

# An Investigation into the Factors of Tourists' Environmentally Responsible Behaviour

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The objective of this study was to evaluate the determinants that impact the environmentally responsible conduct of tourists within tourist destinations. The study focused on various factors, such as the level of environmental commitment, the reputation of the destination in terms of eco-friendliness, the satisfaction of tourists, and their perception of the value offered by the destination. In order to examine the hypotheses, data was gathered from a sample of 180 tourists visiting different tourist destinations. The data underwent analysis through regression analysis and moderation testing using IBM SPSS. The findings of the analysis indicate a positive correlation between environmental commitment, destination eco-friendly reputation, tourist satisfaction, and tourist value perception of destinations with the environmentally responsible behaviour exhibited by tourists. Additionally, it was discovered that social influence plays a crucial role in moderating the association between the level of environmental commitment and the environmentally responsible behaviour exhibited by tourists. This study makes a valuable contribution to the existing body of literature by examining the impact of various factors on the environmentally responsible behaviour of tourists. Notably, these factors have not been previously examined within a comprehensive model. Furthermore, there is a limited amount of research available regarding the ecological standing of tourist destinations. As a result, this study serves as a significant addition to the existing literature on academia.

**Keywords:** Environmentally responsible behaviour, responsible tourism, eco-friendly reputation, environmental commitment, destination value perception, tourist satisfaction.

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## 1. Introduction

The tourism industry has experienced significant growth in recent years, particularly in regions that boast natural attractions. However, this growth has raised concerns about the potential negative impact on the environment, as tourist vehicles and accommodation facilities contribute to petrol emissions (Weini et al., 2022). The tourism industry relies on the inherent natural and environmental appeal of a particular destination (Ali et al., 2023; Kiatkawsin & Han, 2017). Nevertheless, it is worth noting that in certain instances, tourists can be held accountable for the detrimental impact on the environment in a given location (Shaker et al., 2022). This can be attributed to their engagement in activities such as littering, overcrowding, disturbance of wildlife, and pollution, among others (Su et al., 2020b).

The activities of tourists, whether deliberate or inadvertent, have a discernible impact on the natural environment of tourist destinations, exacerbating the existing detrimental effects of global warming (Guo, 2023; Li et al., 2021). Therefore, there is a growing scholarly and practical interest in identifying strategies to mitigate the adverse impacts of tourism on the natural environment of popular tourist destinations. This pursuit aims to achieve resource conservation, safeguard the integrity of the natural environment, and foster the adoption of sustainable development practises. Ultimately, these efforts seek to enhance the overall tourism experience for all stakeholders involved (Kurniawan, 2023; Pandya & Boukareva, 2022; Tezer & Bodur, 2020). Vakhitova et al. (2022) study the emergence of environmentally responsible behaviour

among tourists has been recognised as a significant phenomenon. Environmentally responsible behavior is “an individual’s environmental concern, commitment and ecological knowledge” (Chiu et al., 2014). It can also be defined as “behaviour that consciously seeks to minimize the negative impact of one’s action on the natural and built world” (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002).

The previously mentioned behaviours encompass activities such as upholding the cleanliness of the destination, removing litter, refraining from engaging in actions that may detrimentally impact the environment or ecosystem of the location, and abstaining from causing harm to the local flora and fauna. The objective of this study is to ascertain the determinants that exert an influence or make a contribution to the environmentally responsible conduct exhibited by tourists.

The study specifically examined various factors, including environmental commitment, the eco-friendly reputation of the destination, tourist satisfaction, and the perceived value of the destination. Environmental commitment is “a psychological connection with, and enduring orientation toward, the environment” (He et al., 2022; Lougheed, 2022; Yehia et al., 2022). The concept of a destination's eco-friendly reputation can be understood as a comprehensive evaluation of the degree to which a destination is deemed environmentally favourable or unfavourable (Suasthi, 2022). The term "tourist perceptions" refers to the assessments, appraisals, evaluations, and viewpoints expressed by tourists regarding the ecological or environmental activities associated with a particular destination (Su et al., 2020b).

Tourist satisfaction refers to the evaluation of pre-travel expectations in relation to the subsequent positive experiences and emotions encountered during the travel journey, with regards to the chosen destination (He et al., 2018). The concept of perceived value encompasses various aspects of the travel experience, such as the price, quality, duration, and emotional factors (He et al., 2018). Furthermore, this study also examines the moderating influence of social factors on the association between individuals' commitment to the environment and their engagement in environmentally responsible actions as tourists. Social influence is basically "the degree to which an individual perceives that important others believe he or she should behave in a certain way" (Venkatesh et al., 2012). In the context of tourism, social influence refers to the anticipated environmental responsibility exhibited by an individual during their travels, as influenced by the expectations of their social circle. This study makes a valuable contribution to the existing literature by examining factors that have not been previously tested within a comprehensive model. Furthermore, there is a dearth of research on the eco-friendly reputation of destinations, underscoring the significance of this study as a valuable addition to the existing body of knowledge.

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Environmentally Responsible Behaviour of Tourist

Tourism plays a pivotal role in fostering the economic development of a given locality, with a significant portion of tourists being drawn to destinations primarily for their aesthetically pleasing natural surroundings. Hence, in recent years, there has been a growing apprehension surrounding the concept of green tourism. This form of tourism aims to achieve a harmonious equilibrium between the preservation and safeguarding of the natural environment while simultaneously capitalising on the economic advantages derived from increased tourist activity. The objective is to mitigate the adverse impact of tourists on the environment while ensuring the provision of necessary amenities and services to cater to their needs. The primary stakeholder with the greatest influence on the promotion of green tourism is the tourists themselves.

The significant potential of tourists to negatively impact the environment (Han & Hyun, 2017; Su & Swanson, 2017) and, therefore, the adoption of environmentally responsible behaviour by these tourists assumes paramount importance (Chien et al., 2022; Mariotti, 2022; Radović et al., 2023; Yamen & Can, 2023). Environmentally responsible behaviour can simply be regarded as "minimizing activities adverse to the environment and exhibiting a commitment to environmental protection" (He et al., 2018).

In academic literature, the concept of environmentally responsible behaviour is often used synonymously with various other terms, including green consumption, eco-friendly behaviour, environment-friendly behaviour, and pro-environmental behaviour, among others (He et al., 2022; Kim et al., 2019; Li et al., 2019; Tezer & Bodur, 2020). These behaviours encompass the principles of

respecting and refraining from disrupting the culture and natural habitat or lifestyle of local residents, preserving the natural environment, refraining from littering, upholding the cleanliness of the destination, properly disposing of waste, utilising environmentally friendly fuel, refraining from engaging in activities that may harm the environment or ecosystem of the destination, abstaining from damaging flora and fauna, and encouraging fellow travellers to refrain from engaging in harmful activities (Xu et al., 2018).

In recent times, there has been an increased focus on climate change and corresponding advocacy efforts, which have resulted in heightened awareness among tourists (Jankowska & Gralewski, 2022; Máté et al., 2023; Shafi et al., 2022; Vitkauskaitė, 2023). This has particularly impacted individuals who engage in travel for the purpose of experiencing and appreciating the natural splendour of various destinations. Consequently, there is a greater expectation for these tourists to exhibit environmentally responsible behaviour (Han et al., 2016). The objective of this study is to ascertain the personal level factors influencing tourists' motivation and inclination towards engaging in environmentally responsible behaviour during their tours. The subsequent subsections provide a comprehensive outline of the description and explanation of each factor that is examined in this study.

### 2.2 Environmental Commitment

Commitment can be understood as a psychological bond that encompasses emotions and cognitions, allowing individuals to safeguard, maintain, and foster relationships and affiliations (Davis et al., 2011). In addition to the concept of interdependence within interpersonal relationships, which encompasses commitment, it can also extend to the relationship between individuals and their environment. According to the interdependence theory, commitment refers to a subjective reliance. The degree to which an individual's needs are satisfied by a particular entity and their dependence on said entity to meet those needs is indicative of the potential for higher levels of commitment (He et al., 2018). This explanation suggests that the degree of reliance on the relationship is a determining factor in an individual's level of commitment. Individuals who possess a higher level of dedication towards a particular matter are inclined to exert greater endeavours in order to safeguard and maintain that association. Based on the same lines, environmental commitment can be defined as "a psychological connection with, and enduring orientation toward, the environment" (He et al., 2022). Self-expansion theory suggests that an individual's relationships serve to broaden their self-concept (Aron & Aron, 1986). An individual's self-concept undergoes continuous development as their interpersonal relationships and affiliations with valued entities, including the natural environment, expand. This holds particularly true in the context of tourism, as tourists typically prioritise establishing a connection with the environment through the exploration of destinations characterised by natural beauty and landscapes (Frye, 2018; Su et al., 2020a; Su et al., 2020b). Consequently, individuals who possess a heightened sense of

responsibility towards the environment are more likely to engage in proactive measures and actions aimed at the conservation and welfare of the environment (Davlembayeva et al., 2021; Wesselmann et al., 2022). Prior studies have indicated that a higher level of environmental commitment is positively associated with an increased propensity for engaging in environmentally responsible behaviour (He et al., 2018; Raineri & Paillé, 2016). Therefore, based on the discussion above, the following hypothesis is proposed,

**H1:** *Environmental commitment is positively associated with environmentally responsible behaviour of tourists.*

### 2.3 Destination Eco-friendly Reputation

Destination reputation is “the public’s general feeling, impression and cognition of it” (Abidin et al., 2022; Kurniawan, 2023; Mingchuan, 2015). Destination eco-friendly reputation can be regarded “as a comprehensive assessment of the extent to which a destination is substantially “good” or “bad” regarding the environment. It includes the estimations, judgments, evaluations and opinions of tourists related to the destination’s ecological or environmental activities” (He et al., 2018; Pathmanathan et al., 2022). A positive reputation is indicative of tourists’ perception that the destination’s management is effectively implementing ecological protection and environmental conservation practises (Darwish & Burns, 2019; Han & Yoon, 2015; Pereira et al., 2022; Semvua et al., 2022).

Prior research has indicated that a destination’s favourable reputation has advantageous consequences in terms of attracting tourists, investments, enhancing destination competitiveness, and fostering sustainable growth (Mingchuan, 2015; Su et al., 2020c). Consequently, this results in recurrent visits from travellers who perceive the destination to possess established eco-friendly and socially responsible practises, aligning with their personal environmental concerns (Alruwaili, 2022).

The concept under consideration shares a fundamental principle with corporate social responsibility (CSR) practises, as it pertains to the impact of an organization’s CSR efforts on customers’ perceptions of the organisation and their inclination to engage with its products and services (Ghnam et al., 2023; Peter & Jule, 2023). Destinations that possess a favourable reputation are generally perceived as possessing greater credibility and trustworthiness. Consequently, these destinations tend to attract a higher number of tourists (Jiang et al., 2023; Sriyakul & Chankoson, 2022; Su et al., 2020c).

The concept of destination reputation is considered to be an intangible attribute that is inherently linked to a destination (Durana et al., 2022; Kudla et al., 2023; Ovcharenko & Semenenko, 2022; Streimikiene, 2023). It has the potential to enhance tourist satisfaction, improve the overall image of the destination, and serve as a fundamental pillar for achieving sustainable development (Tanković & Mušanović, 2022). Furthermore, in the event that a particular destination has already established a commendable reputation for its commitment to ecological sustainability, it is probable that tourists will demonstrate socially responsible conduct as a means of upholding the

established standards implemented by the destination management. Based on the preceding discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed. The existing literature on destination reputation is broad, but there is a lack of research specifically focused on destination eco-friendly reputation. Therefore, this study represents a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge.

**H2:** *Destination eco-friendly reputation is positively associated with environmentally responsible behavior of tourists.*

### 2.4 Tourist Satisfaction

The level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction experienced by a consumer with a product or service is determined by the disparity between their expectations and the actual performance of said product or service (Chiu et al., 2014). Satisfaction can be understood as a psychological reaction that arises from the confirmation or disconfirmation of a consumer’s experience with a particular product or service (Naqshbandi & Jasimuddin, 2022; Wang et al., 2023). Within the realm of travel and tourism, the level of satisfaction experienced by tourists is ascertained through the juxtaposition of their pre-travel expectations with the tangible positive experiences and emotions encountered during their journey to the destination (Chiu et al., 2014; He et al., 2018). Previous research indicates that the level of satisfaction experienced by tourists with a particular destination has a significant impact on their intention to revisit that destination and their inclination to recommend it to others (Mušanović, 2020; Triantafyllidou & Petala, 2016). Lee (2011) discovered that a positive tourist experience leading to satisfaction is a factor that influences environmentally responsible behaviour. There exists a positive correlation between a tourist’s level of satisfaction with a destination and their inclination towards prioritising the preservation and safeguarding of its environment (Göker, 2022; Lincényi & Bulanda, 2023; Roszko-Wójtowicz et al., 2022; Tautiva et al., 2023).

Tourists are inclined to exhibit a desire to return to and revisit a destination that has provided them with a pleasurable experience and a sense of contentment (Han et al., 2016). The interrelationship described in this context is grounded in reciprocity theory, which posits that when an individual receives a favour or experiences satisfaction from a person or entity, they are inclined to reciprocate by exhibiting positive behaviour (He et al., 2018). Similarly, in the context of tourism, when a tourist experiences satisfaction with a particular destination, there is a higher probability that they will engage in behaviours that contribute positively to the destination’s well-being, while avoiding any actions that may cause harm. Consequently, individuals are likely to demonstrate a heightened inclination towards engaging in environmentally conscious actions within these settings. This inclination stems from their desire to safeguard the pristine natural surroundings that they have personally experienced during their visit, and to ensure the preservation of this environment for their future visits as well as for the benefit of other travellers (Cheng & Chen, 2022). Therefore, based on the discussion above, the following hypothesis is proposed,



**H3:** *Tourist satisfaction is positively associated with environmentally responsible behavior of tourists.*

## 2.5 Tourist Value Perception of Destination

Perceived value can be defined as “the consumer's overall assessment of the utility of a product (or service) based on perceptions of what is received and what is given” (Zeithaml, 1988). Consumer perception refers to the subjective evaluation made by individuals regarding the value or benefits they receive in exchange for the monetary price or cost incurred. The determination of value for a product or service is based on whether the benefits outweigh the costs, or at the very least, if the costs are commensurate with the requirements (Chiu et al., 2014). The perceived value within the context of travel and tourism pertains to the comprehensive travel encounter, encompassing aspects such as pricing, quality, duration, and emotional elements (He et al., 2018).

The assessment of a destination's worth is contingent upon various factors, including but not limited to cleanliness, environment, climate, and culture. Additionally, factors such as the allocation of time and financial resources, as well as the emotional dimensions encompassing relaxation, enjoyment, and adventure, are significant in shaping individuals' perceptions regarding the value of a particular destination (Bajs, 2015). Previous research indicates that there exists a positive correlation between the perception of higher value and the engagement in environmentally responsible behaviour among tourists. This relationship is observed when tourists perceive their travel experience to be of superior quality and advantageous. Consequently, these individuals exhibit a greater inclination towards the preservation of the environment at their destination, as a means to safeguard and uphold the perceived value associated with their travel experience (Alonso-Vazquez et al., 2019; Han et al., 2016).

The observed behavioural response can be attributed to reciprocity theory, which posits that when a consumer perceives a higher value resulting from superior service quality, there is an increased probability of them exhibiting positive behaviour in response. Individuals are more likely to feel a sense of obligation to reciprocate with positive behaviour when they receive something that they perceive as highly valuable (He et al., 2018). Likewise, individuals who perceive a higher level of value derived from a tour or destination are more inclined to engage in environmentally responsible behaviour as a form of reciprocal action (Li et al., 2021). Therefore, based on the above argument, the following hypothesis is proposed,

**H4:** *Value perception of destination is positively associated with environmentally responsible behaviour of tourists.*

## 2.6 Social Influence

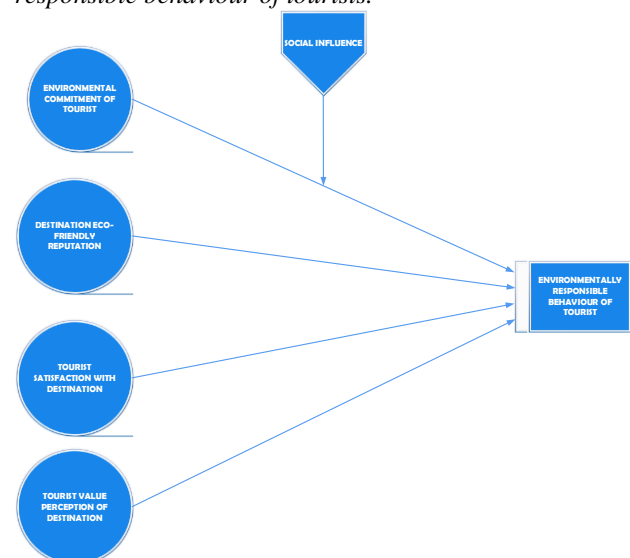
Social influence can be defined as “the degree to which an individual perceives that important others believe he or she should behave in a certain way” (Venkatesh et al., 2012). Subjective norms refer to the pressures or norms that arise from an individual's social circle and influence their decision to engage in or abstain from a specific behaviour.

These norms can either encourage or discourage the individual from performing the behaviour in question. The social network of an individual may encompass various individuals, such as family members, friends, colleagues, or significant others.

The impact of social influence on an individual's environmentally responsible behaviour has been found to be positive (Liu et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2019). When a tourist perceives that an individual or a group of importance to them advocates for environmentally responsible behaviour during their tours, it is probable that the tourist will be influenced by the opinions of these significant others. Consequently, the tourist's inclination, probability, and intention to engage in environmentally responsible behaviour are likely to be heightened (Panwanitdumrong & Chen, 2021). Likewise, the behaviour of a tourist is also influenced by the culture and society to which they belong. If a tourist is a member of a society that prioritises discipline and values environmentally friendly practises, their adherence to these values and norms is likely influenced by the cultural and societal upbringing they have received (Al Kubaisi, 2023). Therefore, this upbringing enhances the probability that they will exhibit environmentally responsible behaviour even when visiting destinations outside of their own society (Kim & Stepchenkova, 2020).

This study examines the role of social influence as a moderator in the relationship between a tourist's environmental commitment and their environmentally responsible behaviour. This premise is grounded in the notion that the correlation between an individual's personal dedication to environmental preservation and their inclination to engage in environmentally responsible actions is reinforced when they are subject to social influence from their social network, which holds expectations for them to exhibit environmentally responsible behaviour. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed,

**H5:** *Social influence moderates the relationship between environmental commitment and environmentally responsible behaviour of tourists.*



**Figure 1:** Proposed Framework

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Measures

The study's variables were assessed using pre-existing measurement questionnaires that had been previously validated. The measurement scale utilised for assessing the variable of environmental commitment was derived from the research conducted by He et al. (2018). The scales used to measure the variables of destination eco-friendly reputation and tourist satisfaction were derived from the research conducted by Su et al. (2020b). The measurement

of tourists' perception of value was conducted by utilising the instrument developed by He et al. (2018). The measurement of environmentally responsible behaviour was conducted by utilising the instrument developed by Panwanitdumrong and Chen (2021), He et al. (2018), as well as Su et al. (2020b). The measurement of the variable of social influence was conducted by modifying the instrument developed by Panwanitdumrong and Chen (2021). The variables were assessed using a 5-point Likert scale. Table 1 below displays the measurement items/statements for each variable, along with their respective sources.

**Table 1. Measurement Tools**

Items	References
<b>Environmental Commitment</b>	
I am committed to keeping the best interests of the environment in mind at (name of destination)	He et al. (2018)
I am interested in strengthening my connection to the environment of (name of destination) in the future	
I feel very attached to the natural environment of (name of destination)	
I expect that I will always feel a strong connection with the environment of (name of destination)	
<b>Social Influence</b>	
People who matter to me think I should take actions to protect the environment of this destination	Panwanitdumrong and Chen (2021)
People who I respect hope I can protect the environment of this destination	
People who I am familiar with think I will help to protect the environment of this destination	
<b>Destination Eco-friendly Reputation</b>	
In general, the destination has a good reputation in ecological environment field	Su et al. (2020b)
Overall, the destination has a positive eco-friendly reputation	
Overall, the destination has a favorable reputation for its green practices	
<b>Tourist Satisfaction</b>	
Overall, I am satisfied with my visit to (name of destination)	Su et al. (2020b)
Compared to my expectations situation, I am satisfied with my visit to (name of destination)	
Compared to the ideal situation, I am satisfied with my visit to (name of destination)	
<b>Tourist Value Perception</b>	
The quality of this travel experience is acceptable	He et al. (2018)
This travel experience is worth the money	
This travel experience makes me feel good	
Participating in this travel activity makes a good impression on other people	
<b>Environmentally Responsible Behavior</b>	
I am willing to properly dispose of litter	Panwanitdumrong and Chen (2021), He et al. (2018), and Su et al. (2020b)
I pick up litter left by other people	
After a picnic, I leave the place as clean as it was originally	
I properly dispose of litter	
I comply with the legal ways not to destroy the destination's environment	
I report to the destination administration if other people are engaged in environmental pollution or destruction	
When I see garbage and tree branches, I will make an effort to put them in the trash can	
If there are cleaning environment activities, I am willing to attend	
I would convince my travel companions, if any, to protect the natural environment of the destination	
I try not to disrupt the fauna and flora during my travel"	

#### 3.2 Data Collection

The data was collected using a non-probability sampling method known as convenience sampling due to the unavailability of a comprehensive list of tourists visiting Saudi Arabia. The data was gathered from tourists who visited two cities in Saudi Arabia, specifically Al-Hasa and Abha. The participants were provided with a self-administered questionnaire and were requested to complete it on a voluntary basis. The individuals were provided with a guarantee that their data would exclusively be utilised for scholarly objectives. A total of 180 questionnaires were collected and subsequently utilised for the purpose of data collection. Regression analysis and moderation testing using SPSS were employed to analyse the collected data for the purpose of hypothesis testing.

### 4. Analysis

#### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 displays the descriptive statistics of the study's variables, encompassing the mean, standard deviation, reliability statistics, and correlations among the variables. The examination of the table reveals that the reliability statistics for all variables fall within the acceptable range. This indicates that the measurement instruments employed to gather data exhibit internal consistency and can be considered reliable. Moreover, the interrelationships between variables do not exhibit excessive levels of correlation that would result in multicollinearity.

**Table 2. Descriptive Statistics**

Variable	Mean	SD	Cronbach's alpha	1	2	3	4	5	6
Environmental Commitment	3.21	2.34	7.64	1					
Destination eco-friendly reputation	3.01	2.49	7.69	0.59	1				
Tourist satisfaction	3.64	3.57	8.04	0.61	0.34	1			
Value perception	2.97	3.94	8.64	0.43	0.22	0.67	1		
Social influence	3.55	2.01	8.97	0.38	0.76	0.54	0.57	1	
Environmentally responsible behaviour	2.67	1.67	7.88	0.66	0.42	0.29	0.49	0.27	1

### 4.2 Testing of Hypotheses

The data that was gathered was subjected to analysis using IBM SPSS. The study hypotheses were tested using simple linear regression. The findings of the regression analysis are presented in Table 3 as shown below. The table illustrates that the adjusted R square value indicates that the collective influence of the four independent variables (environmental commitment, destination eco-friendly reputation, tourist satisfaction, and tourist value perception) accounts for 86% of the variability in the dependent variable, specifically, the environmentally responsible behaviour of tourists. Furthermore, the table presented below provides evidence that there exists a positive and statistically significant relationship between environmental commitment and the engagement in environmentally responsible behaviour among tourists. This finding supports the first hypothesis (H1) proposed in the study. This implies that there is a positive correlation between an individual's level of personal environmental commitment and their likelihood to engage in environmentally responsible behaviour.

The findings of this study provide support for Hypothesis 2, as they indicate a positive and significant relationship between a destination's eco-friendly reputation and the environmentally responsible behaviour exhibited by tourists. It also means that there is a positive correlation between a destination's eco-friendly reputation and the likelihood of tourists engaging in environmentally responsible behaviour. The study's findings indicate a positive and significant correlation between tourist satisfaction and environmentally responsible behaviour among tourists, thereby providing support for Hypothesis 3. It also suggests that there is a positive correlation between tourist satisfaction with a destination and their propensity to engage in environmentally responsible behaviours. Finally, the study finds a positive and significant relationship between tourists' perception of tourist value and their environmentally responsible behaviour, thus providing support for Hypothesis 4. This implies that there is a positive correlation between the perceived value of a destination by a tourist and their likelihood to engage in environmentally responsible behaviour. As a result, all of the direct hypotheses exhibit positive and statistically significant relationships.

**Table 3. Regression Analysis**

Regression Statistics					
Multiple R					0.79
R <sup>2</sup>					0.50
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>					0.86
Standard Error					0.48
Observations					180
ANOVA					
	df	SS	MS	F	Significant F
Regression	64	53.21	7.99	44.99	10.28
Residual	36	16.28	0.64		
Total	100	69.49			
	Coefficients	SE	t value	P-value	
Constant	0.024	0.24	1.99	0.04	
Environmental Commitment	0.030	0.30	1.98	0.03	
Destination eco-friendly reputation	0.022	0.27	2.67	0.03	
Tourist satisfaction	0.039	0.19	3.67	0.04	
Value perception	0.016	0.33	4.01	0.01	

P<0.05 (Hair et al., 2007), t> 1.96 (Hair et al., 2007)

### 4.3 Moderating Effect of Social Influence

In addition to examining the direct effects, the researchers also assessed the moderating effect of social influence using the Hayes Macro in IBM SPSS. The presented table provides evidence that social influence plays a constructive and statistically significant role in moderating the association between environmental commitment and environmentally responsible behaviour, thereby confirming the hypothesis H5 of the study. This implies that the correlation between an individual's personal commitment to the environment and their inclination to engage in environmentally responsible behaviour as a tourist becomes more pronounced when their social circle

also exerts an influence on them to behave in an environmentally responsible manner. The impact of familial, social, and peer networks serves to augment the individual's commitment to environmental responsibility.

Dependent Variable	R <sup>2</sup>	Variables	B	T	F	P
Environmentally responsible behavior	0.29	Constant	2.675.99			
		EC	0.211.24	19.670.01		
		SI	0.021.91			
		EC x SI	0.002.36			

## 5. Discussion

The objective of this study was to ascertain the determinants that impact the environmentally conscious conduct of tourists

in the cities of Al-Hasa and Abha, located in Saudi Arabia. The study specifically examined various factors, such as environmental commitment, the eco-friendly reputation of the destination, tourist satisfaction, and tourists' perception of the value of the destination. In order to examine the correlation between these factors and tourists' environmentally responsible behaviour, data was gathered from a sample of 180 tourists from two cities in Saudi Arabia. The data that was gathered was subjected to analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), and the subsequent findings are now presented and examined in the subsequent sections. The findings of the study indicate that tourists who possess a personal environmental commitment tend to engage in environmentally responsible behaviour during their tours. This outcome aligns with previous research in the field (Davlembayeva et al., 2021; He et al., 2022; Raineri & Paillé, 2016).

Individuals who possess a heightened level of environmental consciousness are more inclined to engage in behaviours aimed at conserving, preserving, and safeguarding the natural environment. They demonstrate a commitment to refraining from littering, avoiding activities that contribute to environmental degradation, and minimising their carbon footprint when visiting various destinations. In general, the individual dedication of a tourist to environmental preservation empowers them to actively contribute to the welfare of the environment, leading them to consistently exhibit environmentally responsible behaviour during their travels. Furthermore, the findings of the research also indicate that the perceived environmentally sustainable image of a tourist destination plays a significant role in influencing the environmentally responsible conduct of tourists in Saudi Arabia. This finding is inherently rational, as there exists a positive correlation between a destination's reputation for eco-friendly practises and its tourists' inclination to adopt environmentally conscious behaviours. This can be attributed to the tourists' awareness that any actions leading to environmental harm would result in significant penalties, fines, or other forms of punishment.

The implementation of environmentally sustainable practises and the preservation of the ecological environment by destination management also appeals to environmentally conscious tourists (Su et al., 2020c). The inclusion of this aspect enhances the overall value of the travel experience for tourists. Saudi Arabia has actively endeavoured to promote its tourist destinations as eco-friendly and has implemented environmentally sustainable practises. Consequently, there has been a noticeable increase in tourist interest in these destinations, and visitors tend to exhibit environmentally responsible behaviour during their visits. In addition, the findings also indicate that the level of tourists' satisfaction with a particular destination plays a significant role in influencing their inclination towards engaging in environmentally responsible actions. This discovery aligns with previous research conducted by Lee (2011).

Tourists who derive satisfaction from their visit to a specific destination are more inclined to engage in the preservation of its natural environment. This inclination

stems from their desire to ensure that future visitors can experience the destination in a manner similar to their own enjoyable experience. Additionally, these tourists are motivated by the prospect of revisiting the destination themselves. The positive encounter and subsequent contentment during a visit to a particular destination engenders a heightened sense of attachment to said location, thereby instilling a desire to preserve its natural splendour and prevent any potential harm. Consequently, individuals are inclined to exhibit environmentally conscientious conduct and to promote such conduct among others, thereby ensuring the preservation of the natural splendour of the location for future generations to appreciate. Finally, the findings indicate that the perception of tourists regarding the value of the destination also has an impact on their propensity to engage in environmentally responsible behaviour. This discovery aligns with the previous one, as it suggests that tourists who perceive their visit to a particular destination as providing significant value are more inclined to engage in environmentally responsible behaviours in order to preserve the natural beauty and integrity of that location (Han et al., 2016).

The concept of value perception encompasses not only financial considerations, but also the holistic experience of a tourist, which encompasses various factors such as the amenities offered at a destination, the scenic beauty and natural attractions, the cleanliness and hygiene of the environment, and the cultural richness that tourists have the opportunity to immerse themselves in at such destinations. Collectively, these various factors synergistically contribute to the overall tourist experience, thereby shaping the perception of the destination's value. Consequently, this perception plays a pivotal role in motivating tourists to adopt environmentally responsible behaviours that safeguard the destination's ecosystem from any detrimental impacts.

In addition to the previously mentioned factors, the findings of the study also unveiled the moderating influence of social influence on the association between environmental commitment and the environmentally responsible conduct of tourists. Individuals who are part of a social circle that places importance on environmentally responsible behaviour during travel are more likely to exhibit responsible behaviour themselves, as they are influenced by the social expectations of their peers in order to gain acceptance within the group. This phenomenon has been documented in previous scholarly investigations as well (Liu et al., 2019; Panwanitdumrong & Chen, 2021; Wang et al., 2019).

## 5.1 Conclusion

An individual who possesses a pre-existing personal commitment to environmental preservation is more inclined to exhibit environmentally responsible behaviour during their visits to tourist destinations. Furthermore, if an individual's family, friends, peers, and significant others exert influence on them to engage in environmentally conscious actions, the bond between the individual and responsible behaviour is further reinforced. Consequently,



the probability of exhibiting responsible behaviour is heightened to an even greater extent.

### 5.2 Theoretical Implications

This study makes a valuable contribution to the existing literature by examining the combined effects of various factors, such as environmental commitment, destination eco-friendly reputation, tourist satisfaction, tourist value perception of destination, and social influence, on the environmentally responsible behaviour of tourists in Saudi Arabia. Previous research has not explored these factors in conjunction with each other in a comprehensive model, making this study a novel and significant addition to the academic discourse on this topic. Furthermore, there is a limited amount of research available on the topic of a destination's eco-friendly reputation, underscoring the significance of this study as a valuable addition to the existing body of knowledge.

### 5.3 Practical Implications

The findings of this study can provide valuable insights for the management of tourist destinations. Specifically, the study highlights the importance of factors such as the destination's eco-friendly reputation, tourists' value perception, and tourist satisfaction in influencing their environmentally responsible behaviour. This implies that destination management authorities should prioritise enhancing their image and implementing environmentally sustainable practises and measures. By shaping tourists' perceptions, it is possible to encourage responsible behaviour that minimises any detrimental impact on the natural environment of the destination. In this context, it is imperative to implement measures pertaining to cleanliness, hygienic protocols, appropriate waste management, provision of informative signboards outlining guidelines for maintaining cleanliness, and the prohibition of detrimental practises. These measures are essential to ensure that tourists are well-informed about permissible and impermissible actions, as well as the consequences they may face for non-compliance. The implementation of various measures and adoption of specific practises have the potential to enhance the overall travel experience for tourists universally.

### 5.4 Limitations and Future Research Directions

Future research can delve into additional factors that may potentially elucidate the environmentally responsible behaviour of tourists. The collection of qualitative interview data from tourists can facilitate a more comprehensive analysis and provide deeper insights into their experiences, allowing for a more nuanced understanding of their emotions and feelings. A comparative analysis of various tourist destinations can be undertaken to examine disparities in destination management environmental policies and tourist behaviour.

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