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The Effects Of Green Transformational Leadership on The Green Behaviour Of Business, The Environment and The Green Performance

Yeşil Dönüştürücü Liderlik Anlayışının İşletmelerin Yeşil Davranışlarına, Çevreye ve Yeşil Performanslarına Etkisi

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Öz

Yönetim ve organizasyon alanında yeşile yani çevreye önem veren liderlik anlayışı, günümüzde yeşil dönüşümcü liderlik anlayışı olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır. Yeşil dönüştürücü liderlik anlayışı, dönüştürücü liderlik anlayışının kapsadığı özelliklere ek olarak çevreyi koruma ve bunun doğrultusunda gerekli olan davranışları sağlamaya çalışan bir liderlik modelidir. Yeşil dönüşümcü liderler işletmenin çevresel değerlerini ön plana çıkarır, yeşil iş terimlerini açıklar ve üst düzey çevresel değerlere yoğunlaşmayı amaçlar. Bu çalışmada da yeşil dönüştürücü liderliğin ne anlama geldiği, işletmelerin yeşil davranışlarının çevreye ve performanslarına nasıl katkı sağladığının ve ne anlama geldiğinin açıklanması ve yazına katkı sağlanması amaçlanmaktadır. Yeşil dönüşümcü liderlik, işletmelerin çevreyle ilişkisi ve etkileşimini ve ekonomik performansa etkisiyle ilgili problemlerin çözmesini sağlayan liderlik modelidir. Yani yeşil değerlere sahip olan bir dönüşümcü lider örgütsel çevreye faydalı olan hususlara yönelerek, izleyenleri motive eder ve örgütsel gelişimin sağlanmasını amaçlar. Yeşil liderlik ile ilgili kavramsal bir çerçeve çizilmeye ve literatüre katkı sağlamaya çalışılmıştır. Yeşil değerlerin ortaya çıkmasını sağlamak için katkıda bulunan yeşil dönüşümcü liderlik ile ilgili literatürde daha fazla çalışmaya ihtiyaç duyulmakla birlikte literatüre teorik katkı sağlamayı amaçlayan bu çalışmanın ilgili ampirik çalışmalara ışık tutabileceği düşünülmektedir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Yeşil dönüştürücü liderlik, yeşil davranış, yeşil performans

Abstract

The understanding of leadership which gives importance to green, that is, to the environment, today emerges as a green transformational leadership approach in the field of management and organization. The green transformational leadership approach is defined as a leadership model trying to protect the environment and providing the necessary behaviors along with the features which are covered by the transformational leadership approach. Green transformational leaders highlight the environmental values of the business, explain terms related to green business and aim to focus upon high-level environmental values. In the present study, it is probed to explain the meaning of green transformational leadership and how green behaviors of businesses make contribution to the environment and their performance and to contribute to the literature. Green transformational leadership is a leadership model which provides businesses an opportunity to solve problems related to their relationship and interaction with the environment and their impact upon economic performance. Namely, a transformational leader with green values motivates the followers and aims to provide organizational development by focusing on the issues which are beneficial to the organizational environment. Through the present study, it has been tried to draw a conceptual framework about green leadership and in this way make a contribution to the present literature. Although further studies on green transformational leadership which contributes to the emergence of green values are needed in the literature, it is thought that the present study, which aims to make a contribution to the literature theoretically, can shed light on related empirical studies.

Key words: Green transformational leadership, green behaviours, green performance

Introduction

Until the 1960s, the dominant idea in the industrialization policies of countries was that the natural resources of the world would be adequate for all countries to industrialize and grow their industries. Moreover, it was thought that nature would not be polluted and would renew itself automatically. However, as a result of the issues such as limited natural resources, population growth, climate change, rapid urbanization and globalization, unavoidable environmental problems began to emerge (Beyazit and Yarım, 2020, p. 13). In order to solve these problems and reduce the hazards of industrial waste, businesses and traditional products, the subject of greening the management and organizational philosophy has become popular both in the field of industry and among academicians (Li, Bhutto, Xuhui, Maitlo, Zafar, Bhutto, 2020, p. 1).

In the field of management and organization, the understanding of leadership which gives importance to green, in other words to the environment, emerges as a green transformational leadership approach. The green transformational leadership approach which has been making a name and has been the subject of research in recent years is described as a leadership model ensuring the protection of the environment and the behaviors which are required for this along with the characteristics of the transformational leadership understanding.

Green transformational leaders put an emphasis on the environmental values of the business as well as defining green business terms and focusing on high-level environmental values. These activities not only help the business achieve its environmental goals, but enhance the audience's perception that their own values are realized, as well. In this way, followers begin to see their daily work as more meaningful and compatible with their personal values. The perception that followers have the same values as their green transformational leaders can be associated more with green employee behaviors (Wang, Zhou, Liu, 2018, p. 3).

Currently, businesses are required to pay more attention to the environment, which stems from both the pollution of the environment as much as possible and the necessity of leaving a clean environment for future generations. In this regard, the issues discussed are considered to bear significance. Thus, leadership models which take the environment into account while producing goods and services in businesses have gained importance. Through these leadership models, it is aimed to minimize the damage given to the environment and to protect the environment. Bearing this in mind, it is of great importance to determine the effects of green transformational leadership, which is one of these leadership models, on the behavior and performance of businesses.

The present study aimed to evaluate the effects of green transformational leadership approach on the green behavior, environment and green performance of businesses. For this reason, national and international literature review was carried out. In order for the compilation study to proceed systematically, firstly studies which are conducted at the

national level were examined, which were attained from the ULAKBIM database by scanning the keywords of green transformational leadership. On the other hand, studies conducted at international level were downloaded from the SCIENCE DIRECT database with the same keywords. In this database, the previous studies were comprehensively examined with the literature review and the framework of the present study was created.

In the process of conducting the study and deciding which studies to include, the study was shaped by taking the studies published between 2009 and 2023 into consideration among the existing studies. While considering those years, the study was carried out especially by paying attention to the fact that there are more studies which have been conducted in recent years and remain up-to-date. In this respect, it can be stated that the research conducted in the last five years has been referred more heavily and thus, the present study has been completed.

Studies on green transformational leadership can be found in the literature. However, no study has been realized to be conducted in the national literature that deals with green transformational leadership understanding, environment and performance together. Therefore, the issues mentioned above were discussed together in the present study and it as aimed to contribute to the related literature by addressing the meaning of green transformational leadership and the effects of this understanding upon the green behavior, environment and green performance of businesses.

1. Green Management, Environment and Green Organizational Behavior

The understanding of sustainable green management and related practices have started to arouse interest among businesses and academics as a way of minimizing industrial waste and environmental pollution (Al-Ghazali, Gelaidan, Shah, Amjad, 2022, p. 2). A "Green Renaissance" period, which has a wide-ranging effect on the missions of current businesses, is experienced. Businesses need to be able to contribute to environmental sustainability and channel their employees in this direction (Eroymak, Izguden, Erdem, 2018, p. 965). Many studies have been conducted so that businesses can understand and adopt green (Onel, 2021, p. 23). With the effect of extreme environmental pollution and global warming, the matter of protecting the environment has become a fundamental issue and more companies have become willing to develop green products (Chen and Chang, 2013, p. 107).

Green management refers to carry out each activity in an environmentally friendly way, especially from product and process development activities to the last activity at the point of reaching the goals of the businesses. Environmentally sensitive management approach refers to the approach adopting practices which eliminate the activities that will give harm to the environment, not activities that will adversely affect the environment (Nemli, 2001, p. 213). Green management means the consideration of environmental protection and economic growth together.

Green management can be considered as the implementation process of the innovation steps that have been taken by the business to achieve a competitive advantage through waste reduction, social responsibility and sustainability (Acar, 2022, p. 5). In this respect, business managers should develop sustainable policies in order to provide competitive advantage with green practices (Yuksel and Uckun, 2022, p. 1381). The concept of “green” is a term which highlights sustainability as well as protection of the environment. This concept, used frequently today, refers to the understanding of the dangers involving water, air and soil pollution, greenhouse gas effect and global warming (Hancioğlu, 2018, p. 231).

Giving training on environmental activities enables employees to exhibit voluntary behaviors and environmental values to spread. Through this strategy, businesses achieve transferring green knowledge and skills to their employees and contribute to their understanding of negative environmental effects (Akandere, 2019, p. 390). With this understanding, employees in turn exhibit behaviors such as recycling and reducing waste in their businesses or they can contribute positively to climate change by feeling sensitive towards cleaning the harmful gases which are released to the environment by their businesses or polluted waters.

The inclusion of environmental awareness in the organizational culture facilitates the environmental activities of the business. New concepts are added to the literature which shows improvement in terms of the environment day by day. For a better understanding of the subject, these concepts are presented in Table 1 (Tepe Kucukoglu, 2014, p. 62).

Table 1. Some Concepts Related to the Environment.

Environmentalism	Behavioral tendency to act with the intention of protecting the environment, worldview (Stern, 2000)
Environmental awareness	Knowing the effect of human behaviour on the environment (Kollmuss and Anyeman, 2002)
Green culture	Environmental values developing through individuals' awareness and perception of the environment (Li, Jin, 2011)
Pro-environmental behaviour	Conscious behavior to reduce the negative effects on the natural environment as a result of the activities of the individual (i.e. reducing the use of resources and energy, the use of non-toxic components, reducing waste generation etc.) (Kollmuss and Anyeman,

	2002), (Krajhanzl, 2010)
Green organizational identity	Interpretive schema which are collectively created and shared by organizational members in order to add meaning to their actions, choices and behaviors related to environmental issues (Chen, 2011)
Green core competence	Environmental capabilities, technologies and knowledge which the business possesses, are difficult to imitate by its competitors, are found rarely in the market, are difficult to replace, and make environmentally friendly contributions to its customers (Chen, 2008)
Environmental leadership	A dynamic process in which one individual affects others in the realization of environmental management and protection successfully (Chen, 2011).
Green competitive advantage	Situations in which the business achieves certain positions in the market by means of environmental management strategies or green innovations in such a way that its competitors cannot imitate these strategies (Chen, 2011)

Kaynak: Tepe Kucukoglu, 2014, p. 62.

Businesses can increase their environmental performance by exhibiting green behavior. Employees can be claimed to go beyond their job requirements by behaving environmentally responsible and help their businesses in terms of increasing their environmental efficiency (Akandere, 2019, p. 389).

In the field of organizational behavior and management, the organizational structures which pave the way for green organization practices and the behavior which is compatible with these structures is called "green behavior". Green behaviors refer to the

behaviours shown voluntarily (Dikme and Sucu, 2019, p. 257). With the help of these behaviors, businesses become to display more sensitivity to their environment.

Green organizational behaviors refer to voluntary behaviors exhibited in order to protect the environment (Yuksel and Uckun, 2022, p. 1380). So as to increase the environmental performance of the businesses, it is of great significance that the employees show green behavior and exhibit environmentally sensitive behaviors. In this way, businesses will solve environmental problems and ensure that the activities of the business are sustainable (Akandere, 2019, p. 398).

Green behaviors can be divided into compulsory and voluntary behaviors. Compulsory green behavior includes the behaviors that are included in the job description and in the corporate policies and those which should be exhibited in the institution. On the other hand, voluntary green behavior is the behavior which is performed by the individual voluntarily by using his own initiative. Both of these behavior types provide an opportunity for the business to develop and achieve positive organizational results (Yigit, 2022, p. 187). Government regulations regarding the activities of businesses can be given as an example of compulsory behavior whereas turning off unnecessary lights or electronic devices within the business is voluntary behavior.

According to compilation from various studies in the literature by Akandere (2019), green behaviors involve practices such as walking to work, participating in environmental activities, helping colleagues about green issues, energy reduction activities, recycling, turning off lights and electrical appliances, making video conferences instead of travelling, using public transportation, drinking from reusable cups and bottles, raising awareness towards water and energy saving, encouraging reduction in waste, printing two sides of the paper, developing training programs regarding global warming risk, how to reduce the effects of business environment, and about how green products can be used, waste management, energy consumption and purchasing green products (Akandere, 2019, p. 389). With the help of these activities, the company and its employees make significant contributions to the environment.

Businesses can save both costs and waste with the help of green practices. Employees are at the center of green practices (Yigit, 2022, p. 187). Bearing this in mind, business managers should both guide the employees and set an example for them through their behaviors in terms of green practices and by being sensitive to the environment. They should focus upon producing green and environmentally friendly products and lead their competitors in this direction.

Effective development of green products helps to form effective environmental policies as well as ensuring environmental sustainability (Saleem, Mahmood, Ahmed, 2019, p. 120). Businesses should fulfill their responsibilities towards the environment and care for environmental activities in terms of both gaining a sustainable competitive

advantage and increasing brand awareness and sales (Yigit, 2022, p. 188). Green behaviors which can be displayed by businesses could be realized in different ways.

Ones & Dilchert (2012) et al., discussed the green behavior of employees in five sections. These are (2012, p. 459-460):

Avoiding harm: Behaviors such as preventing air pollution, monitoring the effect of activities on the environment, protecting and supporting the ecosystem.

Conservation: It includes reducing the consumption, reusing for other purposes, re-evaluating and recycling.

Sustainable work: It includes changing the way through which the work is conducted for sustainability, choosing more environmentally friendly production activities and processes, creating sustainable products and processes, and being open to innovations in production for sustainability.

Influencing others: It includes encouraging and supporting others as well as education and training for sustainability.

Taking initiatives for the environment: It includes giving priority to the environment, acting for the benefit of the environment and developing programs and policies.

2. Transformational Leadership

Currently, digitalization has become a strategic issue for businesses (Telli, 2022, p. 308) and sensitivity towards the environment has also taken its place among the most important issues within the responsibilities of businesses.

Transformational leaders usually create an attractive vision for their followers and highlight the harmony between the goals of the organization and their personal values. In this way, followers prefer the goals of the organization rather than their own personal goals and leaders influence them in terms of showing effort to achieve the goal (Wang et al., 2018, p. 2). Transformational leadership is considered to be the most effective factor in promoting innovation within an organization (Karimi, Malek, Farani, & Liobikiene, 2023, p. 4). Transformational leaders also can create an innovative climate in order to facilitate the development of creativity (Chen and Chang, 2013, p. 109). Thanks to innovation, they try to make adaption to present conditions.

Transformational leadership emphasizes charismatic, visionary and inspiring activities which influence followers in terms of expanding their goals and performing beyond the expectations which are stated in their official job roles and job descriptions (Qu, Janssenb, & Shi, 2015, p. 286).

Transformational leadership can be defined as a leadership style which is useful for impacting organizational awareness and conscious organization. Due to the fact that transformational leaders can encourage their followers to develop new ideas, apply their

knowledge and learn new technologies, they can both create an organizational awareness and activate processes of careful organization (Chen, Chang, Lin, 2014, p. 6606). This leadership model is a leadership style in which leaders realize a desired change and guide the employees through inspiration and motivation so as to achieve a vision (Li et al., 2020, p. 2). Transformational leadership supports, encourages and motivates employees' commitment towards organizational goals and creativity so as to promote innovation and trigger effectiveness in organizational performance as well as maintaining competitiveness; therefore, it has a positive relationship with transformational leadership, the engagement of employees and innovative behavior (Tosun, Parvez, Bilim, Yu, 2022, p. 2).

Transformational leadership aiming to improve pro-environmental performance (Tuna and Yıldız, 2023, p. 63), is comprised of four dimensions which involve intellectual encouragement, individual interest, charisma and inspiring motivation (Chen and Chang, 2013, 109; Acar, 2022, p. 53).

Intellectual encouragement refers to the degree to which the leader's actions force his followers to think creatively and take risks (Park and Pierce, 2020, p. 2), which contributes to development of the skills of the followers such as identifying problems, seeking information, finding solutions and solving problems (Acar, 2022, p. 53). Via intellectual encouragement, the leader can help followers create cognitive processes which are related to creativity in problem solving (Chen and Chang, 2013, p. 109). In this respect, the leader can be claimed to try ensuring that his followers possess an innovative understanding of solving a current or future problem.

In the dimension of individual attention, transformational leaders can stimulate group creativity by recognizing the unique needs of their followers as well as providing coaching and counseling in terms of following up (Chen and Chang, 2013, p. 109). In this dimension, the leader takes the needs, expectations and demands of his followers into consideration and tries to respond to their requests upon this issue.

With charisma, the leader enables a clear vision that gives energy to his followers and constitutes a spirit of creativity. Transformational leaders with a high level of inspirational motivation arouse enthusiasm and support their followers' initiatives and perspectives to trigger creative thinking by encouraging their followers to express their ideas (Chen and Chang, 2013, p. 109). Charisma creates a sense in the followers that the leader owns certain characteristics and abilities which in turn makes the followers follow the leader sincerely (Karcioğlu and Kaygın, 2013, p. 4).

2.1. Inspirational motivation:

Inspiration can be described as a leader's ability to act as a role model for his followers by conveying a vision. Inspiration highlights the behavior of a leader who sets goals, inspires and motivates his followers by explaining the mission. A transformational leader inspires his followers by setting a vision and utilizing from his charisma (Karcioğlu &

Kaygin, 2013, p. 5). Inspirational motivation of transformational leaders can increase the enthusiasm of their followers due to the fact that inspirational motivation can make their followers think and perceive the content and significance of their work (Chen, Chang, Lin, 2014, p. 6606). Through this dimension, the transformational leader activates his followers and makes them willing to succeed.

Transformational leaders have a significant effect upon organizational performance in various ways which include the attitudes and behaviors of employees, their commitment, and green performance (Sun, El Askary, Meo, Zafarcand, Hussai, 2022, p. 5278). The essence of transformational leadership is "leadership which is based on values" (Wang et al., 2018, p. 2). Leaders play an important role in innovation and organizational development thanks to their characteristics. In this regard, it can be stated that the understanding of transformational leadership has a critical value (Acar, 2022, p. 53). One of the reasons why transformational leaders are often searched for is that they have the ability to make innovation and create change as well as possessing easily distinguishable features. The basic premise of transformational leaders is to lead change and they create a considerable change both in their followers and in their organizations and help businesses succeed in a competitive environment by incorporating their followers into the process of change (Turkoz, 2023, p. 91).

Transformational leaders can stimulate the development of new ideas. They give ideas and encourage their followers to break new ground. In addition, the present literature has proven that transformational leadership affects organizational innovation in a positive way (Chen et al., 2014, p. 6606; Gumusluoglu and Ilsev, 2009, p. 464; Al-Amri, Hassan, Isaac, Masoud, 2018, p. 9; Aykanat and Caliskan, 2019, p. 847). Transformational leaders empower their followers by taking their individual needs into account and help them grow and become leaders by harmonizing the broader goals and objectives of the leader, group and organization (Bass and Riggio, 2006, p. 3). The followers, seeing that their individual wishes and expectations are realized, can in turn make more contribution to their businesses with the development of their leadership skills.

Transformational leaders can foster their followers to act beyond immediate self-interest by means of charisma, individual interest, intellectual stimulation and inspiring motivation. Transformational leadership can facilitate the emergence of new ideas by enabling vision, motivation and intellectual simulation for their followers (Chen et al., 2014, p. 6605).

3. Green Transformational Leadership

Climate change constitutes the biggest global problem which is faced by the environment and humanity. Human behaviors such as greenhouse gas emissions, pollution, energy use and excessive use of natural resources cause environmental problems (Akandere, 2019, p. 388), which creates difficulty for the activities of businesses and makes it necessary to feel more sensitive towards the environment.

Chen and Chang (2013) refer to Bass (1998) and Gardner & Avolio (1998) for defining green transformational leadership as the behavior of leaders motivating their followers to display performance beyond expected environmental performance levels and inspiring them to achieve their environmental goals

Managers with a high level of green transformational leadership can lead their followers to question assumptions about environmental problems and generate new and different ideas to solve these problems with the help of intellectual encouragement. They also make guidance for their followers through individual attention and can enable them to achieve high competence in terms of environmental issues. If they themselves exhibit environmentally sensitive behaviors, the followers can feel more sensitive towards environmental issues thanks to their charisma, as well. By explaining the importance of environmental sustainability with inspiring motivation, they can express environmental values and activate their followers in this regard (Ozgul and Zehir, 2021, p. 10).

Robertson and Barling (2013) defines the green transformational leadership approach as a manifestation of transformational leadership in which the whole leadership content focuses upon promoting pro-environmental and green initiatives" (Tuna and Yıldız, 2023, p. 63). Green transformational leadership is described as the behavior of leaders who motivate their followers to achieve environmental goals and give inspiration to their followers so as to perform beyond the expected environmental performance levels (Chen et al., 2014, p. 6606).

Individuals with high green identities probably regard themselves and their green transformational leaders as more environmentally friendly. For this reason, such employees are more likely to interpret the vision and values which are conveyed by their green transformational leaders as green and therefore experience a deeper harmony between the leader's perceived value and their own (Wang et al., 2018, p. 3). Thanks to this harmony, the employees perform the necessary activities to ensure that the activities of the business do not give harm to the environment. They can turn this situation into the way in which the businesses do their jobs. In this way, they can become successful in terms of environmental performance.

Green transformational leadership refers to a leadership model which tries to find ways to solve problems related to the effect of the interaction of businesses with the environment upon economic performance. A transformational leader with green values focuses upon the issues influencing the environmental behavior of the followers and providing benefits to the organizational environment, motivating them and working in order to ensure sustainable organizational development (Acar, 2022, p. 54).

Similar to traditional transformational leadership, environmental or green transformational leadership is divided into four behaviors including green individual attention, green idealized influence, green intellectual stimulation and green inspirational motivation (Farrukh, Ansari, Raza, Wu, Wang, 2022, p. 3). In this respect,

green transformational leadership gains an exclusive feature by exhibiting pro-environmental behaviors.

The understanding of green transformational leadership is regarded as the behavior of the leader who supports the employees and provides a motivating mission and vision so as to achieve the green goals of the business (Perez, Ejaz, 2023, p. 3). Green transformational leadership is a leadership approach which ensures internalizing the environmental goals of the business by the employees as well as aiming to increase the green awareness of the employees and motivating them to do more than expected with the aim of achieving the environmental goals of the organization (Kerse, Maden, Selcuk, 2021, p. 1576). Green transformational leadership emphasizes the behavior of leaders who motivate followers to achieve environmental goals. The use of green values forms the basis for the green transformational leadership (Yucebalkan, 2020, p. 393). Green transformational leaders value green vision of the business more than ever before. They are committed to the delivery of green values which provide benefits to the organization and the environment by making the followers see the work as a reflection of their own values (Wang et al., 2018, p. 2). In this way, they show an effort to leave a clean and liveable environment for future generations.

3.1. The Effect of Green Transformational Leadership on Green Behaviour

The rapid increase in the world population ensures gradual decrease in environmental resources. Moreover, increasing demand for consumption causes unconscious use of these resources, pollution of the environment along with increase in ecological problems and therefore climate change emerges. These fundamental social problems emerge as an important issue that should be addressed for businesses whose existence depends on the continuity of the resources. Bearing this in mind, an environmentalist (green) understanding prevails in all business activities from production to marketing, from human resources management to R&D. furthermore, the concept of green is gaining more and more significance in the field of management and organizational behavior literature (Kerse et al., 2021, p. 1575).

Businesses have some responsibilities towards both future generations and society in general and they can fulfill these responsibilities by popularizing green organizational behavior within their organization (Giderler Karavelioglu, 2023, p. 29). In this respect, green transformational leadership refers to a leadership model which is required to deal with environmental problems at the stages of the organizational life cycle. These leaders express green vision of their businesses in an effective way (Ozgul, 2023, p. 52).

As a concept which emerges in the field of green management, green transformational leaders, including the main forms of activities related to green influence, green motivation, green intellectual stimulation and green personalized thinking, shape the green vision of employees and motivate them in terms of achieving green goals (Tuna and Yıldız, 2023, p. 63). Thanks to this vision, followers tend to display

more green behaviors. Studies have also indicated that green transformational leadership can promote green behaviors of employees in the business (Wang et al., 2018, p. 3).

The relationships between the perceived existence of corporate sustainability policies, perceptions of green working climate and the reports of employers regarding green behaviors prove the existence of sustainable organization understanding (Yuksel, Uckun & Uckun, 2022, p. 1380). Green transformational leadership provides green education and development and regards attainment in green practices as a fundamental requirement for effective environmental benefits and for motivating the workforce (Majali, Alkaraki, Asad, Aladwan and Aledeinat, 2022, p. 5).

Green leadership motivates employees to give value to the institutional goals rather than personal goals and guides employees, helps them when needed as well as motivating followers to generate new ideas for the environment (Li et al., 2020, p. 3). In addition, green transformational leaders encourage followers to engage in practices which could enable green product innovation (Majali et al., 2022, p. 5). Employees directed to these applications can get the opportunity to do their jobs more effectively with the help of more innovative applications and methods.

The use of green values is at the center of green transformational leadership; therefore, the value channel can be the main mechanism of influence upon employees' green behavior. Some scholars put an emphasis on the importance of green transformational leadership in terms of helping while shaping employee green behavior (Wang et al., 2018, 2; Chen et al., 2014, p. 6606; Mittal and Lochan Dhar, 2016, p. 118; Cop, Olorunsola and Violet Alola, 2021, p. 672).

3.2. The Effect of Green Transformational Leadership on the Environment

Green color is the color of businesses which try to protect peace, future generations and the environment from all kinds of dangers (Narmanlıoğlu, 2020, p. 40). Green management refers to the management practices which are put forward in order to improve environmental management in businesses. This concept also refers to constituting an environmentally friendly system in the business, the development of this system and the allocation of resources in this regard. Green management includes not only the development of environmentally sensitive business practices but the implementation of these systems, as well (Acar, 2022, p. 4-5).

Current businesses are increasingly applying environmental initiatives such as environmental management system (Graves, Sarkis and Zhu, 2013, p. 81). The success of environmental programs is dependent on the behavior of the employees. In this regard, directing employees towards displaying environmentally sensitive behaviors is an important element for businesses which are active in global world today (Akandere, 2019, p. 388). The green business (Hancıoğlu, 2018, p. 231), can be described as an environmentally sensitive, well-organized and socially responsible business, does not

show hesitation to act environmentally friendly and sets an example for other businesses and leads them in this regard.

Transformational leaders play a vital role in terms of ensuring environmental sustainability (Sun, El Askary, Meo, Zafarcand & Hussai, 2022, p. 5274). Green transformational leaders are committed to delivering green values that could provide benefits to the business and the environment, which enable subordinates to regard the business as a reflection of their own values (Wang et al., 2018, p. 2). Green transformational leadership has the ability to find innovative solutions to problems of the business related to the environment. It considers the values which are useful for the organizational environment and makes contribution to the sustainable development of the organization. He becomes an environmentalist role model for his followers and establishes good relations with them as well as expressing concerns about the environment and encouraging employees to have green values by directing them towards issues which are related to environmental protection (Acar, 2022, p. 5).

Green transformational leadership influences the green innovation process positively and makes contribution to environmental sustainability because it provides employees with the necessary inspiration to achieve organizational and environmental goals (Hanif, Ahmed and Younas, 2023, p. 3). Green transformational leadership can be stated to be a reflection of the transformational leadership which focuses completely upon pro-environmental activities. This understanding ensures that environmental objectives of the business are internalized by the employees, improves their awareness towards environment and becomes a role model for them as well as motivating employees to show a high level of environmental performance. Furthermore, this understanding focuses on the long-term sustainability of the business and environmental responsibilities of the corporation (Coskun, 2022, p. 4-5). A leader with transformational leadership stimulates his followers to engage in pro-environmental behavior. For instance, he can trigger the green behavior of employees through green organizational identity (Wang et al., 2018, p. 1). Renewable energy resources can be used and expanded among the organizational measures in order to ensure environmental sustainability. In this respect, non-renewable energy consumption can be reduced when production processes are reconsidered (Eroymak et al., 2018, p. 964-965).

Environmental sustainability has become an issue of great interest and discussion today due to the fact that the characteristics of present conditions are enough to make businesses more anxious and more concerned about the natural environment than their previous counterparts, which increased the concerns of the stakeholders about the consequences of environmental pollution and environmental degradation. Thus, increasing anxiety has forced business managers to deal with green behaviors towards the environment (Bayrakcı and Dinc, 2020, p. 189).

Green transformational leaders inspire and motivate their followers in terms of taking pro-environmental actions through their idealized charismatic personalities (Farrukh et

al., 2022, p. 2). The change in the basis of increasing interest in environmental sustainability is also reflected within the organizational context. The field of organizational behavior has also started making adaptation to this change within its own dynamics as businesses have shown a tendency to change their inputs, processes and outputs in order to achieve environmental sustainability. With the aim of supporting the change, not only have new green positions been added into the organizational context but also green tasks have been included in the works by expanding the responsibility limits of the existing jobs (Bayrakcı and Dinc, 2020, p. 189).

Changes in the perspectives towards the environment, globalization and issues related to the fact that feeling sensitive towards the environment should be considered as a competitive opportunity rather than a cost element have highlighted the need for investigating environmentally sensitive behaviors. Moreover, businesses have initiated practices such as environmental management systems, green purchasing, eco-design, recycling and energy saving, which provide businesses with long-term benefits such as a positive image, competitive advantage, low operating costs, etc. (Erbasi, 2019, p. 5).

Green transformational leader which is based on traditional transformational leadership engages in environmentally friendly activities. He also triggers employees to work beyond individual interests, enables them to deal with environmental problems in new ways and show effort for a common green vision as well as establishing a close relationship with employees so as to improve their green skills (Ozgul, 2023, p. 52).

Green transformational leadership focuses mainly upon the environmental goals of the business and increases the awareness of the employees as well as motivating them to achieve the goal of maintaining corporate environmental performance (Hanif et al., 2023, p. 3). Green transformational leaders generally emphasize the vital importance of environmental issues which are related to long-term goals of the company while communicating with their subordinates (Wang et al., 2018, p. 3). Environmental awareness has quickly emerged as a widely accepted concept, which results from global climate change; therefore, more customers want to pay more attention to green products (Chen and Chang, 2013, p. 107).

Green behaviors serve for long-term goals of the business. When leaders exhibit green transformational leadership behaviors, the attitudes of the followers towards the organizational environment become more active and they take responsibility for protecting the environment. In this way, green transformational leadership increases the perception of value congruence with leaders and fosters the green behaviors of subordinates (Wang et al., 2018, p. 3). Businesses displaying green behavior may become more acceptable by customers and can get the opportunity to achieve their goals more effectively.

3.3. The Effect of Green Transformational Leadership on Green Performance

Green behaviors of employees can be encouraged by the business so as to minimize the negative effects on the environment while maximizing the positive effects. Employees can be environmentally friendly while they fulfill the tasks assigned to them (Darvishmotevali and Altinay, 2022, p. 3). Environmental friendliness of employees can be achieved through leadership. Behaviors of employees can be directed by leaders in a strong way (Ozgul and Zehir, 2021, p. 9). Transformational leadership plays a very significant role in the development of innovation. Green transformational leadership is defined as the behavior of leaders who could motivate their followers to accomplish environmental goals and inspire them to perform beyond the expected environmental performance levels (Chen, Chang, Lin, 2014, p. 6605). One of the significant effects of the green transformational leadership approach is that the business puts forward green behaviors, green products, which in turn leads to a high level of green performance.

Businesses should adopt an environmentalist belief and present options so as to have an environmentalist worldview. Doing this effectively requires the business to create a green organizational culture (Narmanlioglu, 2020, p. 45). Green transformational leaders show a great effort so as not to give harm to the environment by developing a green organizational culture and guide their employees in this regard.

Psychological mechanisms which try to understand employees' perceptions of the green work environment (i.e how businesses and their colleagues perceive their orientation towards environmental sustainability) and associate such policies with behavior (Yuksel and Uckun, 2022, p. 1380) can be founded. Green transformational leaders fully embody the beliefs, attitudes, values and behaviors of executives influencing business performance. Individuals working with green transformational leadership understanding are proud of being associated with responsible leaders. For this reason, they feel obliged to make positive contributions to their own roles by increasing their performances (Tuna & Yıldız, 2023, p. 63).

Transformational leadership affects innovation performance positively (Chen, 2014, p. 6617). In this respect, with the increase of green transformational leadership behaviors, more environmentally sensitive behaviors can be triggered by increasing green behaviors. Moreover, this leadership model can be used so as to produce environmentally friendly products and to increase them.

Green transformational leadership is of great importance today both in terms of increasing the green performance of businesses and improving innovation due to the fact that businesses need to develop a green management philosophy in order to foster green innovations in the green age (Yucebalkan, 2020, p. 393). With the green transformational leadership understanding, businesses can display green behaviors and achieve a high level of green performance.

Chen, Chang & Lin (2014) state in their study that green transformational leadership is an important determinant of green performance (Chen, et al., 2014, p. 6605). Moreover, along with green transformational leadership, which possesses a key role in the performance of SMEs, the green entrepreneurial orientation plays a significant role in promoting green innovative products which also lead SMEs to show performance (Majali et al., 2022, p. 2). Green products become a powerful competitive weapon in the market because more customers, the environment and more people show willingness to pay more for green products (Chen and Chang, 2013, p. 107). Green transformational leadership helps employees in terms of developing their green creativity significantly by creating a green creative environment and developing individuals (Sidney, Wang, Nazir, Ferasso, Saeed, 2022, p. 3).

Resulting from the technological progress following the industrial revolution, the advent of the information age and the effect of globalization, for a long time, businesses have been trying to adapt to the view that environmental, social and economic sustainability are interconnected (Ones and Dilchert, 2012, p. 450). In this regard, successful green product development can help companies and economies move towards environmental sustainability (Chen and Chang, 2013, p. 107). A business can ensure the continuity of its activities and can keep making contribution to society if it is successful in environmental sustainability. With this advantage, it also guides its competitors in terms of environmental issues.

Environmental leadership can provide a company with a competitive advantage in two ways, the first of which is to meet the demand for environmentally friendly products or services in the market before its competitors. The second advantage involves enabling cost savings which could conserve energy and materials and therefore reduce waste (Chen, 2011, p. 390). Hence, businesses gain a sustainable competitive advantage by meeting the expectations of their customers before their competitors and by providing advantage in terms of cost savings. With this competitive advantage, they can lead their competitors with innovations and outperform them.

Discussion and Conclusion

The world today faces many significant problems. Unavoidable problems such as rapid urbanization, continuous increase in the world population and climate change have begun to emerge as a result of the nature being polluted to such an extent that it cannot renew itself, the rapid depletion of natural resources and the intense migration to cities.

In order to cope with these problems, putting forward practices that give importance to green is necessary at the center of the management. Leadership arises in this respect, as in any other issues. The green transformational leadership approach refers to a leadership model that can respond to this requirement and ensure feeling more sensitive towards the environment. It can be stated that the benefit will be greater and opportunities can be created thanks to the benefit/cost analysis of businesses that are

sensitive to the environment and it can also be claimed that taking advantage of these opportunities can be achieved with the help of green transformational leadership.

A leader in a green transformational leadership approach becomes more sensitive to green and the environment and adjusts his behavior accordingly. In this way, he also sets an example for his employees. Employees can also display behaviors that take the environment into account while achieving their goals. Thus, they can increase their environmental performance.

Green transformational leaders who increase environmental performance can achieve a sustainable competitive advantage and innovate constantly in order to ensure this sustainability. The transformational leader, who exhibits the ability to provide intellectual encouragement, also accomplishes changes with the help of innovations.

Green transformational leaders make their followers question environmental issues and provide intellectual stimulation in order to solve these problems. With the aim of solving these problems, they carry the employees to high competence levels, which in turn make employees become more sensitive towards environmental issues. The employees who show sincerity to solve problems show an intense effort so as not to give harm to the environment, try to find new areas of use for products to protect the environment, show more sensitivity towards the environment in the production process and can form regular and systematic plans-programs in the business. Green transformational leaders, who can influence their followers on the issues mentioned, are also likely to influence their followers as role models.

Green transformational leaders also contribute to the environment in terms of producing environmentally friendly products and services. Affected by green transformational leaders, followers adopt the environmental goals of the business. The followers internalizing these goals show a superior performance so as to accomplish the environmental goals of the business; therefore, displaying green organizational behavior and producing green products become one of their main goals. In this way, strong steps are taken for a clean environment and future. A conceptual framework about green transformational leadership has been tried to be created as well as aiming to contribute to the existing literature. Considering that it is a new leadership model which is sensitive towards the environment, the present study is hoped to make a good contribution in this regard.

As a result of the literature review, it was realized that the studies on green transformational leadership in our country are limited when compared to the ones at international level. With the help of this study, which was carried out to make contribution to a further increase in interest in green transformational leadership and the environment as well as a better understanding of the importance of the environment, the effects between the subjects were evaluated. This study can be stated to differ from other studies in terms of the subject matter with which it deals, which is expected to contribute to the literature.

In the present study, the effects of green transformational leadership upon the green behavior, environment and green performance of businesses were discussed and it was seen that this leadership model had positive effects. It has been concluded that the green leadership model can be practised to increase green behavior, not to give harm to the environment and to increase green performance. When the problems related to the environment and nature are considered, it can be stated that this leadership model is necessary for solving these problems. According to the findings, it is hoped that the study will contribute to the literature. The present study, which aims to make a theoretical contribution to the literature, is thought to shed light on empirical studies (i.e. issues such as green transformational leadership, green behavior, environment and green performance etc.).

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