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The employee green behavior and employee well-being nexus: A bibliometric analysis and review of seminal literature

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Abstract

Purpose: This systematic literature review clarifies how employee green behavior (EGB) is conceptualized, synthesizes evidence on its links with employee well-being, and identifies its underlying mechanisms, and existing research gaps, through science mapping with a focused synthesis of seminal mechanisms.

Design/methodology/approach: Following the SPAR-4-SLR protocol, we analyzed 323 documents from Scopus and Web of Science (2019–2024) along with targeted seminal extension (2012–2018) using bibliometric mapping and a thematic synthesis of seminal articles. We built two evidence sets: (i) a mapping corpus for bibliometric analysis (n = 323) and (ii) a direct-nexus subset of workplace studies that jointly operationalize EGB and well-being and analyze their association (n = 20), supported by a targeted seminal extension (2012–2018) for in-depth conceptual analysis.

Findings: The results reveal that the field is expanding rapidly where Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and performance dominate its conceptual space. EGB emerges as a multilevel construct shaped by individual (e.g., affect, values, self-identity) and contextual (e.g., green human resources management, psychological climate, leadership) influences. However, direct tests of the EGB-well-being association remain rare, with patterns favoring indirect pathways (e.g., identification, self-esteem, trust, and sense of purpose) and boundary conditions (e.g., green psychological climate).

Originality/value: The review consolidates the limited direct evidence on the EGB–well-being association, integrates it with psychological mechanisms, and proposes testable multilevel propositions to enable cumulative, longitudinal research and practical measurement alignment.

Keywords: Employee green behavior, Employee well-being, CSR, Bibliometric analysis, Science mapping

Jel Codes: M12, M14, Q56, J28

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1. Introduction

Despite the significant advances in pro-environmental strategies over the past half-century, greater action is needed to fulfill global commitments for reducing CO2 emissions and to mitigate climate change risks (McKinsey & Company, 2023). International development institutions are placing growing emphasis on sustainability-driven actions, reflected in the 2030 United Nations Agenda and sustainable goals coupled with growing grassroots movements (e.g., Fridays for Future) (Tarnovskaya, 2023).

Operating sustainably has thus become an imperative for organizations to tackle the sustainability challenge while maintaining a competitive advantage in today's interlinked markets. Consequently, many Multinational Enterprises (MNEs) positioned sustainability at the core of their strategic agendas and pledged sustainability commitment at the industrial level, by decarbonizing supply chains and becoming climate positive in the next decade (e.g., IKEA, Apple, OCP).

These top-down strategic initiatives are crucial in sending sustainable signals and enhancing environmental, social, and governance (ESG) reporting to access the growing market of sustainable investing (Morgan Stanley, 2022) and maintain consumer loyalty. In this regard, achieving sustainability integration within organizations is key to ensuring the balance between economic, environmental, and social objectives, and navigate the sustainability transition paradox of achieving carbon neutrality without undermining growth objectives. Corporate sustainability implies achieving interdependent, conflicting sustainability objectives (Hahn et al., 2018) which enhances the complexity of integrating sustainability into businesses' core operations arising from balancing the three dimensions (Baumgartner & Rauter, 2017; Landrum & Ohsowski, 2018).

Continuous involvement and engagement of individuals is capital for ensuring the effective translation of the strategic plans into operational reality (Ramus & Steger, 2000) as well as committing to the timely implementation of sustainability-driven agendas, via both in-role performance and extra-role initiatives.

Individual involvement of employees at all levels of the organization, will require a change in behavior, by adopting employee green behavior (EGB). An extensive literature in organizational research about EGB multi-level theories has been produced to investigate this concept by exploring its institutional, organizational, leader, team and employee-level antecedents and outcomes (Norton et al., 2015). Various theoretical approaches have been mobilized including attitudinal, normative, exchange and motivational theories. However, besides studying behavioral intentions, little is known today about the mechanisms through which contextual factors influence, drive, or predict the emergence of Employee Green Behavior.

In this systematic review, we use EGB to denote individual work behaviors that contribute to corporate environmental sustainability (e.g., resource conservation, eco-initiatives, eco-helping), following workplace-focused conceptualizations (e.g., Ones & Dilchert, 2012; Zacher et al., 2023). We adopt a multidimensional view of employee well-being spanning emotional (affective), psychological (functioning), and social (relational) domains.

Two gaps motivate this review. First, while a rich literature documents antecedents of employee green behavior (EGB) across individual (affect, identity, intentions) and contextual (green human resource management, psychological climate, leadership) levels, the mechanisms that translate these factors into enacted EGB remain fragmented. Second, it remains unclear whether EGB itself relates to employee well-being beyond proposed mediators (e.g., self-esteem, trust, sense of purpose). This review therefore (i) consolidates definitions and scope conditions for EGB; (ii) critically synthesizes evidence on the EGB–well-being nexus, distinguishing direct from indirect pathways; and (iii) distills a focused set of research propositions to guide cumulative testing. Accordingly, our objectives are threefold: (1) clarify how EGB is conceptualized and measured and map its multilevel drivers to specify candidate mechanisms; (2) evaluate the presence, strength, and direction of links between EGB and specific dimensions of well-being; and (3) identify testable propositions and design implications for future multilevel and longitudinal research.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Micro-level EGB Research and Conceptual Proliferation

The under-exploration of micro-level perspectives of employee green behaviors in the workplace has led to an increase in interest in investigating further individual-level approaches since early 2010s (Francoeur & Paillé, 2022).

Inducing a change in employees behaviour in the workplace is not an easy endeavor. As far as environmental issues are concerned, adopting solely environmental policies is not sufficient in driving employee green behaviour (Bissing-Olson et al., 2013). Hence, focusing on employee green behaviors is very important to ensure their mobilization in the effective implementation of sustainability agendas of organizations (Francoeur & Paillé, 2022).

The increased enthusiasm towards investigating green behaviors led to a proliferation of concepts and labels, such as: pro-environmental behaviors, organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBE) and employee green behaviors (Francoeur & Paillé, 2022). According to the authors, the most promising concepts among these constructs remain the non-green behaviors and required green task performance. This profusion of constructs led to an enhanced complexity of navigating the field of green behaviors in an organizational setting and a clear lack of consensus in the literature regarding the definitions of such social phenomena (Ciocirlan, 2017). Consequently, there is an undeniable need for establishing rigorous definitions of green behaviours to enable the operationalization of variables, their observation and measurement. As stated by Kirchherr, et al. (2017), "understanding social phenomena first requires defining the concepts that bring them to life as precisely as possible".

2.2. Bibliometric Synthesis and the Need to Consolidate the EGB–Well-Being Nexus

In response to this conceptual proliferation and ambiguity, recent scholarship has increasingly relied on systematic reviews and bibliometric science-mapping to structure the field, clarify dominant clusters, and surface unresolved questions. For example, Zhang et al. (2024) analyzed 275 Web of Science indexed EGB articles (2012–2023) and showed that the literature has expanded across disciplines, with research concentrating heavily on antecedents such as Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), organizational support, Green Human Resources Management (GHRM), leadership styles, organizational identification, and organizational climate, while noting that boundary conditions receive comparatively less attention.

Complementing this, Devaraju and Subramanyam (2025), using Scopus-only data (2014–2024) and tools such as VOSviewer/Biblioshiny, reported a consistent upward trajectory in EGB publications and highlighted influential publication venues (e.g., Journal of Cleaner Production; Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management), prolific authors (e.g., Yusliza; Ali), and leading contributing countries (e.g., China, Malaysia, India, United Kingdom). Similarly, Widyanty et al. (2025) mapped EGB knowledge structures into clusters spanning organizational factors, personal factors, and green HRM, and explicitly emphasized the need for longitudinal approaches to track change in EGB over time. In parallel, bibliometric work on employee well-being from a sustainability perspective (Costea & Momete, 2025) has mapped the employee well-being field itself (2016–2023) using citation, co-citation, and keyword co-occurrence analyses, identifying major hotspots such as job satisfaction and workplace flexibility, and indicating the prominence of well-being scholars (e.g., Bakker; Schaufeli) in the broader well-being knowledge base.

2.3. Research Gaps

These reviews map EGB as a concept, without underscoring whether, how, and under what conditions EGB and Employee well-being are associated and through which psychological mechanisms.

Based on the above-mentioned research gap, our review addresses three questions:

RQ1: How is EGB defined and measured, and what multilevel drivers/mechanisms are most consistently implicated?

RQ2: What is the overall relationship between EGB and employee well-being, and through which mechanisms or boundary conditions is it observed?

RQ3: Which testable propositions follow for cumulative multilevel and longitudinal research?

3. Methodology

As shown in Figure 1, we adopted the Scientific Procedures and Rationales for Systematic Literature Reviews (SPAR-4-SLR).

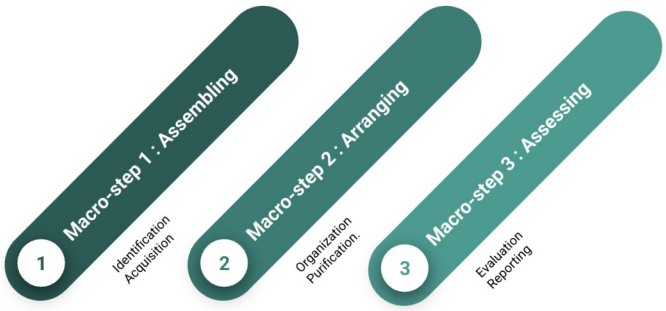


Figure 1. Systematic Literature Review Process based on the (SPAR-4-SLR) procedure, Paul et. al (2021)

3.1. Review Protocol

Following the SPAR-4-SLR review protocol, we adopted the described protocol in Table 1, and a qualitative component consisting of a thematic synthesis of the 10 most-cited/seminal articles to interpret mechanisms and contradictions identified by the bibliometric maps.

Stage & Sub-stage	Criterion	Rational
Assembling - Identification	Domain	This research aims to explore the relationship between Employee Green Behavior (EGB) and employee well-being. It will investigate the contextual, individual, and societal factors influencing the emergence of EGB, as well as the impact of EGB on employees' well-being within and beyond the workplace.
	Research questions	• **RQ1:** How is EGB defined and measured, and what multilevel drivers/mechanisms are most consistently implicated? • **RQ2:** What is the overall relationship between EGB and employee well-being, and through which mechanisms or boundary conditions is it observed? • **RQ3:** Which testable propositions follow for cumulative multilevel and longitudinal research?
	Source type	As we are at the exploratory stage of this research, the analyzed material will stem from a diversified portfolio of publications, including mainly scientific papers to ensure the inclusion of peer reviewed data. We will add results from book chapters and conference proceedings published in the last 5 years: 2019–2024, except for fundamental articles.
	Source quality	For academic papers and conference proceedings, we will use regular scientific databases such as Scopus & Web of Science (WOS) (for bibliometric details). In our case, mobilizing both databases will enable us to include the highest quality of papers due to the stringent indexing criteria of WOS in the EGB established area of research and include the newest articles in the emerging field of employee well-being.
Assembling - Acquisition	Search mechanism and material acquisition	Databases: • Scopus • WOS

Stage & Sub-stage	Criterion	Rational
	Search period	Core SLR window: 2019–2024 (recency rule). Seminal extension: 2012–2018 via backward/forward citation chasing; used for conceptual clarification only and excluded from screening counts and trend statistics.
	Search keywords	Search operators: • Boolean (AND, OR) Defining keywords: • Brainstorming • Extracting synonyms – Thesaurus, Merriam-Webster • Mapped articles
Arrangement - Organization	Organizing codes	Based on the aim of our research and the dimensions to be explored highlighted in the research questions, we suggest the following codes: 1. Exploring EGB 2. Relationship between EGB and employee flourishing 3. Gaps & future directions of research
Arrangement - Purification	Inclusion and exclusion of articles	**Inclusion criteria:** Peer-reviewed items in English (2012–2024) that address EGB, mainly in workplace settings (definition, drivers, measures, or outcomes). Items that focus only on well-being were retained only if they explicitly link to EGB. **Exclusion criteria:** editorials, corrections, non-scholarly items; studies not involving employees; topics solely on environmental performance without behavioral or well-being relevance. **Purification outcome:** after removing 60 duplicates, title/abstract/full-text screening against criteria retained n=323; no additional exclusions occurred post-purification because screening had already been applied to the deduplicated set. Screening applied only to the 2019–2024 core SLR set (Scopus + WoS). Foundational items published 2012–2018 were added later through citation chaining to support definitions/mechanisms and were not included in the screening flow. We limited RQ2 evidence to empirical studies that (a) operationalize EGB enacted by employees (in-role or OCB-E) in workplace settings; (b) operationalize employee well-being; and (c) report an association (e.g., correlation, regression/SEM, experiment). Student/consumer/public samples were excluded. This post-hoc audit used the deduplicated record set—no new database searches were conducted. This yielded n = 20 studies for RQ2; all other retained records remain in the mapping set for RQ1 (reviews used for conceptual orientation only and excluded from trend counts). Review papers were retained for conceptual orientation only, they were excluded from trend counts and not used as primary evidence for the EGB-well-being link.
Assessment	Analysis method	In our research, we used one of the well-established automated workflows of bibliometrics, i.e., the open source Bibliometric R-Package. This tool is capable of performing comprehensive bibliometric analysis (Aria & Cuccurullo, 2017) as developed by the scholars Massimo Aria & Corrado Cuccurullo in their study: "bibliometrix: An R-tool for comprehensive science mapping analysis". Besides the bibliometric analysis, foundational articles were identified based on the citing analysis and preliminary readings to conduct in-depth thematic analysis for the scientific summary.

Stage & Sub-stage	Criterion	Rational
Assessment	Reporting	The analysis enabled to structure the EGB & employee well-being landscape by analyzing the scientific production, collaboration analysis, citation analysis, conceptual structure analysis as well as thematic structure and evolution analysis. The qualitative review enabled us to synthesize the state-of-the-art knowledge regarding definitions, types and impact of EGB, explore the direct and indirect relationship with employee well-being including the mechanisms, mediating and moderating factors and identify knowledge gaps while proposing future research directions.

Table 1. Review protocol

3.2. Keywords and Search Strings

Keywords were selected based on cross-analysis of existing literature, extracting synonyms from Thesaurus, Merriam-Webster and Dictionnaire.reverso.net and based on authors' research background. The results of keywords search are presented in Table 2.

	Search Keywords
Employee	1. Employees 2. Individuals 3. Staff 4. Personnel 5. Labor Force 6. Workers 7. Collaborators 8. Human Capital 9. Human resources
Green	1. Green 2. Sustainable 3. Environmental/pro-environmental 4. Ecological 5. Eco-friendly 6. Eco-conscious 7. Eco-responsible 8. CSR/Corporate Social Responsibility
Behavior	1. Behavio*r 2. Conduct 3. Approach 4. Actions 5. Initiatives 6. Practices 7. Performance 8. Responsibility 9. Commitment
Well-being	1. Flourishing 2. Psychological Benefit 3. Well-being 4. Psychological well-being 5. Social well-being 6. Emotional well-being 7. Subjective well-being 8. Positive psychological capital 9. Thriving 10. Happiness

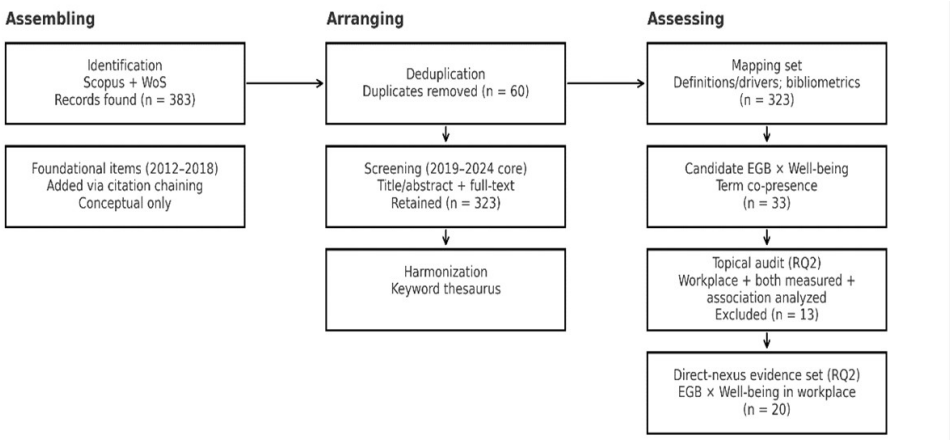
Table 2. Identified keywords

Search string: (("Employee" OR "Individual" OR "collaborator" OR "staff" OR "Personnel" OR "worker" OR "Labor force" OR "Human Capital" OR "Human resources") AND ("Green" OR "Sustainable" OR

"Pro-environmental" OR "Environmental" OR "Ecological" OR "Eco-friendly" OR "Eco-conscious" OR "Eco-responsible" OR "CSR" OR "Corporate Social Responsibility") AND ("Behavio?r" OR "Conduct" OR "Approach" OR "Action" OR "Initiative" OR "Commitment" OR "Practice" OR "Performance" OR "Responsibility") AND ("Flourishing" OR "Psychological Benefit" OR "Well-being" OR "Psychological well-being" OR "Emotional well-being" OR "Social well-being" OR "subjective well-being" OR "Positive psychological capital" OR "Thriving"))).

4. Results

Figure 2 (screening flow, core SLR) summarizes identification, duplicate removal, and screening decisions for the 2019–2024 corpus. A small "seminal extension" (2012–2018) was added post-screening via citation chasing for conceptual interpretation only and does not alter the screening counts.



Notes. Foundational (2012–2018) items inform definitions/mechanisms only.
Mapping set (n = 323) supports RQ1; Direct-nexus set (n = 20) supports RQ2.
Topical audit excluded non-workplace samples (for RQ2) or studies lacking both measures or an analyzed association.

Figure 2. Workflow From Search to Evidence Sets (Mapping n=323; Direct-Nexus n=20)

4.1. Bibliometric Analysis

4.1.1. Scientific Production

Descriptive statistics are shown in Table 3. These indicators justify our focus on mechanisms linking EGB and well-being rather than expanding further descriptive mapping.

Description	Results
Main Information About Data	
Timespan	2012:2024
Sources (Journals, Books, etc)	208
Documents	323
Annual Growth Rate %	**46.28**
Document Average Age	1.8
Average citations per doc	17.85
Document Contents	
Keywords Plus (ID)	734
Author's Keywords (DE)	1017
Authors	
Authors	1086
Authors of single-authored docs	33
Authors Collaboration	
Single-authored docs	35
Co-Authors per Doc	3.61
International co-authorships %	15.79
Document Types	
Article	231
Article; early access	12
Book	14
Book chapter	52
Conference paper	7
Review	7

Table. 3. Description of the combined corpus used for mapping (core SLR 2019–2024 + seminal extension 2012–2018)

The above overview of bibliometric analysis reflects the main indicators of a corpus of **323** documents, published between 2012-2024. This corpus is composed mainly of articles (231) with a smaller fraction from other formats such as book chapters (52).

Scientific production in the field of Employee Green Behavior and Employee well-being shows a strong growth rate of **46.28%** explained by the growing interest in analyzing the micro-level of the environmental strategy and linking it to employee well-being. Authorship analysis reveals a total of **1086** authors with significant collaborative research in this area with only 33 single-authored articles.

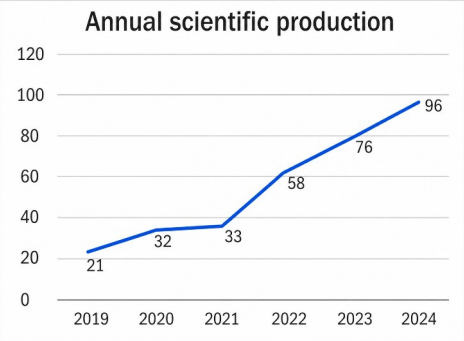


Figure 3. Annual scientific production

Annual counts (Figure 3) are provided; numerical values are reported in Appendix (Table 9).

Based on the 323 selected articles, the annual production analysis (from 2018 onwards) demonstrates a marked increase of scientific production from 2019 to 2024 with a significant acceleration observed from 2022 onwards demonstrating an increased interest in exploring the topic recently due to multiple reason such as the increased awareness of prioritizing employee well-being and achieving green/environmental performance.

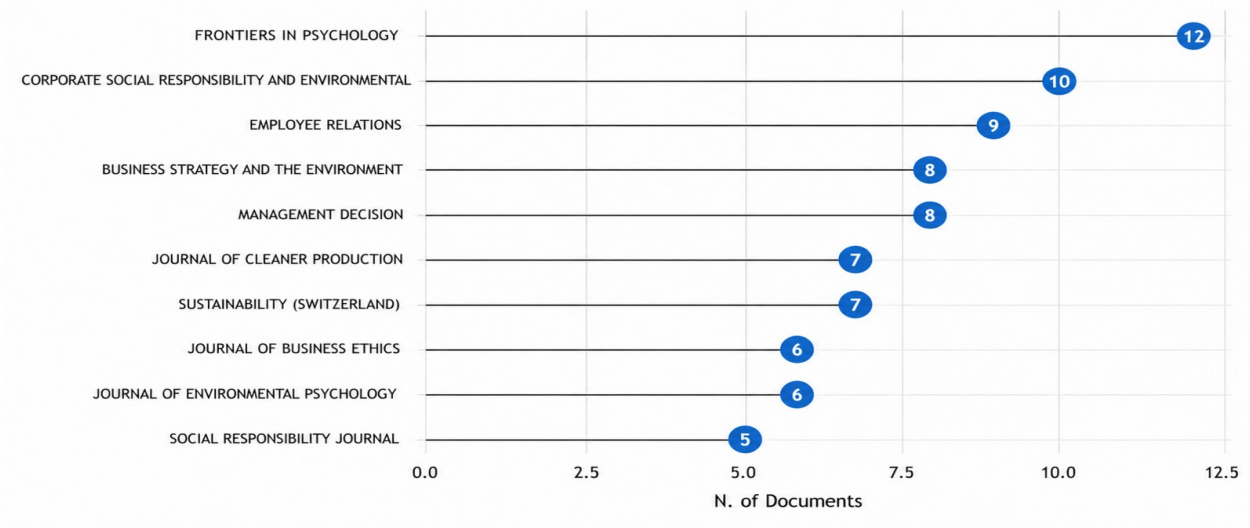


Figure 4. Most relevant journals based on the number of published documents

Frontiers in Psychology, Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management, and Employee Relations account for the largest shares of eligible studies, reflecting the field's joint anchoring in organizational psychology and sustainability/CSR outlets.

4.1.2. Authorship Analysis

Among the +1000 authors identified in our database, only few have published +2 articles (13), and most authors contributed with one article only. Below is the Lotka's law chart (Figure 5) that reveals that only a small percentage of authors in our database is responsible of a large fraction of publications. Consequently, and as shown in Figure 6 the vast majority have a h-index of 1 within the dataset, while only seven authors exhibit higher within-corpus h-index values. HAN H records the highest within-corpus h-index (h = 4).

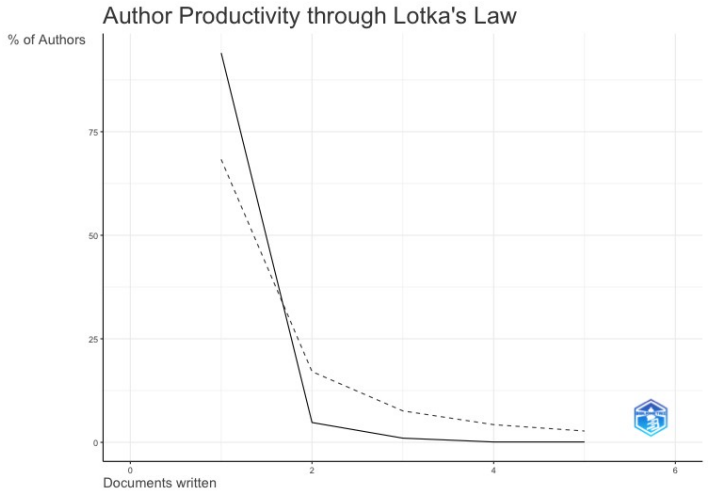


Figure 5. Authors Productivity through Lotka's Law

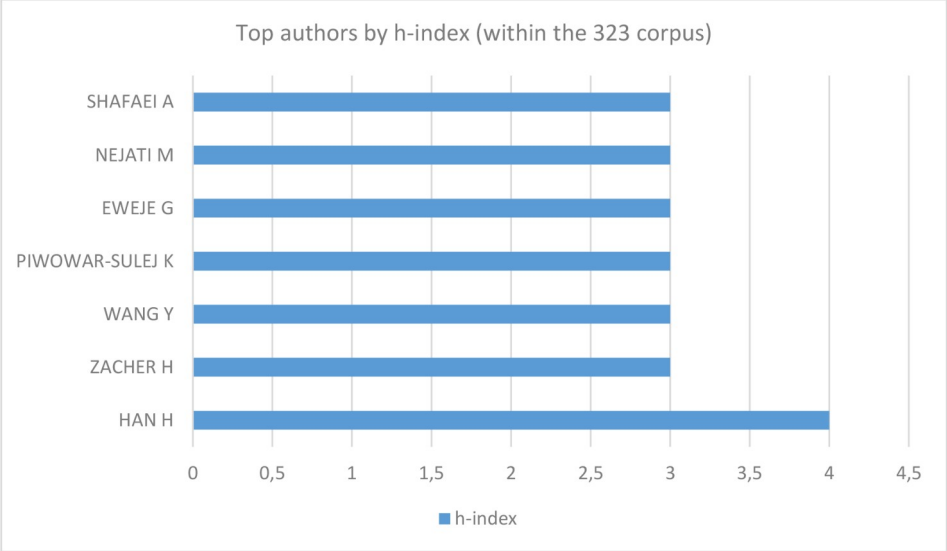


Figure 6. H-index of authors

Most-cited items used for conceptual anchoring (2012–2024).

The table (Table 4) above reveals that some papers, even not very recent (2012), are still relevant and influential in our area of research. It also demonstrates a diversity of journals with varied scopes including business ethics, organizational behavior, environmental psychology, tourism management, and corporate social responsibility, reflecting hence the interdisciplinarity of this topic requiring insights and contributions from different fields. The analysis of the 10 most cited articles will equip us with a robust thematic and scientific analysis to identify the relevant emerging themes and research gaps.

The bar chart (Figure 7) shows a positive correlation between the number of publications and total citations. That is the most productive countries are more likely to receive the higher number of citations. We notice India's dominance in terms of the number of corresponding authors and scientific production with 57 articles. The United States, Australia, and Canada stand out as leading countries in terms of citations and scientific production, indicating highly impactful research coming from these countries.

Paper	DOI	Total Citations
Paillé et al. (2014), *J Bus Ethics*	10.1007/s10551-013-1732-0	605
Bissing-Olson (2013), *J Organ Behav*	10.1002/job.1788	452
Martin et al. (2020), *J Environ Psychol*	10.1016/j.jenvp.2020.101389	376
Spreitzer et al. (2012), *Organ DYN*	10.1016/j.orgdyn.2012.01.009	284
Norton et al. (2017), *Journal of Organizational Behavior*	10.1002/job.2178	234
Su & Swanson (2019), *Tourism Management*	10.1016/j.tourman.2019.01.009	228
Ahmed et al. (2020), *Corp Soc Resp Env Ma*	10.1002/csr.1960	163
Di-Fabio & Peiró (2018), *Sustainability*	10.3390/su10072413	135
Ogunbode et al. (2022), *J Environ Psychol*	10.1016/j.jenvp.2022.101887	109
Sharma et al. (2020), *Business Strategy and the Environment*	10.1002/bse.2567	90

Table 4. The 10 most cited documents and authors in terms of citation

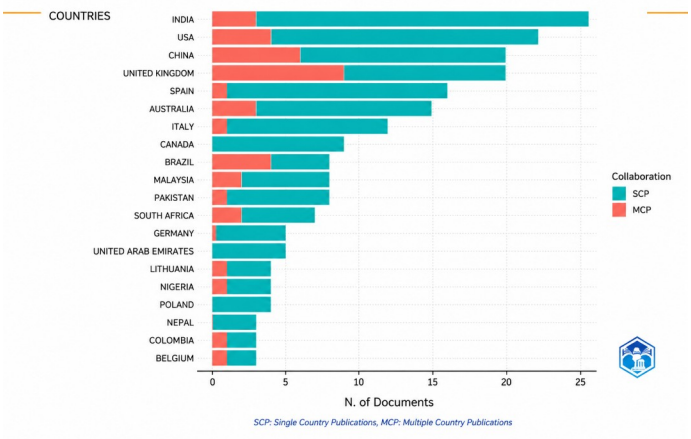


Figure 7. MCP and SCP distribution by country

Country	# of articles
India	57
USA	51
China	44
United Kingdom	44
Australia	30
Pakistan	30
Spain	29
Italy	24
Canada	16
Malaysia	15

Table 5. Top 10 countries in scientific production

4.1.3. Conceptual and Intellectual Structure

One of the foundational analyses provided by the bibliometrix tool is the conceptual and intellectual structure enabling to identify key themes, trend topics and network analysis. The returned results shows that the body of research analyzed is strongly focused on the interplay between employee well-being, corporate social responsibility (CSR), and firm performance.

Below is the tree map (Figure 8) and the wordcloud reflecting these key concepts (as defined in Table 6).

We rely on the TreeMap (Figure 8) as the primary conceptual snapshot; the Word Cloud is provided in Appendix (Figure 15).

Figure 8. Word TreeMap

Concept	Description
Performance & well-being	The link between the organizational/individual performance and employee well-being, covering concepts such as job satisfaction and happiness is a central theme explored in our database. Confirmed also with the co-word network analyses.
Corporate Social Responsibility	CSR emerges as a significant contextual factor that simultaneously promotes employee green behavior and employee well-being, while contributing to improved corporate performance.
Impact & mediating roles	The appearance of these concepts in the TreeMap demonstrates the focus of scholars in the selected database on exploring the impact and mediating roles of employee green behavior and employee well-being related concepts. Highlighting hence the complexity of these relationships and the growing interest in understanding the interplay between them.
Human Resources Management	HRM represents a key topic in recent studies about employee green behavior and employee well-being as a strong contextual factor, creating a conducive environment of integrating well-being within the environmental strategy.

Table 6. Definitions of Key Conceptual Themes

Topics Trends & Network Analysis

The trend topics (Figure 9) analysis reveals a sustained interest over the last two years in the following topics: job-satisfaction, behavior, HRM, performance, impact, and CSR. These trend topics reflect our identification and acquisition approach focusing on linking both employee green behavior and employee well-being. It also shows an increased interest in exploring both individual (behavior) and organizational (CSR) aspects of the environmental strategy. Taken together, these trends legitimize our focus on the EGB–well-being nexus as a niche yet rising theme and motivate the move from mapping to mechanism.

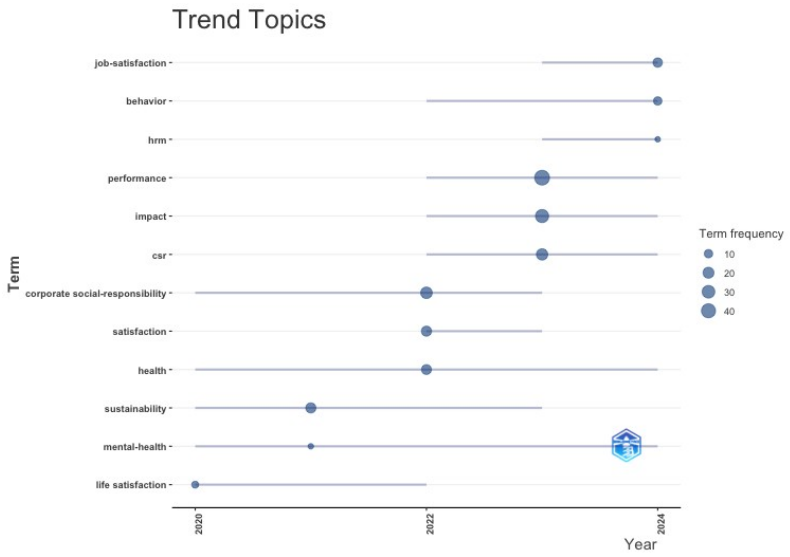


Figure 9. Trend topics

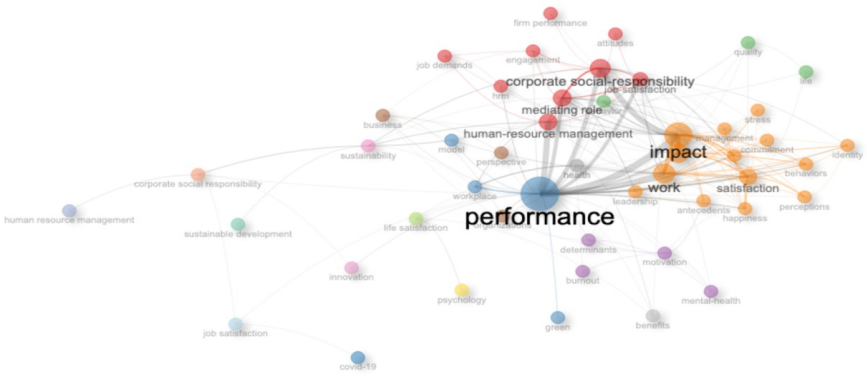


Figure 10. Network analysis of key concepts and longitudinal thematic evolution

The above network analysis (Figure 10) highlights the complexity and interconnectedness of concepts in our topic of research. The network highlights central co-occurrence around performance, corporate social responsibility, and human resource management. Centrality indicates salience in the literature, not causal priority, we therefore treat these clusters as conceptual anchors for RQ1, reserving directional claims for the RQ2 thematic synthesis.

The network analysis is confirmed by the below thematic map (Figure 11), where performance, impact and CSR are established as core themes **(High density, High relevance)** driving research in EGB and employee well-being. While "Sustainability", "Innovation", "Life satisfaction" represent well-established, foundational basic themes in the literature, that are highly relevant and might be less explored recently **(Low density, High relevance),** "gender differences", "emotions", and "mental health" represent niche themes **(Low relevance, High density)** that might be emerging areas of research, representing probably the next trends of research.

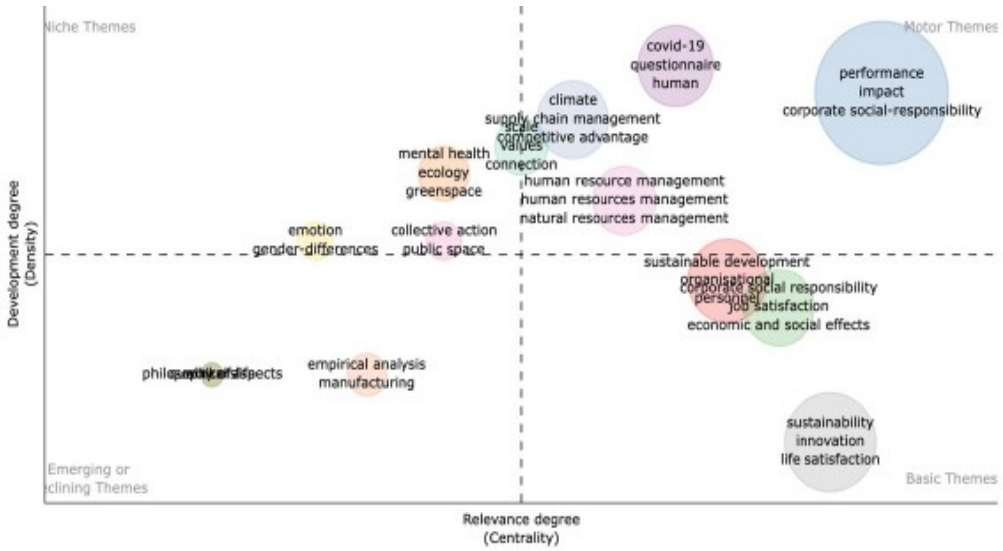


Figure 11. Thematic map

Thematic placement shows performance/impact/CSR as motor themes while mental health/emotions cluster as denser, less central niches, underscoring why direct tests of EGB's well-being effects remain scarce and why our synthesis emphasizes causal pathways.

The bibliometric phase bounds the construct space (definitions/operationalizations; multilevel drivers) and locates well-being conceptually; effect claims derive from the direct-nexus subset synthesized under RQ2.

Additionally the longitudinal thematic analysis below reinforces the dominant position of Corporate Social Responsibility that emerges as a key theme over the years, with the highest cumulative frequency by a wide margin, followed by Job Satisfaction and Human Resource Management. It also suggests a recent intensification (2021–2024) in well-being–related keywords (e.g., Happiness, Job Satisfaction) and sustainability framing (e.g., Sustainable Development, Pro-environmental Behaviour), indicating a shift from broader management topics toward employee-centered outcomes.

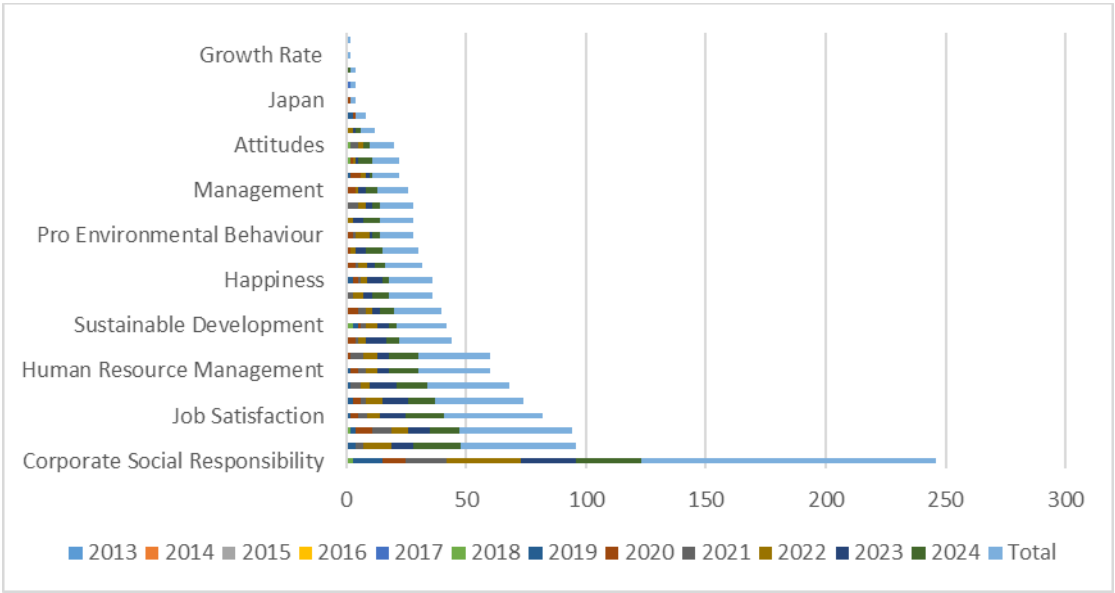


Figure 12. Longitudinal thematic evolution

4.1.4. Methodological Analysis of Reviewed Studies

We complemented the science-mapping outputs with a methodological screening of the corpus based on recurring method-related terms in titles, abstracts, and keywords. Overall, the EGB–well-being literature is methodologically dominated by quantitative survey-based studies, most often analyzed using SEM-family techniques (including PLS-SEM) and regression approaches, reflecting the field's emphasis on testing explanatory models of antecedents, mechanisms, and employee outcomes. Qualitative approaches (e.g., interviews, case-based inquiry, and thematic/content analysis) also appear as a meaningful stream, typically used to deepen construct understanding, contextualize organizational practices, or refine conceptualizations of green behaviors and well-being. By contrast, explicit references to longitudinal/time-lagged/diary designs, multilevel modeling, and experimental or intervention approaches are comparatively less frequent in the bibliographic fields, indicating that much of the evidence base is better suited to documenting associations and plausible pathways than establishing causal effects over time. This methodological profile reinforces calls for stronger causal identification and the adoption of longitudinal analyses to explore how the EGB–well-being nexus evolves over time.

4.2. Review of Seminal Literature: Conceptualizations of EGB, Mediating and Moderating Factors of EGB-EWB Nexus

4.2.1. EGB Conceptualization

4.2.1.1. EGB Definition in the Literature Review

Based on the core SLR findings (2019–2024) and a targeted set of seminal works (2012–2018) retrieved via forward/backward citation chasing, we conducted a thematic synthesis to clarify definitions, mechanisms, and gaps. We weight recent empirical items in the thematic synthesis and use older, highly-cited works only for definitional and mechanistic context.

Emergence of Positive Sustainability & Positive Healthy Organizations

By drawing on the analogy of positive psychology & positive health framework, a new perspective has emerged in sustainability, calling for "positive sustainability". The new perspective goes beyond the traditional framework of just "maintaining resources both quantitatively and qualitatively" for future generations, to embrace both respecting and regenerating resources. (Di-Fabio, 2017b). The new perspective focuses not only on using renewable resources and preventing pollution but also on purifying processes with a layer of accountability regarding the health/well-being and the renewing and upgrading of resources via the processes of "re-well-being, up-well-being and crea(te)-well-being" (Di-Fabio, 2017b), enhancing hence positive healthy organizations to sustain not only the ecological and socio-economic resources but also to sustain the well-being of individuals and organizations.

Environmental Psychology/Psychology of Sustainability

The concept of sustainability has been continuously extended and enriched over the last decades, to include not only matters related to the planet's health but also to human's health. This association is quite tangible in the Sustainable Development Goals, which include good health and well-being to ensure the prosperity for all human beings (Di-Fabio & Peiró, 2018). Hence a new field has emerged linking psychology perspectives with sustainability science to embed the promotion of well-being of individuals and organizations within the sustainable development framework. This field evolves using a transdisciplinary approach (Di-Fabio & Cooper, 2023) by blending knowledge from different fields to create a comprehensive framework of sustainability for various environments (natural, personal, social and organizational).

In-Role Behaviors: Employee Green Behavior

Exploring employee green or pro-environmental behaviors is an emerging field in organizational psychology (Bissing-Olson et al., 2013).

According to Paillé et al (2014), few studies have focused on the explanation of individual processes of triggering employees' motivation of adopting green behaviors at work by HRM practices. The extant body of research is more skewed towards analyzing the functional or strategic level of the link between HRM and environmental performance. It is crucial to understand how employees make decisions to adopt a green behavior and in fine contribute to the success of the environmental strategy.

Pro-environmental behavior in general is defined as "individual activity that minimizes harm to, or benefits the natural environment", as conceptualized by Steg and Vlek (2009). Although its exploration as a broad green behavior has been conducted for years, its investigation in the workplace context remains relatively recent.

Task-related pro-environmental behavior is defined by Bissing-Olson et al as the "the extent to which employees complete their required work tasks in environmentally friendly ways". That is, seeking to protect the environment and natural resources in completing their core job tasks.

We can differentiate between high pro-environmental behavior and low ones.

The first case can be illustrated the example of the hairdresser when he/she reduces electricity and water consumption while cutting a client's hair. Whereas a consultant who prints a report using single-sided paper is an illustration of the second case.

In 2012, Ones and Dilchert conceptualized for the first time the employee green behavior as a workplace behavior, contributing or detracting from environmental sustainability. It was explored by other scholars using a multilevel approach, exploring both contextual and individual predictors (Kim, Kim et al., 2017; Norton et al., 2015).

Extra-Role Behaviors: Self-Starting Approach

Continuous involvement and engagement of individuals is capital in ensuring the effective translation of the strategic plans into operational reality (Ramus & Steger, 2000) as well as committing to the timely implementation of sustainability- driven agendas, via in-role performance and extra-role initiatives, represented as Organizational Citizenship Behaviors towards Environment (OCB-E) which is defined as "voluntary behaviors not specified in official job descriptions that, through the combined efforts of individual employees, help to make the organization and/or society more sustainable" (Lamm et al. 2013, p. 165).

That is; by adopting OCB-E, employees go beyond their job duties to help the organization become greener, by making decisions at their own level. This type of contribution is not linked to employees' contracts and stems from an individual motivation and willingness to deploy discretionary green acts toward their job (eco-initiatives), their colleagues via mutual support (eco-helping) and towards the overall organizational commitment (eco-civic) (Boiral & Paillé, 2012).

Ecopreneurship was conceptualized by Pichel 2003 as another illustration of discretionary employee green or pro-environmental behavior. It was described as "an extraordinary type of behavior that derives not from an employee's job description or the management's requirements, but from personal engagement" (Pichel, 2003, p. 141).

Another concept reflecting the extra-role engagement of employees in preventing environmental issues and contributing to the environmental commitment of the company is proactive pro-environmental behavior. Similarly to OCB it's defined by Bissing-Olson et al. (2013) as "the extent to which employees take initiative to engage in environmentally friendly

behaviors that move beyond the realm of their required work tasks". These behaviors include taking actions that are not required such as: problem-identification, creative problem-solving, continuous improvement, etc.

Importance of OCB-E

Scholars have discussed the importance of Organizational Citizenship Behavior towards environment as an important contributor to support environmental strategies (Paillé et al., 2014) and contribute to the development. It enables us to foster environmental innovations due to, a.o., their proximity to industrial processes. For example, rather than relying solely on end-of-pipe technologies, employees can help address toxic emissions by suggesting less expensive preventive solutions (Hart, 1995).

It is recognized to be useful for three main reasons:

1. Preventive approaches enabling to avoid pollutions by reducing it at the source (Hanna et al. 2000; Hart, 1995).

2. Tackle the complexity and diversity of environmental aspects to cover all the "possible desirable behaviors" required to address environmental issues (Jiang & Bansal, 2003).
3. Achieve environmental objectives of the company by innovating through spontaneous behaviors at the workplace (Branzei et al. 2004; Daily et al. 2009; Fernández et al., 2003; Hart 1995; Walley & Stubbs, 2000).

Additionally, environment sustainability champions are needed to provide a common understanding of environmental issues and promote environmental initiatives across organizations (Andersson & Bateman, 2000) and in fine enable the corporate sustainability integration. Three steps are required to achieve corporate environmental championing: identifying environmental issues, packaging environmental issues, and selling environmental issues, mediated with an inducive organizational context (Andersson & Bateman, 2000).

4.2.2. EGB's Mediating Mechanisms

Throughout the thematic analysis of EGB from a well-being perspective, we have noticed the existence of a substantial body of research positioning EGB, and more precisely, the organizational citizenship behavior toward the environment (OCB-E), as a mediator that links organizational-level sustainability actions to environmental and employee-related outcomes.

4.2.2.1. OCB-E as a Mediator between SHRM and Environmental Performance

OCB-E enable employees to act autonomously and freely to improve the effectiveness of environmental initiatives and share tacit knowledge (Paillé et al., 2014).

Considering the extra-role aspect of these pro-environmental behaviors, they are outside of the HRM system's control (Paillé et al., 2014) but can be stimulated by SHRM practices (Jabbour & Santos 2008; Jackson & Seo 2010) and in fine lead to environmental performance.

Beyond the stimulating effect of HRM on the emergence of OCB-E, empirical evidence supports the mediating role of OCB-E in linking Strategic Human Resources Management (SHRM) to environmental performance (Paillé et al., 2014).

In their study, Paillé et al. (2014) examined the relationships between: SHRM, OCB-E, internal environmental concern and environmental performance by surveying CEOs, Top Management Teams, and frontline workers in Chinese manufacturing firms. They confirmed the positive relationship between SHRM and OCB-E on the one hand, and between OCB-E and environmental performance on the other hand. They also demonstrated through their study that high internal environmental concern positively moderates the relationship between SHRM and OCB-E, a result that we will analyse later in the moderating factors of EGB adoption.

This study, alongside others that will be analyzed in the upcoming sections, emphasizes the complex and interconnected influence of contextual and individual factors on the overall environmental performance. It showcases the important role of individual green actions, as a critical mediating mechanism to activate the role of organizational-level initiatives and strategies. However, it doesn't allow for a cross-sector generalization and it is specific to the Chinese organizational context and merits further investigation across different cultures (e.g., African contexts) and economic sectors (e.g., services).

4.2.2.2. Psychological Climate as a Mediating Context

The concept of green psychological climate emerges as a key mediating mechanism, facilitating the adoption of EGB.

While the construct of organizational culture exists since decades and refers to the shared values, beliefs and expectations among members of an organization, including values, norms, ideologies and conventions of behavior (Kirke, 2005; Tierney, 2008), the psychological climate is relatively recent, and reflects the individual level of organizational climate.

On the organizational level, organizational culture serves as a unique and autonomous, self-sustained system of meaning within an organization (Tierney, 2008), and hence exerts a profound effect on individual's behavior and

resistance to change (Kirke, 2005). On the individual level, Psychological Climate has emerged as a significant contribution to conceptualize employees perceptions and interpretations of work environment (Baltes et al., 2009), with two levels of perceptions: individual referent, reflecting the perception of the employee's experience and the organizational related to the perception of the organizational environment in general (Baltes et al., 2009).

Several studies exist on the positive impact of psychological climate on promoting pro-social and citizenship behavior by impacting both in-role and extra-role performance (Bernetti et al., 2020), as the perception and interpretation is needed by employees before acting upon it (James et al., 2008).

When the policies and practices of organizations are related to its environmental sustainability, we talk then about the green psychological climate (Norton et al., 2012; Norton et al., 2015). Previous research has demonstrated that green psychological climate is positively related to EGB (Dumont et al., 2017; Norton et al., 2014). More precisely, some scholars have demonstrated only a partial mediating effect of green psychological climate in the GHRM-EGB relationship (Gupta & Kaur, 2024). Other constructs also play a role in this mediation, such as the employee green commitment (Jnaneswar, 2023).

Others found that there is no direct relationship between green psychological climate and next-day EGB, requiring hence interactions between green behavioral intentions and green psychological climate, by emphasizing rather the moderating effect of this concept (Norton et al., 2017).

This apparent inconsistency supports that despite the reported positive link between green psychological climate and EGB in cross-sectional studies, there is a weaker within-person effect in daily designs, highlighting that mediating processes may be contingent on temporal and contextual factors (Norton et al., 2017).

4.2.2.3. CSR-EGB Linkages Via Individual and Contextual Mediators

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) has also been widely examined as a key antecedent of EGB, with empirical evidence supporting the positive role of both contextual factors, such as green HRM and individual variable such as organizational trust.

To understand the critical role of CSR, we deem it necessary to define this concept and its different dimensions. Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) includes the activities conducted by a company to address social issues, beyond its economic interest (Dibeu, 2011) (Darwish & El-Naggar, 2021). According to Pomering and Johnson (2009) it exceeds the sole objective of minimizing negative externalities and maximizing positive ones.

Despite the variety of definitions, it encompasses generally environmental, social, economic, stakeholder and voluntariness aspects (Dahlsrud, 2008). Its impact on financial performance and its perception by external stakeholders has been largely studied in the literature. However, there is relatively little research about CSR's impact on internal stakeholders, such as employees (Su & Swanson, 2019).

Previous studies have explored the impact of CSR on employees' organizational commitment and turnover intentions (Kim et al., 2016). More precisely it has been demonstrated that employees in frontline services for example, had higher belief of performing important work when working in organizations supporting CSR activities, which in turn increases their job satisfaction (Kim et al. (2018). Others have demonstrated that supportive CSR practices positively affect employees' overall job performance (Chaudhary, 2020) and boost their organizational citizenship behavior by enhancing organizational identification (Freire et al., 2022). CSR's impact on employee behavior in general can be stronger in collectivist cultures and among employees who value CSR (Zulfiqar et al., 2019; Chaudhary, 2020).

Regarding employee green behavior, empirical evidence supports the positive impact of CSR on employee green behavior, with this relationship being mediated by multiple factors. These include contextual factors, such as Green HRM, organizational culture, and green culture (Aukhoon et al., 2024), as well as individual and relational factors, such as green work engagement, supervisor–subordinate relationships, organizational trust, and organizational identification (De-Ocampo-Clamor et al., 2023).

Together, these findings position CSR as a key antecedent of EGB, by placing employee-organization variables as key translators leading to employee-level and environmental outcomes.

4.2.3. Moderators of EGB

4.2.3.1. Internal Environmental Concern

Environmental concern refers to the recognition of the seriousness of environmental issues, translating into beliefs and behaviors aimed at preventing and mitigating environmental risks. More precisely, scholars have positioned environmental concern at the level of assessment or an attitude towards behaviors with an environmental impact (Fransson & Gärling, 1999). Some studies have demonstrated the impacts of positional, individual and institutional factors on environmental concern, in non-organizational setting, such as: gender, education and environmental beliefs (Wong & Wan, 2011).

Regarding its link with EGB, internal environmental concern has been shown to strengthen the relationship between SHRM and OCB-E. As mentioned earlier in the mediating mechanisms paragraph, Paillé et al. (2014) found that high internal environmental concern positively moderates the relationship between SHRM and OCB-E.

In other terms, the alignment of attitudes, beliefs and behaviors is required to translate sustainability related organizational-level initiatives into employee-level actions.

4.2.3.2. Green Psychological Climate

As discussed earlier, the green psychological climate, bridges the gap between GHRM and EGB in various ways, as a mediator but also as a moderator, underscoring hence the critical importance of the presence of a supportive green climate.

Norton, et al. (2017) have studied the impact of green psychological climate on employee green behavior, by analyzing both between-person and within person variabilities. They have demonstrated, by collecting data from employees in the dairy sectors across 10 days, that within-person level, there is an indirect relationship between green psychological climate and next-day EGB, through the interaction with behavioral intentions. In other words, individual intentions alone are not sufficient in triggering EGB, psychological climate is a key moderator in this relationship, explaining both between-persons and within-persons variability.

4.2.3.3. The Role of Nature Contact and Nature Connectedness in Shaping Pro-Environmental Behavior

Considering the inter-connectedness of environmental sustainability (planetary health) and human health, researchers have called for integrating research agendas of these two challenges (Fleming et al., 2019; Watts et al., 2015). Since then, we have witnessed more studies focusing on connecting both environmental sustainability and physical/mental health using the area of the contact with the natural environment. Beyond analyzing this connection some researchers focused also on examining the association of nature contact and nature connectedness on pro-environmental behavior (Boiral et al., 2019).

Th impact of nature contact on human health and well-being has been wildly explores in the literature, enabling to distinguish between 2 types of nature contact established by Keniger et al. (2013):

a) **Direct contact with nature** be it, incidental via an exposure to a neighborhood greenspace for example or intentional such as visiting natural spaces.

b) **Indirect contact with nature:** because of spending more time on screens, another form of indirect contact with nature has emerged in the literature related to consuming nature-based TV and radio programs.

Nature connectedness has been defined as the subjective sense of individual's relationship with the natural world (Martin & Czellar, 2016). Several scales exist to measure it, with both emotional and cognitive aspects. It has been demonstrated to be linked to high levels of eudaimonic well-being and pro-environmental behaviors. The interplay of nature contact and nature connectedness has been explored, establishing the mediating role the nature connectedness between nature contact and positive outcomes. Analyzing the interplay between nature connectedness, nature contact and well-being has been explored for the first time by Boiral et al. (2019), in a large scale survey, The Monitor of Engagement with the Natural Environment, covering 4960 adults in UK. It turns out that intentional contact with nature by visiting natural spaces for example once a week, is positively

associated with general health. It was proven to be associated with higher eudaimonic well-being in moderation models for individuals with low nature connectedness.

Consequently, maintaining a contact with nature is positively related to the propensity of individuals to adopt household pro-environmental behaviors and protect the health of the planet

Previous studies have examined how nature contact, whether by spending nature-related leisure time or watching nature documentary, impacted the endorsement of pro-environmental attitudes. Arendt and Matthes (2014) demonstrated that participants who are highly connected to nature were the only ones to increase their donations to environmental organizations after watching a nature documentary. That is: *"for pro-environmental behaviors at least, contact with nature may promote the most beneficial outcomes among individuals who are already highly connected with it"* (Boiral et al., 2019).

Hence, nature connectedness moderates the relationship between nature contact, wellbeing and pro-environmental behaviours (Martin et al., 2020). Nature contact is more effective in generating broader pro-environmental behaviors such as volunteering when participants demonstrated high level of nature connectedness and a positive disposition towards the environment.

In an organizational setting, Boiral et al. (2019) have explored the practical implications of nature connectedness in natural resources companies. Their results reveal an overall feeling of disconnection from natural ecosystems across the respondents and the importance of the latter in generating multiple positive outcomes, such as the awareness of environmental issues, the adoption of green behaviors at the workplace and an improved employee well-being (Boiral et al., 2019).

4.2.3.4. Affect Activation and Pro-Environmental Attitudes

The overall impact of experiencing positive emotions and affect in our lives has been largely investigated by numerous psychologists. Fredrickson (1998), conceptualized one the salient theories in this area, entitled: the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. According to this theory, experiencing positive emotions broadens our momentary thought-action repertoire and serves to build personal resources including, physical and intellectual resources, and social and psychological ones. Previous studies have already demonstrated the impact of this thought-action repertoire, not only in our personal lives but also in the workplace. For example, in her later study, Fredrickson (2003) has already demonstrated the role of these personal resources in driving positive behaviors at the workplace.

Other authors investigated the role of positive affect as a predictor of pro-social or altruistic behavior for the public good (e.g., George, 1991; Isen, 1999; Isen & Baron, 1991), such as pro-environmental behavior (Griskevicius, Tybur, & Van den Bergh, 2010).

Considering the broadened thought-action repertoire, employees experiencing positive affect are expected to more likely consider alternative and positive ways of thinking, by mobilizing the developed personal resources, and hence more likely to conduct their work in a more environmentally friendly way (Bissing-Olson et al., 2013).

In examining pro-environmental behavior more specifically, other nuances have been added to the research design to understand precisely how the positive affect drives this behavior, be it activated or inactivated. In their work, Bissing-Olson et al. (2013), examined the role of both activated and inactivated daily affect to identify the unique predictors of pro-environmental behaviors. They state that, the level of activation plays an important role in this interplay, not largely explored before in this area, despite it being widely investigated in organizational research in general (e.g., Amabile et al., 2005; Fritz & Sonnentag, 2009; Seo, et al., 2010).

Building on seminal models of affect (Larsen & Diener, 1992; Russell, 1980; Watson & Tellegen, 1985), Bissing-Olson et al. (2013) distinguish four families of affect based on affective valence and activation level (Figure 12).

	Activated	Inactivated
Positive	Feeling excited Euphoric Enthusiastic	Feelings of contentment Being at rest Feeling relaxed
Negative	Distress Annoyance Fear Nervousness	Dullness Tiredness Drowsiness Sluggishness

Table 7. Daily affect categorization derived from Bissing-Olson et, al.(2013)'s study

Consequently, each type of daily affect (activated vs inactivated) impacted differently the pro-environmental behavior of employees, with the moderation of pro-environmental attitude (planned behavior theory). Whereas the inactivated positive affect was proven to be positively related to the task-related pro-environmental behavior, the activated daily positive affect was more linked to proactive pro-environmental behavior, with a stronger effect in the case of a low pro-environmental attitude.

That is, and building on the broaden-and-build theory, the proactive pro-environmental behavior of employees with low pro-environmental attitude is more likely to be triggered by activated positive daily affect, compared to their colleagues with high pro-environmental attitude, who are already engaged in this type of behavior. Hence, experiencing feelings of excitement and enthusiasm could be a true catalyst of self-starting and change-oriented behaviors.

4.2.4. IndividuaL Level Predictors and Antecedents of EGB

The focus on predicting and analyzing employee green behavior has increasingly grown in organizational psychology research. In their study, Bissing-Olson et al. (2013) highlighted that previous studies have largely focused on between-individuals' differences in investigating pro-environmental behavior, by exploring the impact of attitudes and personality characteristics (e.g., personal norms, intrinsic motivation, etc.) (e.g., Lee et al., 1995), with a limited explanatory dimension.

Little focus has been directed towards understanding the impact of the within individuals' fluctuations, such as green behavioral intentions, despite its demonstrated relevance in explaining employee behaviors such as task performance and OCB. Especially that it may interact with individual differences to shape employee behaviors (Dunlap et al., 2000).

While between individuals' factors have been widely explored in explaining Employee Green Behavior, the understanding of within-person variations is still untapped in the literature (Norton et al., 2015). Hence the call of researchers to investigate these factors to help managers understand the emergence of EGB within the workplace (Bissing-Olson et al., 2015).

4.2.4.1. Green Behavioral Intentions

When analyzing the predictors and explaining factors of employee green behavior, scholars have explored the role of green behavioral intentions, drawing on the theory of planned behavior. This theory was initiated as the Theory of Reasoned Action in 1980 (*The Theory of Planned Behavior*, s. d.) with the aim of predicting individuals intention to adopt a behavior on which they exert a self-control, by mobilizing two main components: the motivation (intention) and the ability (behavioral control, Figure 13). It demonstrated its effectiveness in explaining a wide range of behaviors such as smoking and breastfeeding.

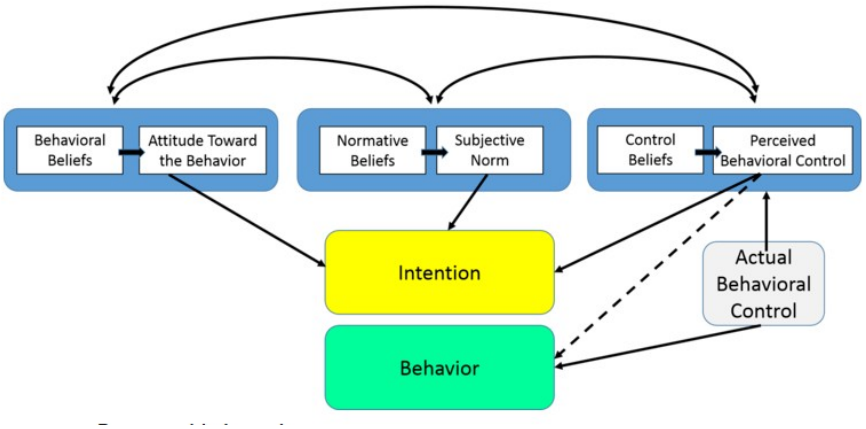


Figure 13. The six constructs of the Theory of planned behavior, Behavioral Change Models website

The association between the intention and the EGB has been examined in different ways. Some researchers referred to the green behavioral intention as a proxy of measuring the EGB (Cordano & Frieze, 2000; Greaves et al., 2013), and demonstrated the small to moderate effect of interventions used to change the intention on the enacted behavior (Webb et al., 2006). Other meta-analyses exist covering the effect of the green behavioral intention and the subsequent behavior using between-persons design, with few analyzing the within-persons perspective.

We therefore treat intentions as a proximal antecedent of EGB while assessing whether EGB, in turn, predicts well-being beyond intentions.

4.2.4.2. Climate Anxiety as a Motivational Driver

Most respondents to a large-scale survey conducted among +70k Facebook users across 31 countries reported a certain level of anxiety related to climate change, ranging from "somewhat" to "very" worried (Ogunbode et al., 2022). A survey that reflects the alarming rising level of people experiencing psychological distress related to environmental degradation. This distress has been conceptualized as "eco-anxiety" or "climate anxiety" reflecting negative emotions such as worry, guilt and hopelessness (Ojala et al., 2021). Previous research has already demonstrated the association between climate change and psychological distress (Searle & Gow, 2010). This negative emotional state could lead to an enhanced pro-environmental action, driven by a "practical anxiety" that pushes people to rethink their lifestyles and behavior (Pihkala, 2020), and hence encourage pro-environmental behavior. Previous studies have demonstrated the link between worry and anxiety about climate change and pro-environmental behavior (Bouman et al., 2020; Stanley et al., 2021; Wullenkord et al., 2021).

In another study, drawing on Stern's (2000) classification and the established role of negative emotions as motivators of action Weber (2006), Ogunbode et al. (2022) examined how climate anxiety relates to private-sphere pro-environmental behaviors and engagement in environmental activism across different geographical contexts. They found that climate anxiety is overall related positively to pro-environmental behavior in the private sphere, predicting actions such as avoiding food waste and saving energy at home. It also predicted participation in climate protests as a form of climate activism, especially in European, democratic, and relatively affluent countries.

This study also highlighted some explanatory factors of cross-national variations such as culture, contextual barriers, and the wealth of the country. In terms of culture, a stronger link between climate anxiety and pro-environmental behavior was observed in individualistic societies, where people have less connection with social norms and act on their personal preferences, as well as in richer countries vs countries in the global south facing multiple barriers (e.g., financial, political, insufficient knowledge, etc.)

Contextual barriers also play an important role as more privileged groups (e.g., high socioeconomic status) for whom feelings about climate change, "more readily translate" to climate action.

These findings support that climate anxiety predicts both private-sphere pro-environmental behaviors and environmental activism, particularly under favorable contextual conditions.

4.2.4.3. Environmental self-identity

Our perception of ourselves, including our characteristics, traits, relationships, and goals plays an important role is shaping our behavior (DeMarree & Rios-Morrison, 2012). This perception represents the self-concept and represents a dynamic multidimensional psychological construct, covering multiple domains, including our relationship with the environment. In the latter area it's called the Environmental self-identity, reflecting how we perceive our relationship with the natural world and consequently impacts our behaviors and commitments towards the environment (Kashima et al., 2014). Previous studies have demonstrated the mediating role of self-identity between collectivism, organizational culture and green empowerment and employee's green behavior (Xing & Mohamed Zainal, 2024).

Green Self-identity is one the components of this broader concept and represents a significant predictor of green purchasing intentions and behaviors (Sharma et al., 2020). It also plays a mediating role between green knowledge and green buying behavior, as well as between various leadership styles and employee green behavior, such as the environmentally specific transformational leadership (ETFL), which enhances employee's green behavior via the development of their green self-identity (Huang et al., 2023). Hence, developing a positive green self-identity at the workplace can be a key lever in activating the role of organizational culture and leadership style in shaping employee green behavior.

4.2.5. EGB Outcomes

4.2.5.1. CSR, EGB and Well-Being

One of the positive outcomes of CSR demonstrated in the literature is an improved employee well-being. Studies have clearly shown that a positive perception of CSR can improve the quality of employee work life (Kim, Rhou et al., 2017). It is suggested that CSR helps create a positive work environment leading to a greater employee well-being (Su & Swanson, 2019).

In other cases, CSR helped alleviate mental health issues such as depression and anxiety via the mechanism of sense-making and having a sense of purpose at work. (Kim et al., 2023). In fact, employees who feel that their work contributes to a higher purpose, serving social goals, experience an enhancement of their mental well-being. (Bayona & Maya, 2023). One of the first studies to explore the impact of CSR on employee well-being was conducted among hotel employees, by analyzing the mediating role of organizational trust and organizational identification (Su & Swanson, 2019). The study demonstrated that CSR efforts can help to improve employee well-being in a hotel context. They also demonstrated a positive association between employees 'well-being and their level of engagement in green behavior. In another study, authors demonstrated that well-being has a full mediating role in the relationship between CSR and green behavior, while also mediating the link between environmental awareness and green behavior of employees (Ahmed et al., 2020).

Together these studies position employee well-being as both an outcome and a reinforcing mechanism within a virtuous cycle of sustainability-wellbeing.

4.2.5.2. EGB and Employee Well-Being Via Self-Esteem

Despite the abundant literature about exploring the predictors and factors enabling the manifestation of the employee green behavior, only few studied its impact and outcomes on employees (Zhang et al., 2024). At the individual level, EGB enhances job satisfaction (Aguilera et al., 2007), impacts positively employees professional, physical and mental health development (Bauer & Aiman-Smith, 1996) and fosters their well-being (Zhang et al., 2021).

In their study, Zhang et al., (2021) explored how employee green behavior impacts employee well-being by using the mediating role of self-esteem. They adopted and demonstrated the reliability of a four-dimensional measurement framework of EGB, composed of: green learning, individual practice, influencing others and organization voices.

Results indicate that EGB correlates positively with employee well-being, partly via self-esteem. This aligns with evidence that perceived CSR improves well-being via sense-making, trust, and identification, positioning EGB as a plausible direct contributor to well-being to be tested explicitly.

4.2.5.3. Leadership Style, Sustainability, and Employee Flourishing

The matter of associating sustainability and employee well-being has been gradually critical due to the negative impact of recent crises on the quality of working life (Peiro et al., 2014). In their study, Peiro et al., 2014, identified four combinations of the "happy and productive worker" as shown in Figure 14.

	Happy	Unhappy
Productive	Happy Productive Worker	Unhappy Productive Worker
Unproductive	Happy Unproductive Worker	Unhappy Unproductive Worker

Table 8. Combinations of the "happy and productive worker" model (Peiro et al., 2014)

These possibilities open multiple reflections about trade-offs practitioners and researchers should consider between the organizational sustainability (highly productive) and individual well-being sustainability. Promoting a virtuous circle maximizing both is necessary and required in the implementation of Positive healthy organizations' principles. This concept is centered on promoting growth and success instead of focusing on avoiding risks and failure (Di-Fabio, 2017a).

To integrate the challenges of real and sustainable HRM in a comprehensive way, Di-Fabio and Peiró (2018) introduced the "new integrated leadership style for the sustainability of human capital and organizations" called: human capital sustainability leadership and suggested a scale to assess it by aiming at developing healthy organizations (performance) and healthy employees (flourishing and resilient). They integrated in this construct their definition of sustainability leadership including ethical leadership, mindful leadership and, servant leadership and analyzed its psychometric properties. They found that there is a positive relationship between the Human Capital Sustainability Leadership Scale and the Flourishing Scale from a leader's standpoint.

That is, adopting a comprehensive leadership style, perfectly associating the health of organizations and individuals, enabled leaders to perceive themselves as flourishing, with a social and psychological prosperity in addition to well-being in relationships, self-esteem, presence of purpose and optimism. According to the researchers, this is an "important starting point" for leaders to be able to promote the flourishing of their teams.

This new construct lays the foundation for research on sustainability-driven leadership and its role in supporting both environmental performance and employee well-being, thereby creating favorable conditions under which EGB and well-being can coexist, in line with the principles of positive healthy organizations.

5. Discussion

This review integrates bibliometric mapping of the 2019–2024 core SLR with a thematic synthesis that draws, when necessary, on a small 2012–2018 seminal extension for definitional and mechanistic clarity. We clarify EGB's scope and multilevel antecedents and interrogate mixed evidence on the EGB-well-being link: direct tests are rare, some contextual effects (e.g., green climate) vary by design (cross-sectional vs. within-person), and mechanisms (self-esteem, trust, purpose) are frequently assumed rather than contrasted. We use these observations to propose a concise causal frame and testable propositions for cumulative research.

RQ1: How is EGB defined and measured, and what multilevel drivers/mechanisms are most consistently implicated?

EGB is most consistently conceptualized as a multidimensional construct combining in-role/task-related behaviors and discretionary/proactive behaviors, measured either as specific eco-initiatives or as broader OCB-E forms. Across levels, the most robust drivers cluster around (i) individual pro-environmental orientation and identity, (ii) leader and team cues that shape reciprocity expectations and norms, and (iii) organizational systems that signal environmental priorities and enable behavior (e.g., green HRM and green psychological climate).

Throughout our study we revealed the multi-dimensional nature of the EGB construct, encompassing both in-role/task related behaviors as well as extra-role/self-starting initiatives, conceptualized as the Organizational Citizenship behavior towards the Environment (OCB-E). Our results showcased the centrality of organizational constructs such as CSR, HRM and performance emerging as core themes driving research in this area. Furthermore, we highlighted the role of Green HRM practices (Paillé et al., 2014; Renwick et al., 2013), perceived CSR (Zulfiqar et al., 2019), and specific leadership styles (Di-Fabio & Peiró, 2018; Huang et al., 2023) as key contextual drivers of the emergence of EGB. At the individual level, pro-environmental attitudes (consistent with the Theory of Planned Behavior, see Norton et al., 2017) and intentions, affective states (Bissing-Olson et al., 2013), environmental self-identity (Kashima et al., 2014; Sharma et al., 2020), nature connectedness (Boiral et al., 2019), as well as the impact of negative emotions such as climate change anxiety that could trigger pro-environmental action (Ogunbode et al., 2022). These psychological and organizational factors operate jointly, reinforcing the need for multilevel designs to isolate EGB's unique contribution.

Of the mapped corpus, n = 20 workplace studies jointly operationalize EGB and employee well-being and analyze their association; these constitute the direct-nexus evidence for RQ2.

> *RQ2: What is the overall relationship between EGB and employee well-being, and through which mechanisms or boundary conditions is it observed?*

The direct evidence linking EGB to employee well-being is still limited and heterogeneous, but it suggests that the association is rarely uniform or purely direct. Overall, findings are more consistent with indirect and contingent pathways, where EGB relates to well-being through psychological mechanisms (e.g., self-esteem, trust, and sense of purpose) and depends on contextual supports such as green psychological climate and the type of EGB (in-role vs proactive).

The n = 20 direct-nexus studies indicate scarce and mixed direct links; patterns favor indirect pathways (e.g., identification, self-esteem, trust, purpose). Our study showcased the emergence of a nascent field exploring the interplay between EGB and employee well-being in the workplace, representing a niche theme as represented in our bibliometric analysis. A central finding of this review is the limited empirical evidence directly linking Employee Green Behavior (EGB) to employee well-being, with most existing research highlighting indirect pathways through mediators like self-esteem, organizational trust, or sense of purpose.

Most studies explored the indirect relationship between the two constructs via psychological mechanisms, showing overall a positive connection. One of the studies for example demonstrated the mediating effect of self-esteem, enhanced by EGB and leading to employee well-being (Zhang et al., 2021). Similarly, perceived CSR, a strong driver of EGB, also positively influences well-being, potentially via mechanisms like sense-making, purpose (Kim et al., 2023; Su & Swanson, 2019), organizational trust, and identification (De-Ocampo-Clamor et al., 2023; Freire et al., 2022).

Direct tests of EGB=>well-being are scarce and mixed. The direct-nexus evidence suggests that EGB is more reliably linked to employee well-being through psychological mechanisms than through simple direct effects:

- Self-esteem is one of the most critical concepts in modern psychology. It refers to the individual's overall assessment of their own worth. It has been demonstrated to play a major role in predicting employee attitudes and behaviours (Brockner, 1988; Judge & Bono, 2001; Korman, 1970, 1976; Pierce & Gardner, 2004). This variable is activated when engaging in EGB, as individuals affirm a valued self-concept related to their ability to contribute to a an impactful aspect of their jobs, which can elevate psychological well-being and reduce emotional exhaustion under supportive conditions.
- Trust becomes central when EGB is interpreted as part of a reciprocal exchange. Within Social Exchange framework, reciprocity-based rules and principles links leadership and organizational treatment to employee behavioral responses, clarifying how socioemotional resources (e.g., perceived support and trust) create felt obligations and motivate discretionary contributions. In this review we demonstrated that organizational trust stands as a central relational mechanism that can moderate the effects of leadership styles and fairness perceptions to behavioral outcomes (EGB/non-green behavior).

- Sense of purpose is one of the emerging studied constructs in sustainability related research (van Tuin et al., 2020). It's one of the core pillars of eudaimonic well-being that has recently gained rising meaning while being frequently associated to meaning in life in research. Having a purpose in life refers to having goal-oriented life that has a specific direction (Ryff, 1989). Previous studies have already established a positive relationship between the sense of purpose and various positive outcomes, including better physical health (McKnight & Kashdan, 2009), greater goal engagement (Irving et al., 2017) and resilience to stress (Ong & Patterson, 2016). It matters when EGB is framed as meaningful impact. Under a coherent sustainability narrative, EGB can enhance eudaimonic well-being (meaningfulness, flourishing) beyond hedonic satisfaction.

These mechanisms operate within a psychological/green climate that signals whether EGB is valued, resourced, and safe. However, when climate cues are weak or inconsistent, EGB may become effortful, ambiguous, and emotionally draining, shifting outcomes toward strain rather than flourishing.

Overall, the direct EGB-well-being nexus studies remain limited. Two structural features explain this pattern: (a) measurement dispersion in both constructs (heterogeneous EGB and well-being operationalizations), and (b) the dominance of mediational models that prioritize antecedents over outcomes. In our topical audit, only n = 20 workplace studies explicitly measure both EGB and employee well-being and analyze their association; many more examine CSR/HRM => EGB or CSR => well-being separately. We therefore treat indirect pathways (e.g., identification, self-esteem, trust, purpose) as the prevailing pattern, and we specify boundary conditions for detecting direct effects (e.g., extra-role/proactive EGB, supportive green psychological climate).

To address the recurring barrier of measurement dispersion, we recommend that future work explicitly distinguishes in-role/task-related green task performance from extra-role/discretionary EGB, consistent with established EGB literature in workplace measures that separates task-related versus extra-role pro-environmental behavior. In parallel, green psychological climate, identified as a key boundary condition, could be operationalized as employees' shared perceptions that environmental priorities are valued, supported, and enacted through organizational policies and practices.

Finally, following the emergence of flourishing concepts, we recommend clustering well-being dimensions into two complementary dimensions: 1) hedonic/affective well-being (e.g., satisfaction, positive affect) and 2) eudaimonic/psychological well-being (e.g., meaning, functioning). This enables to capture different forms of "feeling good" versus "functioning well" and may respond differently to required versus discretionary EGB.

RQ3: Which testable propositions follow for cumulative multilevel and longitudinal research?

To enable cumulative progress on the EGB–well-being nexus, future studies should align measurement (clearly distinguishing EGB dimensions and well-being dimensions), incorporate multilevel boundary conditions (e.g., climate and leadership), and adopt designs that strengthen causal inference (time-lagged, diary, multilevel longitudinal, and field-intervention approaches). Based on the synthesis, we propose testable multilevel propositions to guide hypothesis-driven research on when EGB supports flourishing versus increases strain.

To close the identified gaps, we prioritize direct causal tests and precise outcomes over additional mapping. Specifically, future studies should fill in these gaps by exploring the mechanisms of this interplay by exploring the exact psychological mechanisms through which EGB and employee well-being interact directly. Also, considering the emergence of the flourishing concept in the well-being literature, further research should focus on the impact of this construct on employee EGB and vice versa. From a methodological perspective there is a predominance of quantitative studies. Considering the psychological and complex nature of this field, it is necessary to complement the current state-of-knowledge with in-depth qualitative studies exploring internal individual micro-factors through interviews or even the specificities of some organizational set-ups in shaping both EGB and employee via case studies. The understanding of the influence of leadership styles on employee green behavior can be further explored by examining the impact of this central contextual factor on both employee green behavior and employee well-being simultaneously. Furthermore, principles from organizational behaviour management could be leveraged to explore, in real-world settings, the respective impact of

self-esteem, organizational trust and sense of purpose in connecting employee green behaviour and their level of well-being at the workplace. This will consequently enable the design of effective interventions that aim at fostering EGB and concurrently examining its direct impact on employee well-being.

Beyond correlational designs, field experiments using OBM levers (clear antecedents, feedback, reinforcement) can test whether shifts in EGB cause changes in discrete well-being outcomes. This design logic clarifies mechanisms without expanding constructs.

6. Conclusions

We mapped the 2019–2024 literature indexed in Scopus and WoS and, for conceptual anchoring only, consulted a targeted 2012–2018 seminal extension identified through citation chasing. All descriptive counts and trend statements refer to the 2019–2024 core SLR.

Given limited direct tests and heterogeneous measures, the EGB–well-being relationship appears primarily indirect and bounded by context, with direct associations most plausible under extra-role/proactive EGB and supportive green climate. The most plausible mediators highlighted in the direct-nexus evidence are self-esteem, trust, and sense of purpose, while key boundary conditions include green psychological climate and the distinction between in-role versus proactive EGB.

Future studies should prioritize multilevel and longitudinal designs (e.g., diary/time-lagged studies, cross-level climate effects, and field experiments) and should report aligned measures for EGB and well-being dimensions Building on this synthesis, we encourage future work to test explicit hypotheses linking specific EGB dimensions to specific well-being dimensions via identifiable psychological pathways under clearly specified climate condition. Hypotheses could include testing the direct EGB-well-being link (e.g., Employee Green Behavior (EGB) is positively associated with employee well-being) or testing the mediation effect of psychological mechanisms (e.g., The positive association between EGB and employee well-being is partially mediated by employees' self-esteem, organizational trust, and sense of purpose).

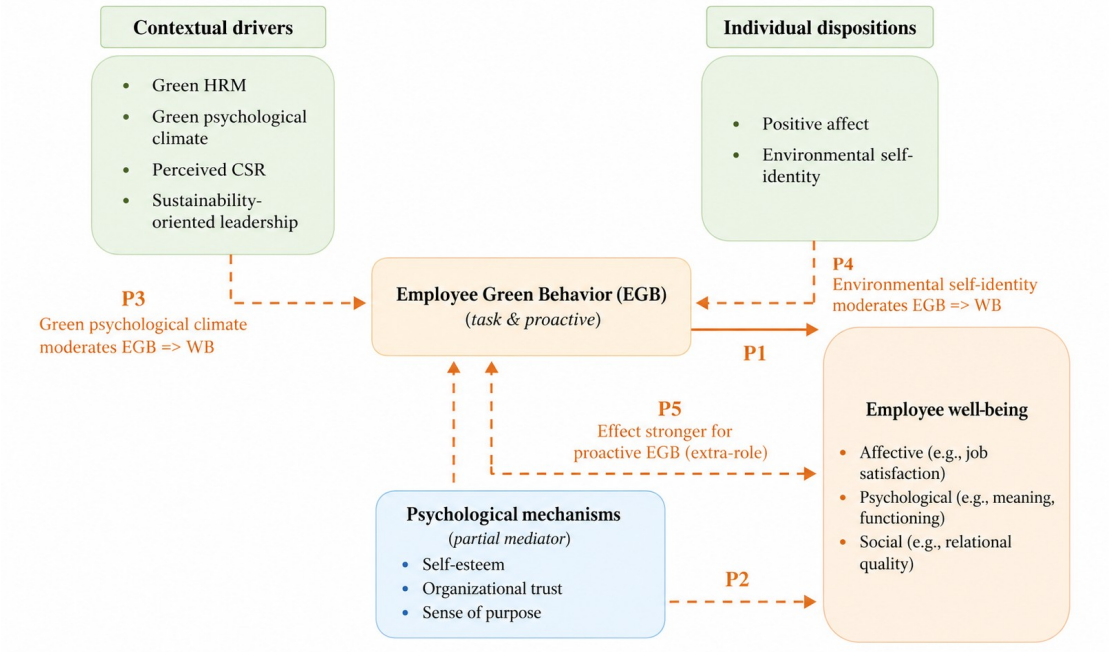


Figure 14. Conceptual model of the EGB–well-being nexus

7. Limitations

This review has some limitations related to the research protocol. Our research was only limited to Scopus & WOS databases. Future research might consider the integration of other specialized **databases** such as PsycINFO. Furthermore, our research was only conducted in the 2019–2024 period leading to a recency bias. A

ten-year period could be considered in future studies. Also, completing this landscape with results sourced from French literature can add new insights to this complex interplay between both concepts.

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Authors' contributions

Amal Zaki: conceptualization, methodology, investigation, data curation, formal analysis, writing.

Prof. Amine Zenjari: Supervision, validation, methodological guidance, review & editing.

Data availability

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. Access to the original bibliographic records may be subject to third-party restrictions imposed by the source database.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

The authors declare that artificial intelligence tools were used only for limited editorial support in improving language and clarity during manuscript preparation. All intellectual contributions, including study design, analysis, interpretation, and final validation, were carried out by the authors, who take full responsibility for the content of the manuscript.

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Appendix

Year	Articles
2019	21
2020	32
2021	33
2022	58
2023	76
2024	96

Table 9. Annual scientific production

Figure 15. Word Cloud