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Green Organizational Support: A New Approach in Reinforcement and Promoting Green Organizational Behavior of Employees

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Environmental protection is one of the important human concerns, for which several actions have been taken. Organizations are no exception to this rule and have taken one of the most basic and important actions in the form of green organizational behavior of employees. Green organizational behavior of employees owes to various factors that organizational support is one of the most important. Paying attention to such issues creates a new and constructive approach in organizations, which is considered as green organizational support. The main purpose of this study is to identify and explain the elements of green organizational support as a new approach to reinforcement and enhancing the green organizational behavior of employees. It uses a mixed method. The approach used in this method is a concurrent triangulation strategy that taken in two qualitative-qualitative phases. In these phases, two qualitative methods of "Expert Panel-Grounded Theory" have been used, respectively. The main tool used in both qualitative phases is interview, which uses six experts in the first qualitative phase, 11 people as academic and executive experts in the second phase, respectively. According to the research findings, in the panel of experts six thematic axes were extracted and in the second qualitative phase, 19 components were classified into six main categories of grounded theory. The results of the study indicate that green organizational support can positively affect employees' attitudes to green behaviors, and in addition, the organization, managers or colleagues can adopt approaches to support employees who perform their duties be effective and provide an opportunity to create a supportive organizational environment for employees.

Keywords: *Organizational Support; Green Organizational Behavior; Personality Traits; Mixed Method*

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Introduction

In the decades, environmental protection has become an important and unavoidable issue in all societies and organizations, and almost all of them have accepted the importance of environmental protection (Kim et al, 2019: 48). Today, the natural environment can affect the internal environment of the organization, because organizations are dependent on natural resources. The scarcity or destruction of natural resources of the Earth will definitely have destructive effects on organizations, employees, others, and the society (Keshavarz et al, 2022: 105). Following these changes, new concepts in the field of "greening" emerged in organizations, one of the most important of which was the concept of "green organizational behavior" (Andersson et al, 2013: 152). According to De Roeck and Farooq (2017), employee green behavior includes "employee participation in green behaviors, including employee actions to do work in an environmentally friendly manner (eg, recycling, rational use of resources, participation in environmental initiatives, policy making). More stable) (De Roeck and Farooq, 2017: 2). Green organizational behaviors are not rewarded as voluntary organizational behaviors in the workplace and are not mandatory, but are optional and altruistic (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002: 240). Most thinkers, consider green employee behavior as a "mechanism for improving problem-solving abilities among employees to develop solutions to deal with environmental issues and align organizational policies with environmental protection strategies to achieve organizational sustainability goals" (Mohd Khalid, 2021; Akgunduz et al, 2018; Liet al, 2018; Paillé et al, 2014; Brio et al, 2007). Organizational support plays a key role in creating voluntary employee behaviors in the organization that benefits both the organization and the environment (Değirmenci, 2021: 6). In order to show the green organizational behavior of employees, there are several methods and strategies, one of the most important of which is organizational support. Organizational support is an important resource in the organization that can create a series of positive emotions based on the support and understanding of employees and supervisors, as well as acknowledging their abilities (Chen et al, 2012). On the other hand, when organizational support for employees is low, this low support in the organization can lead to their indifference and burnout and other negative and inefficient effects on the organization (Wen et al, 2019: 122). When the organization supports the

resources needed by employees, they will feel reinforcement and perform well-established organizational goals and missions (Paille & Meija-Morelos, 2019). Therefore, applying the main theory of organizational support with environmental concerns leads to green organizational support, which is one of the most important requirements in today's (Pinzone et al, 2019: 222). Wells et al (2015) report that few studies have been conducted on employees' internal green behaviors. And this category is one of the most important issues in this field. Also, providing a suitable environment to increase employee motivation and increase their participation rate in environmental sustainability is very important (Hasan poor & Ebrahimi, 2021: 178). And organizations need to adopt new strategies and approaches in organizations. One of the most fundamental and vital of these approaches is green organizational support. Establishing green organizational support in organizations can have a significant impact on the green organizational behavior of employees. In this study, by identifying and analyzing the relevant components in this field, this concept will be examined. The high relationship of green organizational support in creating green organizational behavior of employees has a great role and importance in creating a sound or healthy organization and society, which raises the need to examine this relationship. On the other hand, the evidence suggests that internal studies in this area generally have taken an incomplete path and only consider the causes and factors of green behavior. One of the most important innovations of this research is that it investigates such an issue for the first time. Therefore, in this study, we try to identify key and essential elements of green organizational support in reinforcement and enhancing the green organizational behavior of employees to be effective in resolving the theoretical gap in this field. The main question of the current research is what are the key and necessary elements of green organizational support in reinforcement and enhancing the green organizational behavior of employees?

Literature review and research background

Organizational support

The conceptual basis of organizational support is presented by Eisenberger et al in 1986. They defined organizational support as the general beliefs of employees that the organization is concerned about and

that the organization supports with respect to ethical responsibilities (Eisenberger and Stinglhamber, 2011). According to social exchange theory, employees may feel a sense of commitment to the organization or make greater efforts to achieve organizational goals by reducing the stress of employee work (Li et al, 2018).

Organizational support, as a resource in an organization, can create a series of positive emotions based on the support and understanding of employees and supervisors, as well as acknowledging their abilities (Chen et al, 2012). Such positive emotions can help restore emotional exhaustion of employees in emotional work. For employees, organizational support is an important external energy source that helps with emotional recovery while doing emotional work (Li & Zhou, 2012). Various studies show that perceived organizational support can significantly expand the scale of employee tolerance and minimize to reduce employees' negative feelings (Wen et al, 2019). According to organizational support theory, when a manager or supervisor is seen as a source of employee value and support, employees believe that their organization values their well-being and cares about the comfort and quality of their work and personal lives (Eisenberger et al, 1986). Applying the principle of reciprocity, employees with high organizational support feel committed to respond to the organization with positive job attitudes and useful organizational behaviors (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Therefore, high organizational support is negatively associated with burnout while it is positively associated with job satisfaction (Riggle et al, 2009).

Therefore, high organizational support provides resources for employees that help them to achieve their work goals (Karatepe, 2015; Hochwarter et al, 2006). In addition, high organizational support improves communication and collaboration between partners (Erdogan et al, 2004; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Cameron and Quinn (1999) stated that cooperation requires common goals, social interaction, and collective achievement. Organizational support is essential to reinforcement social relationships and strengthen organizational relationships and commitment (Schepers & Van den Berg, 2007). When organizational values are shared, trust is built and opportunities for interpersonal collaboration increase, allowing teamwork and other organizational competencies to flourish (Kull et al, 2012). Therefore, when employees understand the signals within the organization,

they expect to gain more organizational support through rewards, training, and promotion. As a result, these employees are more likely to work harder, put in more effort, and have more motivation to gain the knowledge and experience needed to be "in-group" in the organization. In short, employees' perception of their internal situation will have a positive effect on employee behavior and organizational work environment (Tsai et al, 2015). If the perceived organizational support can contribute to satisfying the emotional needs of employees to retrieve the affective resources, the pressure decreases and employees are willing to strive for organizational goals (Wen et al, 2019). Social Exchange Theory (SET) explains social changes in societies and human behaviors. It also explains employee contributions to organizations and their expectations as a result of their interaction. According to this theory, when a person is kind to someone, he/she expects that kindness to be returned in the future (Demir, 2009). Employees show positive behaviors and contribute to their organization by expecting to be rewarded by them (Ibrahim et al, 2016; Demir, 2009; Eisenberger et al, 1986). This shows that if organizations meet the needs of employees, value their contributions and pay attention to their interests, employees will experience job satisfaction, which in turn will be perceived to benefit the organization and increase organizational support. Increased job satisfaction resulting from these behaviors by the organization also stimulates mutual emotions. As organizations value their employees more, employees engage in more positive organizational behaviors (Çakar & Yıldız, 2009). According to organizational support theory, employees attribute personality traits to their organization and value their participation in the organization and the level of organizational well-being (Wen et al, 2019). Eisenberger et al. (1986) used social exchange theory to explain employees' beliefs and commitment to their organization. They found that employees with a strong social exchange ideology show more organizational commitment, want to help the organization, experience higher perceived organizational support, and have less absenteeism. As employees' perceived organizational support increases, they feel more obligated to help the organization thrive and help their organization achieve its goals (Akgunduz et al, 2018: 109). Social exchange theory argues that individuals compare their achievements with those of other individuals or organizations. If one realizes that organizational support is high, he/she helps the organization (Demir, 2009).

According to organizational support theory, when employees feel supported by their organization, their sense of responsibility for the welfare and goals of the organization improves (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). They also report that when employees get help from their colleagues in the organization, they feel more responsible. According to this theory, when a person exhibits positive behavior, employees feel obligated to respond positively to this behavior. Therefore, employees try to help those who have already helped them and show their positive attitudes (Gouldner, 1960).

Employee Green Behavior

Employee Green Behavior (EGB) is a critical factor in promoting and developing an organization's green (Haugh and Talwar, 2010). In fact, the green behavior of employees refers to all the sustainable environmental behaviors that are implemented by employees in the workplace (Ones and Dilchert, 2012). On other hand, the green behavior of employees can achieve a competitive advantage for the organization, improve the organizations environmental performance and bring them environmental reputation (Paillé et al, 2014; Brio et al, 2007). At the same time, it can improve organizational processes, cost saving, and reduce resource consumption (Chen et al, 2012). On the other hand, implementing green behavior can improve the employees work motivation, increase job satisfaction, and enhance their career advancement (Norton et al, 2015; Osbaldiston and Sheldon, 2003; Bauer and Aiman-Smith, 1996).

Green behavior refers to any behavior that is beneficial to the environment or minimizes hazard to the environment (Steg and Vlek, 2009). With the implementation of the strategy of sustainable organizational development, increasing attention has been paid to the green behavior of employees in the workplace (Wang et al, 2018; Norton et al, 2015). Green organizational behavior of employees refers to all environmentally friendly behaviors performed by employees in the workplace (Ones & Dilchert, 2012). According to the standards of independent behavior (organizational requirements and individual self-determination, green organizational behavior of employees includes two aspects: green behavior related to the task that is performed in the responsibilities of employees and active green behavior that is performed outside the responsibilities of employees (Bissing-Olson et al, 2013). Green behavior is related to the function of

green behavior used by the staff to complete the core tasks required by the organization. Preventive green behavior refers to cautious and environmentally friendly behavior that is not explicitly recognized by the formal reward system (Bissing-Olson et al, 2013; Paille & Boiral, 2013). Green preventive behavior of employees can contribute the environmental performance of organizations and help to fill the environmental gap and contribute to the formal rules and regulations of organizations (Raineri and Paillé, 2016; Alt & Spitzack, 2016). Boiral & Paille (2012) divided it into three dimensions: the behavior of environmental initiatives, the behavior of socio-civic participation, and the behavior of helping the environment (Boiral & Paille, 2012). Among them, the behavior of environmental initiatives refers to the initiative of employees to promote the performance of environmental protection by the organization, which indicates the inherent motivation to protect the environment of employees. Socio-civic participation behavior refers to the voluntary participation of employees in the organization's environmental projects and activities. Environmental assistance behavior refers to helping and encouraging colleagues to pay more attention to environmental issues. The effectiveness of this three-dimensional segmentation has been confirmed by Terrier et al (2016). Thus, according to research by May et al. (2022), it is divided into four dimensions: task-related green behavior, environmental initiative behavior, socio-civic participation behavior, and environmental assistance behavior. Perceived organizational support for the environment reinforces job participation and pro-environmental behavior related to the tasks and reduces the intention to leave. Also, employees' expectations of support and evaluation by their organization increase trust among employees so that these organizations approve, reward and appreciate their attitudes and behaviors (Karatepe et al, 2022). Employees who have a high understanding of organizational support are also expected to have more positive feelings about their organization (such as increased job satisfaction and reduced relocation intent) and to help increase their levels of organizational support and organizational performance (Eder & Eisenberger, 2008). Also, organizational support can reduce stress and increase employee life satisfaction (Zhang et al, 2022). Organizational support basically requires the organization to acknowledge an individual's loyalty, effort, socio-emotional needs, and commitment. According to the concept of

organizational green, when the organization supported the resources needed by employees, employees feel empowered (Paille & Meija-Morelos, 2019). Pinzone (2019) suggested that adapting the core theory of organizational support to environmental concerns leads to green organizational support, as organizations make greater efforts to improve employees' organizational green behavior in the knowledge and skills of employees (Mohd Khalid et al, 2021). Green behaviors are included in a role in organizational environmental management policies and are part of the official job duties of employees (Pham et al, 2019). Researchers use "employee green behavior" as employee supportive environmental behavior, pro-environmental voluntary behavior, employee ecological behavior (Pinzone et al, 2019; Okumus et al, 2019; Bissing-Olson et al, 2013; Paille et al, 2013). In fact, organizational support promotes the green behavior of employees in the organization and aims at organizational sustainability and extra-role behaviors, such as "competent pro-social behaviors that are not controlled by formal environmental management policies, but are critical to the environmental sustainability of organizations" (Amruth & Geetha, 2021: 3).

Research Methodology

The research method of the present study is a mix one that has used the concurrent triangulation strategy. This research is done in two qualitative and qualitative phases and uses the "Expert Panel-Grounded Theory" method, respectively. In the concurrent triangulation strategy, qualitative or quantitative data are collected and analyzed at the same time. Priority is usually the same and both types of data are given the same value. Data analysis is usually done separately. In the qualitative part, the thematic axes were extracted using the expert panel method, and then, in the next stage using tools such as semi-structured interviews, related codes were extracted, and for review they were transformed into a paradigm framework using the grounded theory method. One of the important and practical innovations in this research is that it is observed that most researchers enter the research discussion without extracting thematic axes and conduct the research using qualitative methods. Thematic axes are as guiding factors in research that need to be identified and examined from the perspective of experts in the field. For this reason, in the first step, the qualitative research method of the panel of experts is used to extract the thematic axes. Then, these axes will

be used in the interview and the data foundation theory method will be used to extract the relevant dimensions and components.

Phase One (Qualitative Method): Expert Panel

The expert panel method is one of the qualitative methods that is widely used to gain the consensus of experts in a particular field (Dominello et al, 2018). The expert panel is a group of experienced people and experts who are selected on a specific topic, especially topics that require technical knowledge and expertise, such as scientific topics (Health Canada, 2018). The main tool used in this method is interview. The interview in this method has three criteria: 1) Definitions, principles, effects, etc., whether at the micro or macro level, should be relevant to the main topic. 2) The people in the panel are networked and interactively with each other, and 3) there is documentary and reasoned evidence related to the subject (Dominello et al, 2018). It should be noted that due to the spread of the Corona virus, experts participated in the meeting using the online panel of experts. The participants were asked to raise thematic axes in relation to the thematic context of the current research. Therefore, keywords such as organizational support, the concept of greening in organizational support, how to promote organizational support, etc. were brought up for discussion in the meeting and each of the experts announced their opinions regarding them according to their expertise.

Phase Two (Qualitative Method): Grounded Theory

Grounded theory is a qualitative research method proposed by Glaser and Strauss in 1967. This method is very suitable for creating theoretical frameworks in initial research (Zau et al, 2020). In this method, researchers analyzing the items and extracted all of them by interviews, then completing the information to theoretical saturation and categorizing the initial data into open, axial, and selective coding (Zhang et al, 2020; Corbin & Strauss, 2014; Charmaz, 2000). In this research, the systematic approach of Strauss and Corbin will be used to encode the interviews and the data will be analyzed by open coding, axial coding and selective coding.

The statistical population of the present study is different for each method. In the qualitative phase - the method of the panel of experts - the statistical population of this study, six experts and academic and executive

experts of the country who participated in the panel. It should be noted that these people have several years of scientific and executive experience in universities and government organizations. In the second phase of the research, the grounded theory method, the relevant experts are identified and interviewed using purposive sampling method, which is one of the qualitative sampling methods. In this phase, 11 experts participated in semi-structured interviews. The characteristics of the interviewees are explained in Table 1.

Table 1. Characteristics of the interviewees

Characteristic	Amount / Number		Characteristic	Amount / Number	
Age	20 to 30 years	0	tenure	1 to 10 years	1
	31 to 40 years	3		11 to 20 years	3
	41 to 50 years	5		21 to 30 years	5
	50 years and above	3		30 years and above	2
Politics				1	Education
Executive field	Executive (economic, social study, etc)	4	Masters (MA)	2	
	Academic and research	6	Ph.D	9	

Findings

As explained in the research methodology, the approach of the present research is mixed method with the concurrent triangulation strategy, which is performed in two qualitative-qualitative phases. In the first phase, thematic axes were extracted using the expert panel method. The participants in this section are six university professors in this field who have educational background and related research articles in this field, and also have a history of implementation in governmental organizations. As explained in the methodology of the research, due to the prevalence of coronavirus and lack of face-to-face access to individuals, the researcher, using a new qualitative method such as online panel of experts, interviewed the experts in order to extract thematic axes. These individuals were interviewed in audio and video during one of the period of January 2022 through one of the cyber application and items such as: "Perceived

organizational support; Management support of organizational green behaviors; organizational green behavior, employee adherence to organizational green behaviors, employee motivation management "were extracted as thematic axes. In the second phase -in grounded theory method- the systematic approach of Strauss and Corbin was used, in which the propositions were counted in three types of codes. Finally, 101 open codes, 58 axial codes and 19 selected codes were obtained that categorized into six categories. The axes extracted from the first phase of the research, as the axes of interview and alignment of the concepts of "green organizational support and green organizational behavior" were done, which in order to prevent the content; These items are explained in the form of six main categories and other tables are omitted.

1. Causal conditions: Green organizational values, Green organizational participation, Green organizational identity, Green organizational compatibility, Common green vision.
2. Context conditions: Green organizational culture, green organizational communication and interactions, organizational climate supporting green behaviors.
3. Core category or phenomenon: Green organizational support and green organizational behavior.
4. Intervening conditions: Individual, group and organizational values; Organizational procedures and instructions; the views and attitudes of the managers of the organization.
5. Strategies: Green Organizational Policies, Guidelines and Mechanisms Supporting Green Behaviors, Green Education.
6. Consequences: Green accountability, green organizational performance, green organizational citizenship behavior, green actions and activities of employees, green creative behaviors.

Paradigm framework: According to the principles and rules of data theory and based on the relationship between the categories and issues raised in the research method, the paradigm framework was drawn in Figure 1.

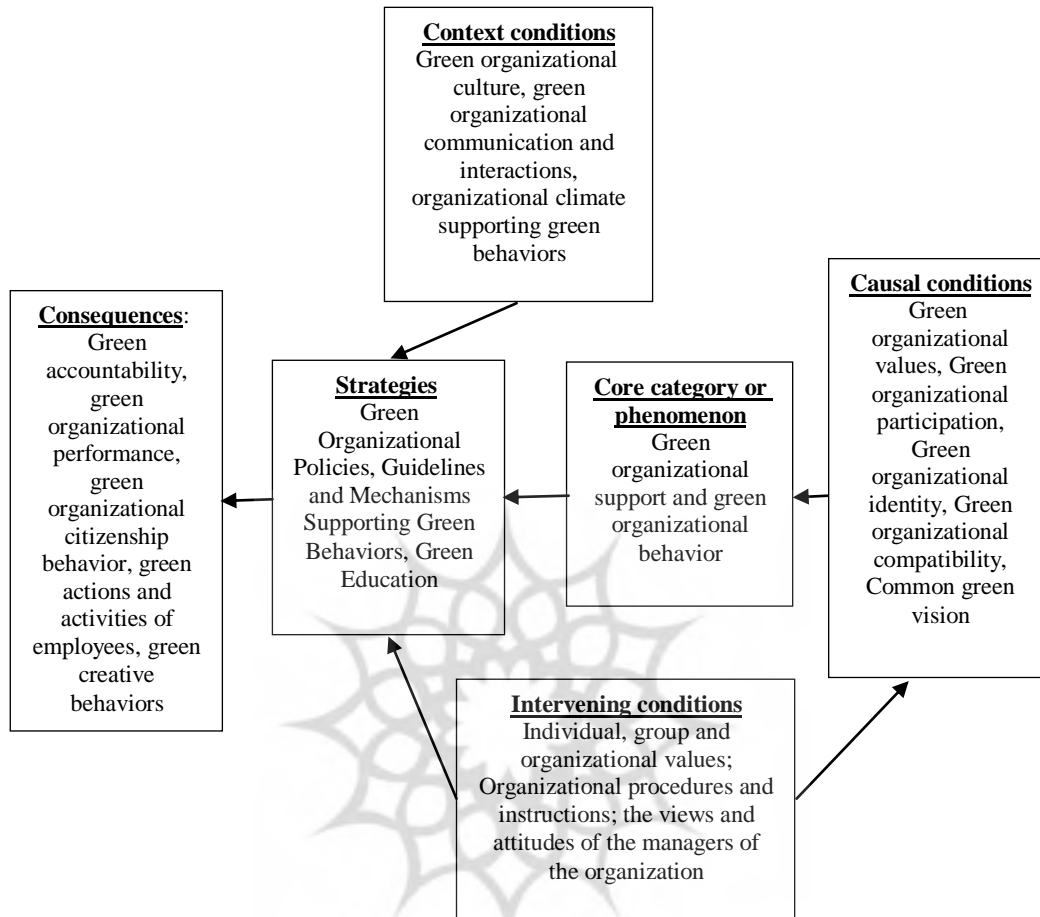


Figure 1. The pattern of green organizational support in reinforcement and promoting green organizational behavior of employees

In the resulting model, items such as "green organizational values, green organizational partnership, green organizational identity, green organizational compatibility, common green vision" are the causal conditions that affect the core category, namely green organizational support and green organizational behavior. In any organization, the perceptual and personality characteristics of individuals, with a focus on the main mission and mission; Employee behavioral patterns are formed and

emerging factors such as the above causal conditions can play an important role. Factors such as "green organizational culture, green organizational communication and interactions, organizational climate supporting green behaviors" were considered as Context conditions. Green organizational support means organizational support and support from managers, supervisors and colleagues who can support employees based on effective resources to create green behaviors. This category is derived from context conditions as specific contexts, affect strategies such as "green organizational policies, guidelines and mechanisms to support green behaviors, green education". Factors such as "individual, group and organizational values; organizational procedures and guidelines; views and attitudes of managers" are intervening conditions that affect strategies in the form of general conditions. Therefore, it can be seen that in the above pattern, value and communication issues are important as the main contexts of this concept that can show the commitment of the conceptual link of green organizational support and green organizational behavior of employees in organizations. Factors such as "green organizational policies, guidelines and mechanisms to support green behaviors, green education" have been considered as strategies for this concept. The emergence of green organizational support and, consequently, the green organizational behavior of employees; It owes a number of factors and strategies that are derived from the organizations themselves.

These strategies can ensure a green organizational support and green organizational behavior for organizations by turning to interventionist and contextual conditions. Factors such as "green responsibility, green organizational performance, green organizational citizenship behavior, green actions and activities of employees, green co-creation behaviors" were considered as the consequences of this category. When the above factors and components occur considering the organizational conditions and climate, desirable results will be achieved. These outcomes affect the organization and the community in which the organization operates by creating green organizational behavior in employees and create a friendly climate in form of the green organizational support.

Conclusions and suggestions

The purpose of this study is to identify and explain the components of

green organizational support in reinforcement and promoting green organizational behavior of employees, which has been done using a mixed approach. Green organizational support is an important and vital issue in organizations that is done to employees and sometimes the community. According to the research findings, green organizational support should be considered as an important resource for creating green organizational behavior of employees. The management of the organization must continuously improve the organizational support environment for its employees. Appropriate incentive policies and procedures should be developed to identify staff assistance and care for their well-being so that they can continue to work leisurely and carefree. Also, a fair climate should be created and more job independence should be provided to employees. In particular, lower-level managers and supervisors should be given more authority to trust and support front-line staff so that they can be effective in meeting organizational goals and missions. This is the main manifestation of green organizational support that can be used to strengthen and improve the green organizational behavior of employees. According to the causal and intervening conditions identified in the research, which were categorized as effective measures, they can serve as the main sources of green organizational support. Factors such as "green responsibility, green organizational performance, green organizational citizenship behavior, green actions and activities of employees, green co-creation behaviors" are the main consequences of this category, which are considered in the form of outputs. This study provides insights on how to reinforcement and promote green organizational behavior of employees in the light of green organizational support and how green organizational support can be used as an effective approach or context for this purpose. Therefore, the managers of organizations should elevate this concept in order to reinforcement and promote the green organizational behavior of employees, considering the capacities of the organization and employees as an internal resource.

This study investigated that the components of green organizational support can lead to effective management of employees in order to develop green behaviors, which is a kind of comprehensive and value-added support. Creating such shared value is possible through effective support from individuals in which strong relationships and high-quality interactions facilitate dialogue and collaboration between different actors. Also, the

findings of this study show several ways that green organizational support can have a positive effect on employee co-creation behaviors. They also play an essential role in enhancing employees' green skills, and employees with high levels of green organizational support can have green organizational performance. In addition to the organization, managers or colleagues can also take approaches to support employees that are effective in performing their duties and provide an opportunity to create a supportive organizational environment for employees. This creates green responsibility and green organizational citizenship behavior of employees. Another result of the present study is that green organizational support can positively affect employees' attitudes toward green behaviors. These results have several important consequences. First, this perspective can create more interaction and cooperation in the organization, and it is through such interaction and cooperation that green organizational behaviors take place. This type of communication facilitates dialogue between the organization and its employees by using communication skills and appropriate management style to influence creative behaviors in employees. The management of the organization should pay attention to activities that encourage the creation of shared value and create opportunities for the emergence of green organizational behavior. In the following, the basic suggestions in this field are presented.

The results of this research are consistent with the results of Değirmenci (2021), Akgunduz et al (2018), Andersson et al (2013), Eisenberger & Stinglhamber (2011) research.

As examined in this study, in addition to the organization, the support of managers, supervisors and colleagues is very important in creating green employee behaviors. Therefore, it is suggested that organizations create new ways to empower and facilitate employee support by creating new conditions and opportunities. Indeed, employee empowerment is one of the most effective strategies that can increase their participation and more effective. The second suggestion is to pay attention to important and basic organizational concepts in this field. When the organizational climate in to supporting of green organizational behaviors of employees, concepts such as organizational trust, promotion of cultural support for the emergence of green organizational behaviors, implementation of green training, etc. in this area increase and its benefits in employee behaviors the scene emerges and takes place.

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