzed using the bootstrapping procedure. The analysis confirmed the mediating roles of GE and GOC in the relationship between GTM and GP. Specifically, GE was found to partially mediate the link between GTM and GP ($\beta = 0.143$, $p < 0.001$), while GOC also mediated this relationship ($\beta = 0.157$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, H6 and H7 were both confirmed.

Table 5. Direct and indirect effects.

Hypotheses	Path	β	s.e	CR	p-Value	Results
H1	GTM→GP	0.532	0.066	8.060	0.000	Confirmed
H2	GTM→GE	0.401	0.071	5.647	0.000	Confirmed
H3	GE→GP	0.356	0.055	6.472	0.000	Confirmed
H4	GTM→GOC	0.380	0.078	4.871	0.000	Confirmed
H5	GOC→GP	0.413	0.061	6.770	0.000	Confirmed

Table 5. *Cont.*

Hypotheses	Path	*β*	s.e	CR	*p*-Value	Results
Mediating effect						
H6	GTM→GE→GP	0.143	0.039	3.667	0.000	Confirmed
H7	GTM→GOC→GP	0.157	0.044	3.568	0.000	Confirmed

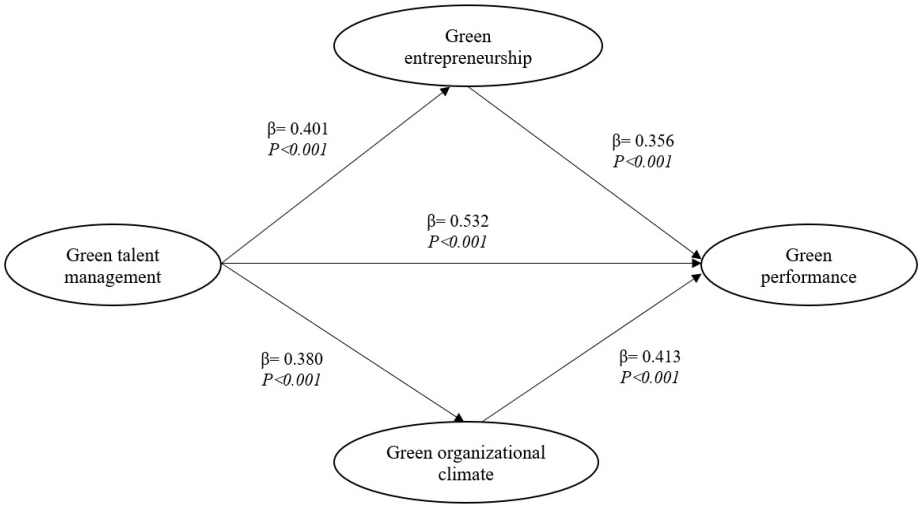

Figure 2. The final model of the study.

5. Discussion

This study aims to examine the effects of GTM on GP, GE, and GOC, along with the influences of GE and GOC on GP and the mediating roles of GE and GOC in the tourism and hospitality industry. While the results indicate a strong, positive impact of GTM on GP in tourism and hospitality organizations (β = 0.532, $p > 0.001$), it is essential to consider alternative explanations and broader contextual influences on these findings. For instance, Ref. [98] suggests that GTM aligns the workforce with sustainability goals, while [99] argues that GTM's role in attracting and retaining talent with green skills ensures workforce readiness for supporting green initiatives. However, these impacts might be context-dependent, particularly within industries or regions with strong regulatory environments that prioritize sustainability. The influence of GTM may vary in contexts with less emphasis on sustainability, which could affect GP outcomes.

This study also highlights a significant positive effect of GTM on GE in tourism and hospitality organizations (β = 0.401, $p > 0.001$), aligning with [74,100], who propose that GTM fosters an entrepreneurial mindset necessary for sustainability-driven innovations. In this vein, Ref. [67] emphasizes that recruiting and training employees with a focus on sustainability cultivates a culture that supports green innovation, positioning organizations as leaders in environmental initiatives. However, this relationship may differ across sectors and regions; for example, in industries with limited focus on eco-innovation or in markets where green entrepreneurship is underdeveloped, the impact of GTM on GE may be less pronounced.

Similarly, the findings indicate that GE positively influences GP in tourism and hospitality organizations (β = 0.356, $p > 0.001$), which aligns with [41,101], who suggest that GE enhances GP by driving innovation and operational efficiency. However, GE's impact on GP might vary by region or industry, as the degree to which organizations embrace eco-friendly practices can depend on external market demands and regulatory pressures. For example, Ref. [102] emphasize that green entrepreneurship can enhance market positioning and financial metrics; however, these effects could be weaker in markets with lower consumer demand for green products, which could limit the overall impact on GP.

The study further suggests that GTM positively affects GOC in tourism and hospitality organizations ($\beta = 0.380$, $p > 0.001$), as indicated by [5,8,82], who argue that GTM fosters a supportive environment for sustainability by attracting employees committed to green values. This positive relationship assumes that GOC is universally valued; however, the degree to which a green climate impacts GP could vary based on local cultural attitudes towards sustainability. In contexts where environmental priorities are secondary, GOC may not have the same influence on performance, suggesting that GTM's effect on GOC could be more conditional than implied.

In addition, the findings that GOC positively impacts GP in tourism and hospitality organizations ($\beta = 0.413$, $p > 0.001$) align with [16,56], who found that GOC enhances agility and adaptability to environmental changes. While these benefits are significant, the extent of GOC's impact on GP may be influenced by industry-specific factors, such as the availability of green technologies or the organization's capacity to innovate. Refs. [44,103] suggest that GOC fosters learning and innovation, yet this effect may be contextually limited in sectors with restricted access to sustainable technologies or resources.

Finally, GE and GOC's partial mediation of the GTM-GP relationship suggests that while GTM directly influences GP, it also exerts indirect effects through its influence on GE and GOC in tourism and hospitality organizations. This indirect influence raises questions about the consistency of these mediating roles across diverse economic and regulatory landscapes. In regions or sectors with weaker sustainability policies or lower consumer demand for green initiatives, the mediating roles of GE and GOC may be less significant, suggesting that the pathways from GTM to GP might not be as universally applicable as the findings imply. Thus, considering these alternative explanations and context-dependent variations could deepen our understanding of GTM's complex role in promoting green outcomes.

6. Theoretical Implications

This research offers new insights into DCT by demonstrating how GTM affects GP through GE and GOC in tourism and hospitality organizations. It underscores the importance of incorporating sustainability into dynamic capabilities, suggesting that tourism and hospitality organizations need to cultivate skills that extend beyond conventional operational competencies to include environmental sustainability. This approach expands the concept of dynamic capabilities to integrate green competencies, aligning with the theory's emphasis on the evolution of organizational capabilities in response to environmental shifts. The study also illustrates how GE and GOC mediate the connection between GTM and GP. It highlights how tourism and hospitality organizations adapt their internal processes and culture to align with sustainability objectives. This aligns with the DCT, which emphasizes that firms must continuously evolve and refine their capabilities to stay competitive in the face of changing environmental demands.

In a similar vein, GE acts as a conduit for GTM to impact GP, demonstrating how sustainability-focused entrepreneurial activities drive the reconfiguration of organizational capabilities. GE encompasses innovation and proactive strategies for tackling environmental issues, which are crucial for adapting capabilities to improve sustainability and GP. Additionally, GOC mediates the impact of GTM on GP by creating an environment that promotes and strengthens green practices. This mediation shows how a supportive climate enables the adjustment and enhancement of organizational capabilities to prioritize sustainability, effectively illustrating the practical application of DCT in managing GP in tourism and hospitality organizations.

Furthermore, the findings emphasize how GTM fosters the development of dynamic capabilities related to sustainability in tourism and hospitality organizations. By attracting and developing talent with a focus on green practices, tourism and hospitality organizations strengthen their capacity to innovate and adapt to meet GP objectives, thus expanding the DCT to include talent management as a crucial element in capability evolution. Additionally, the study highlights the role of GOC in facilitating the effective use of these green

capabilities. A supportive GOC serves as a key enabler for the successful implementation of sustainability practices, enhancing an tourism and hospitality organization's dynamic ability to adapt and excel in an environmentally conscious way.

7. Practical Implications

This study offers practical guidance for tourism and hospitality organizations seeking to improve their sustainability practices. It highlights the critical role of GTM in enhancing GP. To drive sustainability, these tourism and hospitality organizations should prioritize attracting, developing, and retaining employees with strong environmental knowledge, problem-solving abilities, and a commitment to sustainability. This can be achieved through targeted recruitment strategies, green-focused training and development programs, and incentives and career advancement opportunities for employees with green skills.

Moreover, the mediating role of GOC underscores the need for fostering an environment conducive to environmental initiatives and green innovation. Tourism and hospitality organizations should focus on developing a culture that prioritizes sustainability, encourages collaboration across departments, and supports ongoing learning and knowledge exchange regarding green practices. This involves setting clear sustainability policies and objectives, allocating resources and recognizing efforts for green projects, and empowering employees to actively participate in the organization's green transformation.

Additionally, the study's findings on the mediating role of GE suggest that tourism and hospitality organizations should cultivate a culture focused on green innovation and opportunity-seeking. To support GE, businesses can grant employees the freedom, resources, and incentives to develop and implement novel green ideas. This could include creating specialized green innovation teams, organizing green hackathons or ideation sessions, and offering GE awards or seed funding to encourage and reward sustainable initiatives.

This study's findings emphasize the interconnectedness of GTM, GOC, and GE, underscoring the need for a comprehensive, integrated approach to sustainability. Tourism and hospitality organizations should align and reinforce their GTM practices, organizational culture, and innovation initiatives. This can be achieved by creating a cohesive green strategy, forming cross-functional green teams, and implementing performance management systems that recognize and reward contributions to sustainability throughout the organization.

Lastly, the study highlights the significance of green-related dynamic capabilities in achieving exceptional GP. Tourism and hospitality organizations should invest in cultivating green-focused skills, technologies, and infrastructure to support their sustainability objectives. This may include upgrading facilities to enhance energy efficiency, adopting green supply chain management practices, and integrating smart technologies to monitor and optimize GP.

8. Limitations and Future Research

Like any research, this study has limitations and opportunities for future inquiry. One limitation of this study is its treatment of Green Talent Management (GTM) as a single, unified construct, which may obscure the distinct effects of Green Hard Talent Management (GHTM) and Green Soft Talent Management (GSTM) on sustainable practices. By combining these two dimensions, the study offers a broad perspective but lacks a detailed understanding of how structured, compliance-oriented practices (GHTM) and cultural, behavior-focused practices (GSTM) each contribute to green outcomes. Future studies could apply a bidimensional approach, analyzing GHTM and GSTM separately, to gain deeper insights into how each uniquely supports green talent management and aligns with organizational sustainability objectives.

This study was conducted in Saudi Arabia, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other countries or cultural contexts. Future research could address this limitation by including a diverse range of geographical locations and industry sectors,

spanning both developed and developing economies. To enhance comparability and capture potential cultural, economic, and regulatory influences, future studies could focus on countries (e.g., Egypt, United Arab Emirates, USA) with varying levels of sustainability regulations, organizational practices, and market demands. Additionally, including sectors beyond tourism and hospitality, such as manufacturing, healthcare, and technology, would allow researchers to examine whether the relationships between GTM, GE, GOC, and Green Performance (GP) are consistent across industries with different environmental impacts and operational structures. This broader approach would provide deeper insights into how contextual factors, such as local cultural norms, economic priorities, and environmental policies, shape these relationships, thereby enhancing the robustness and generalizability of the findings. The study also concentrated on travel agencies and tour operators within the tourism and hospitality industry, sectors with specific characteristics that might affect the relationships between GTM, GE, GOC, and GP. Future research could explore the applicability of the proposed model in other sectors such as airlines, hotels, or transportation. This would help assess the consistency and transferability of the findings across different segments of the industry.

Additionally, this study employed a cross-sectional research design, capturing data at a single point in time. This approach limits the ability to establish causal relationships and understand the evolving nature of the variables involved. Future research should utilize a longitudinal design to track changes and developments over time, offering more comprehensive insights into the causal mechanisms and long-term impacts of GTM, GE, and GOC. In addition, the study concentrated on the mediating roles of GE and GOC, yet other mediating or moderating factors might also affect the relationships between the studied variables. Future research could investigate additional potential mediators and moderators, such as green leadership, green organizational learning, or green work engagement, to better understand the intricate dynamics influencing the link between GTM and GP. Lastly, the study used a quantitative research approach, which might not fully capture the complexities and subtleties of GTM, GE, and GOC. Future research could benefit from integrating qualitative methods, such as in-depth interviews or case studies, to obtain detailed, contextual insights that would complement and deepen the understanding provided by quantitative findings.

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Appendix A

Green talent management (GTM)

1. My organization cares about my well-being and offers considerable support for my welfare when executing green centered initiatives.
2. My organization offers green training, workshop opportunities, coaching and courses that advance my knowledge on how to foster environmental sustainability.

3. My organization offers me a considerable degree of autonomy when carrying out green related tasks.
4. My organization offers me job rotation opportunities associated with environmental sustainability.
5. My organization is very supportive of green related activities that can help me plan my future development.
6. My organization offers me challenging assignments that are grounded on environmental sustainability.
7. In my organization, green tasks are driven with several opportunities that allow me express myself and share my opinions on green related matters.
8. My organization offers a stringent performance appraisal system to drive green initiatives.
9. Environmental sustainability initiatives in my organization are driven by a high level of bureaucracy.
10. My organization offers more support towards achievement of green results than it offers to support my wellbeing.
11. Green initiatives are not driven by already established and prescribed strict rules (reverse coded).
12. organizational support for developing team members is mainly geared towards increased task efficiency and productivity in green initiatives.
13. My organization offers a high level of task flexibility, autonomy, effective and efficient communication when carrying out green initiatives (reverse coded).
14. Personal development in my organization is driven by green related results I achieve.

Green performance (GP)

1. The business activities significantly reduced overall costs.
2. The business activities significantly reduced the lead times.
3. The business activities significantly improved product/process quality.
4. The business activities significantly improved the reputation of my company.
5. The business activities significantly reduced waste within the entire value chain process.

Green entrepreneurship (GE)

1. Our firm has an attitude of adventure and proactiveness to green projects when faced with uncertainty.
2. Our firm has a strong tendency for high-risk green product development projects which have a chance for very high returns.
3. Our firm has a strong emphasis on green R&D, technological leadership, and innovation.
4. Our firm has a tendency to initiate green actions for competitors to respond to.
5. Our firm has a tendency to be a market leader, always first in introducing green products, services, or technologies.

Green organizational climate (GOC): the extent to which their company.

1. is worried about its environmental impact.
2. is interested in supporting environmental causes.
3. believes it is important to protect the environment.
4. is concerned with becoming more environmentally friendly.
5. would like to be seen as environmentally friendly.

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