

## Conference Paper

# Conceptualizing Sustainable Consumption Behaviors among Millennial Employees in the Energy Sector

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### Abstract.

The increasing concern regarding the impact of energy consumption on the environment and the 2050 net-zero emission target necessitates the investigation of behavioral studies in energy consumption among employees. This study aims to develop a conceptual framework for future research on sustainable consumption behavior, specifically focusing on millennials.

The conceptual framework links millennials' sustainable consumption behavior to proactive work behavior through the lens of workplace spirituality. To develop this framework, the paper reviewed published studies related to sustainable consumption behaviors, work values, and behavioral factors across different generations. The review utilized computerized keyword searches in scholarly databases such as SpringerLink, Emerald, ScienceDirect, ProQuest, and Google Scholar. Based on the review's empirical findings, narrative examples were drawn to construct the conceptual framework.

The findings emphasize the importance of exploring millennials' sustainable consumption behavior in relation to their values and behavioral factors. Proactive work behavior and workplace spirituality are identified as actionable elements to promote sustainable consumption behaviors among employees in the energy sector. Workplace spirituality is proposed as a moderating variable for the relationship between sustainable consumption behaviors and proactive work behavior, providing potential for further research in this area.

Given that millennials are a significant generation in achieving sustainable energy consumption goals by 2050, this study focuses on their hiring and training to drive sustainable behavior. It evaluates the influence of HR and organizational behavior factors on sustainable consumption behavior in the energy industry. Practical implications and recommendations aim to assist practitioners and policymakers in analyzing behavioral phenomena to establish and implement sustainable goals for millennials.

The paper extends the conceptual underpinning of sustainable consumption behavior by integrating proactive work behavior and workplace spirituality in the context of energy sector millennials. It paves the way for future researchers to empirically investigate and examine these variables in the energy sector. The study's significance lies in its conceptual contributions to the existing body of knowledge in the field of sustainable consumption behavior.

**Keywords:** energy sector, millennials generation, sustainable consumption behaviors, proactive work behavior, workplace spirituality

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## 1. Introduction

Over the last four decades, there were several investigations by many researchers on negative impacts on the natural resources of earth resources by people (Svensson, & Padin, 2019). Environmental concerns, global warming and sustainable energy consumption are the few top concerns to save the environment (Geiger, Fischer, & Schrader, 2018). Increasing use of fossil fuels, degradation, and deforestation are the main factors causing increased carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions (Matharu, Jain, & Kamboj, 2020). Global temperature increased which causes melting glaciers and the gas emission by greenhouses which affect the ozone layer. In 2012, global basic energy consumption increased by 1.8% due to rising energy demand and urbanization (Geiger, Fischer, & Schrader, 2018). As a result, worldwide energy consumption issues increased and the energy sector went through various transformations.

The prevailing concern of energy management for existing and future generation raises the concern for individual and organization level consumption. It is imperative to consider energy consumption and create awareness to increase sustainable consumption behavior from the perspective of employees in the workplace (Geiger, Fischer, & Schrader, 2018). Employees spend a significant amount of time in office space, consuming electricity and other resources. This initiates the need to be environmentally responsible when using resources at work and home. Employees' behavior towards environments is crucial to achieve such sustainable goals. Employee consumption behaviors can produce a positive impact on the environment (Meng, Chua & Han, 2022). Globally, energy consumption is considered as a major cause of environmental and climatic change (Geiger, Fischer, & Schrader, 2018). Sustainable policies conducted to improve sustainable performance but in the absence of employee participation, energy consumption negatively impacts the environment. The question arises as to how employee behavior and values can help to improve rational energy consumption and which factors can influence and strengthen sustainable consumption behavior in the workplace that can help to achieve the 2050 global sustainability targets.

Many researchers suggested different recommendations including pro-environmental behaviors and environmental citizenship behavior. Nevertheless, research on the concept of sustainable consumption behaviors by employees in relation to sustainable environment demands attention (Svensson & Padin, 2019). Employee sustainable consumption behaviors can be implemented on the strategic level to reduce workplace energy consumption (Cho and Yoo, 2021; Meng, Lee, Chua & Han, 2022). Employees work from 8am to 5pm and use energy primarily from computers,

machines, electronics, etc. Millennials can be used as a primary source of policy implementation that will affect the environment in order to reach the net zero goal of 2050. Consequently, this study highlighted the critical importance of proactive work behavior for achieving long-term sustainable consumption behavior in organizations by employees (Hou & Huang, 2021). The need for proactive work behaviors is significant in the role of sustainable consumption behaviors of employees. Proactive employees can take initiatives and act according to goals. Although several studies showed the impact of proactive work behaviors on sustainability, the sustainable consumption behaviors from employees' perspective needs better attention by scholars (Searle & Rooney, 2013; Quoquab, & Mohammad, 2020; Araújo, Oliveira, & Correia, 2021). Therefore, this study signifies the role of proactive work behaviors to achieve sustainable consumption behaviors of employees.

Another issue that companies encounter is behavioral instability and inconsistency. Several studies found inconsistent behavior over time and under stressful situations (Strauss, & Parker, 2014; Strauss, Griffin, Parker, & Mason, 2015). To build and maintain behavioral qualities over time several factors are recognized as critical determinants (Strauss, Griffin, Parker, & Mason, 2015). In relation to this, a number of studies highlighted the issues of behavioral inconsistency due to the value system. The findings revealed that religious belief and value systems led to more responsible, consistent actions even in the absence of monitoring (Batool, Shabbir, Abrar, & Bilal, 2022). To attain long-term sustainable goals, value systems must be examined. Workplace spirituality has a significant part in assisting, strengthening, and maintaining proactive and sustainable consumption behaviors that leads to energy consumption reduction (Meng, Lee, Chua, & Han, 2022). To achieve the sustainable target for future generations, employees must have some moral values with strong workplace spirituality; so even if they are not satisfied with their job they are still motivated for environmental concern with a sense of community.

## 2. Context of the Study

Contemporary issues of the dynamic world are evident of a shift of workforce demographic and relationship behaviors (Lyons & Kuron, 2014). With the emergence of Millennials, demographic characteristics and work dynamics have essentially changed (Leung, 2013). Millennials, often known as generation Y, range in age from 26 to 41 (1981 to 1996). PwC's (2011) 14th Annual Global CEO Survey (p.3) states that by the end of 2020, the Generation 'Y' (Millennials) had become the 50% of world employees. Millennials

are the most active, intellectual and innovative minds and they have the ability to cope with environmental dynamics. The attitude and behavior of these workforce are unconventionally different from the previous generation. They have diverse and different personality traits, work related behaviors, and expectations in comparison to previous generations (Twenge et al., 2010; Lyons & Kuron, 2014).

### 3. Research Questions

1. How does Sustainable Consumption Behavior Affect Proactive Work Behavior in the Context of the Millennial Generation?
2. How does Workplace Spirituality (Compassion, Mindfulness, Meaningful Work, & Transcendence) moderate the relationship between Proactive Work Behavior and Sustainable Consumption Behaviors of Millennials in Energy Sector employees?

### 4. Research Objectives

1. To conceptualize the relationship between Sustainable Consumption Behaviors and Proactive Work Behavior in the Context of the Millennial Generation in the Energy Sector.
2. To review the moderating role of Workplace Spirituality (Compassion, Mindfulness, Meaningful Work, & Transcendence) between Proactive Work Behavior and Sustainable Consumption Behaviors in the Context of the Millennial Generation in the Energy Sector.

### 5. Methodology

Primarily, this conceptual paper aimed to review key studies pertaining to sustainable consumption behaviors. Systematic literature review was conducted to conceptualize the framework. Essentially, a systematic review requires accurate strategy before starting searching. There is vastly published literature which can be challenging without an efficient search strategy.

The first strategy involves search engine strategy by using the keywords of constructs on scholarly databases including ScienceDirect, Emerald, ProQuest, Google Scholar and SpringerLink. To find out specific models and instruments the key search includes “sustainable consumption behaviors”, “sustainable consumption behaviors instrument”,

“consumption behaviors”, “sustainable behaviors”, “sustainable consumption behaviors”. The review search only included papers in the English language. In total, 395 papers on sustainable consumption behaviors and proactive work behaviors were reviewed. After screening 210 papers found relevant and in energy consumption context. Hence, 87 references cited in this paper specifically were focusing on sustainable consumption behaviors to develop the framework. The current study also searched for empirical papers to draw narrative examples and specific findings to explain the conceptual understanding from previous studies in this field.

Secondly, the historical review to explore the themes and evolutions in the past fields of sustainable consumption behaviors during 20 years published articles were also taken and mentioned in table 1. The table shows three major trends of research in the field of sustainable consumption research. First era 2000 to 2004, showing the conceptual development on a global and environmental perspective. Next trend was conceptual development on consumer perspectives, and the last was from 2011 to 2020 explored studies highlighted relationships with sustainable consumption behaviors. In total 21 articles cited in the table to avoid repetition of the same concept during a particular period.

Last review method, Boolean Operator technique was adopted and variable search were identified to develop conceptual underpinning and proposing the relationship of conceptual framework. The investigation of relevant papers in search engines includes key search as follows: “sustainable consumption behaviors AND millennials”, “sustainable consumption behaviors AND energy sector”, “sustainable consumption behaviors AND proactive work behavior”, “sustainable consumption behaviors AND workplace spirituality”, “sustainable consumption behaviors AND proactive work behaviors”, proactive work behaviors AND millennials generation”, “sustainable consumption behaviors OR millennials”, “sustainable consumption behaviors OR energy sector”, “proactive work behaviors OR millennials generation”.

## 6. Conceptual Underpinning and Proposition Development

### 6.1. Sustainable Consumption Behaviors (SCB)

Sustainable consumption behaviors is define as *“individual acts of satisfying needs in different areas of life by acquiring, using and disposing goods and services that do not compromise the ecological and socio-economic conditions of all people (currently living*

*or in the future) to satisfy their own needs”* (Geiger, Fischer, & Schrader, 2018). In other words, sustainable consumption behaviors refers to an action towards preservation and care with integrity for the socio-physical resources of the world (Corral-Verdugo et al., 2010). When the people and employees have sustainability orientations they act in more equitable form and use resources to secure environments, their use of energy consumptions and waste is moderate, and they are motivated to be constantly involved in natural resources protection (Corral Verdugo, 2012). The current state of earth and atmosphere required behavioral practices which is manifested in sustainable consumption behaviors (Ma, Kao, Kao, & Cho, 2020). According to Steg et al. (2015), sustainable consumption behaviors in an organization are fruitful for organization as well as the economy. It gives benefits to the environment and reduces the impact of environmental problems (Wahab, 2017).

### **6.1.1. The Evolution in Sustainable Consumption Behaviors and Existing Research Gaps**

Sustainable consumption behaviors is the wider notion which needs to be reviewed holistically. Araújo, Oliveira, & Correia, (2021) conducted bibliometric analysis for the period of 1999 to 2019. He reviewed multiple theoretical and practical lenses to conceptualize sustainable consumption and recommended future research for the inclusion of stakeholders and institutions (Araújo, Oliveira, & Correia, 2021). Few studies highlighted in table 1 to investigate the existing gap. Therefore, the study conceptualizes sustainable consumption behaviors to focus on employees, millennials, and the workplace. As shown in table 1, 21 research papers from the past 20 years with the same themes and context, were selected and reviewed and gaps were highlighted in the sustainable consumption field.

During the systematic review, few trends in research of sustainable consumption behaviors were found during the last 20 years. Starting from 2000 till 2004, sustainable consumption behaviors were investigated to develop and comprehend policies and practices for global, economic, political, governmental and environmental levels. Secondly, from 2005 to 2011 the focus shifted towards conceptualizations in consumers' sustainable consumption. Lastly, from 2011 to 2020 the testing of several theories with significant relationships were analyzed empirically. The summary of sustainable consumption behaviors evolution and research gaps are listed in table 1.

TABLE 1: Evolution of Sustainable Consumption Behavior and Existing Research Gap.

S. No.	Author & Year	Construct	Context & Country	Methodology	Gaps
	Kaur, Mogaji, Wadera, & Gupta, (2022)	Sustainable consumption practices.	India Consumer perspective, Circular economy, generation Z, Baby boomer.	Qualitative data, Interviews.	Employee perspective Behavioral maintenance & consistency Millennials characteristics
	Quoquab, Mohammad, & Sukari, (2019)	Quality of life.	Malaysia Consumer Behavior,	Qualitative Interviews, Scale Development	Employee perspective Behavioral maintenance & consistency Values & Belief systems
	Chen et al. (2019)	Climatic Change	US Climatic Change courage by Media	Secondary Data	
	Pilgrimien et al. (2020)	Environmental attitude, responsibility, behavioral efficacy, Consumer engagement	Netherland Consumers Perspective	Quantitative Data, Survey Method	Employee perspective Behavioral maintenance & consistency Values & Belief systems
	Kadic-Maglajlic et al. (2019)	Consumer values, Self-Identity, Engagement, Emotional intelligence	South-eastern European countries Young Consumer behaviors	web-based panel study	Employee perspective
	Abdulrazak and Quoquab (2018)	Self-determination theory	Malaysia Consumer motivation, innate psychological needs	In-depth interviews	Employee perspective Behavioral maintenance & consistency Values & Belief systems
	Bulut et al. (2017)	Sustainable consumption Behavior, Unneeded consumption, savings, environmental sustainability behavior, Reusability	Turkey Gender and Generation Consumer perspective	Survey	Employee perspective Behavioral maintenance & consistency Values & Belief systems
	Chekima et al. (2016)	Environmental knowledge.	Malaysia Consumers' green purchase intention	Survey Methods	Employee perspective Behavioral maintenance & consistency Values & Belief systems
	Lee (2014)	Parental influence, supportive behaviors.	Hong Kong young, educated consumers	Survey	Employee perspective Generation horizon
	Lorek and Fuchs (2013)	Weak and strong sustainable consumption behaviors, role of values in governance	Germany environmental perspective	Conceptual paper	Empirical findings Employee perspective Behavioral maintenance & consistency Values & Belief systems
11.	Chabowski et al. (2011)	Sustainability in the Marketing context.	Global perspective	Conceptual paper	Empirical findings
12-16.	2011-2005 Jones et al. (2011) Sheth et al. (2011) Peattie & Collins (2009) Seyfang (2006) Vermeir and Verbeke (2006)	Exploration phase in retailing and consumer relationship	Consumers perspective	Conceptual paper	Empirical findings Employee perspective
17-21.	2004-2001 Hobson (2004) Seyfang (2004) Tanner and Kast (2003) Kong et al. (2002) Reisch (2001)	Exploration phase on environmental governance	Global, political, economic, governmental, environment context and policy models.	Conceptual paper	Empirical findings Employee perspective

## 6.2. Proactive Work Behavior (PWB)

Proactive work behavior refers to self-initiated and self-directed actions at the workplace by changing oneself and situation; including work activity, idea-generation, creativity

and innovation, personal initiatives, and problem-solving. Furthermore, it is defined as a self-directed behavior that brings change within organizations including problem-solving, work improvement methods and other concerns (Parker, & Collins, 2010). Several researchers explained different dimensions and scales to measure proactive work behavior (Bindl, & Parker, 2011; Searle, 2011; Tuan Luu, 2018). The most rigorous in organization setting were developed by Parker, & Collins, (2010), comprising four factors: (1) taking charge (2) Voice (3) Individual Innovation (4) Problem preventions. *Taking charge* is showing responsibility towards initiative, building new work and implementing solutions. Second dimension; *voice* is about showing willingness to speak and encourage communications. The third dimension is *individual innovation* which is based on how employees generate innovations and ideas. The last dimension is about *problem prevention*, which highlighted how employees developed and designed systems and discovered root causes for any upcoming problems (Parker, & Collins, 2010).

### 6.2.1. Antecedent & Consequence of Proactive Work Behavior

Several antecedents and consequences of proactive work behaviors are presented in the literature. Earlier, proactive work behavior antecedence perceived as an individual perspective (traits, personality) and organization perspectives (as culture and norms) (Crant, 2000). Later, individual perspective (readiness, and self-directed initiative) organization perspective (autonomy and Leadership style) perceived as antecedents of proactive work behavior. Recently, Parker et al. (2019) identified three antecedent domains after reviewing 95 articles as an effectiveness of proactive work behavior including task consideration, social consideration and self-regulatory considerations. Moreover, there are many consequences as well, including organization commitment, good behaviors, sustainability, organization performance, work-life balance, meaningfulness work, job satisfaction, employee retention, increased productivity and innovation. This is the evidence of proactive work behavior benefit in organization (Ali, 2021).

### 6.2.2. Relationship of Proactive Work Behavior with Sustainable Consumption Behaviors

Proactive work behaviors hold the ability to work under an uncertain environment, enhance efficiency, and can improve work productivity to achieve competitiveness edge. On the other side, the demand for sustainable consumption behaviors is also categorized as a challenging and uncertain situation for the future. There are several



antecedents and consequences of sustainable consumption behaviors including values and belief (Wahab, 2017), lifestyle (Matharu, Jain, & Kamboj, 2020), social factors, and customer pressure (Cho & Yoo, 2021). A study by Ali (2021) found that higher proactive work behaviors will create a strong impact on sustainable performance (Ali, 2021).

Proactive work behaviors can be a significant cause which has potential to produce sustainable consumption behaviors. Under an uncertain environment, proactive employees can work with efficiency to maintain sustainable solutions for the organization. Few studies revealed the link between proactive work behavior with sustainable performance in economical, environment and social dimension (Ali, 2021). However, the lens of proactive work behaviors from millennials in energy consumption to assess employee's sustainable consumption behaviors still needs attention. Therefore, this study hypothesizes the relation of proactive work behavior with sustainable consumption behavior by millennials employees of the energy sector. Hence, this study proposes:

**P1:** *Proactive Work Behavior has a significant positive relationship with Sustainable Consumption Behaviors.*

### 6.3. Workplace Spirituality (WPS)

Workplace spirituality is an emerging area to explore further for better conceptual understanding and empirical findings. Workplace spirituality is defined as the individual feeling of mindfulness, senses of completeness, experiences of transcendence with peers and work processes and community as a whole (Karakas, 2010). He further explained dimensions with four sub-factors including Compassion, Mindfulness, Meaningful work and Transcendence. Compassion is how employees understand and sympathize with the feelings and needs of coworkers. Mindfulness is about how an employee pays attention to himself and enjoys a state of fulfillment. Meaning work refers to experience and joy. Lastly, transcendence refers to experiences of higher power, connection with blessings, sense of community and thinking of integrity (Aftab et al. 2022). The term spirituality is not directly associated with 'religion'. It is inner feelings regarding oneself and the thinking of integrity, accountability and serving when no one is watching.

#### 6.3.1. Antecedent & Consequence of Workplace Spirituality

Organizations that have a culture with workplace spirituality have outperformed as compared to those who do not have such norms (Karakas, 2010; Lind et al. 2015). It

gives high prospective growth and success to organizations as compared to organizations with low spirituality. There are several consequences of workplace spirituality including high cultural cohesiveness, less-conflicts, and strong teamwork, sustainability performance, employee commitment, job satisfaction, and loyalty, life meaningfulness, and workplace well-being, efficient and effective results (Aftab, et al. 2022).

### 6.3.2. Relationship of Workplace Spirituality with Sustainable Consumption Behaviors

There is a strong association of sustainable consumption behaviors with values, such as happiness, religion, ethical and moral values, spiritual satisfaction, and hereafter life by good deed (Minton et al., 2015). In this conceptualizing, workplace spirituality is an impacting factor of sustainable consumption behaviors. Workplace spirituality in environmental concern has a significant positive relationship to develop sustainable behavior and retain these behaviors over the time across the situations (Wahab, 2017; Batool, et al., 2022).

### 6.3.3. Relationship of Workplace Spirituality with Proactive Work Behavior

Studies revealed when employees feel meaningfulness and values, they might adopt proactive work behaviors. In the time where organizations face challenges under an uncertain environment and the rising concern of energy consumption, the role of such employees is important (Batool, et al., 2022). Sense of integrity, values and community by employees proved as an effective and smooth functioning leading to organizational success towards sustainable consumption behaviors (Wahab, 2017; Meng, Lee, Chua, & Han, 2022). The Potential relationship between workplace spirituality and proactive work behavior can be drawn on the basis of self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2012). Moreover, the exploration and empirical analysis of workplace spirituality lacks findings in relations with sustainable consumption behaviors by employees. Hence, on the bases of previous studies of values and belief systems and in translation of self-determination theory this study proposes a moderating role of workplace spirituality to maintain the relationship of proactive work behavior and sustainable consumption behaviors.

**P2:** *Compassion moderates the relationship between Proactive Work Behavior and Sustainable Consumption Behaviors.*

**P3:** *Mindfulness moderates the relationship between Proactive Work Behavior and Sustainable Consumption Behaviors.*

**P4:** *Meaningful work moderates the relationship between Proactive Work Behavior and Sustainable Consumption Behaviors*

**P5:** *Transcendence moderates the relationship between Proactive Work Behavior and Sustainable Consumption Behaviors.*

#### 6.4. Gaps in Existing Research and Contributions

The two-fold study is composed mainly on sustainable consumption behaviors and proactive work behaviors. The major gap of this study is sustainable consumption behaviors and its antecedents which are still in exploration phase (Quoquab, & Mohammad, 2020; Araújo, Oliveira, & Correia, 2021). There are rising concerns on energy consumption and global environmental issues (Matharu, Jain, & Kamboj, 2020). Araújo, Oliveira, & Correia, (2021) concluded thematic evolution from 1999 to 2019, in which the gap found into multiple theoretical and practical lenses including social, psychological. In addition, a review analysis published by Quoquab, & Mohammad, (2020) presented the notion of significant sustainable consumption behaviors during the period 2000 to 2020, but the consumption and sustainable behavior in the workplace has not been found. More interestingly, proactive work behaviors and millennial generation employees are still unrevealed in sustainable consumption (Araújo, Oliveira, & Correia, 2021). This study signifies the role of proactive work behaviors of employees in the workplace to achieve sustainable consumption behaviors of employees in the organization. Hence, it will give conceptual contribution towards energy consumption policy making with the lens of behavioral phenomenon (proactive work behavior) of millennials in the Energy sector.

Another gap is the link of workplace spirituality with sustainable consumption behaviors which is also an emerging relation (Aftab et al. 2022). Earlier studies focused on organizational policies and training to achieve sustainable goals but the association with moral values and belief systems (like workplace spirituality) in millennials generations is missing (Quoquab, & Mohammad, 2020; Araújo, Oliveira, & Correia, 2021; Meng, Lee, Chua, & Han, 2022). Therefore, this study uses workplace spirituality as a moderating role to strengthen proactive work behavior in association with sustainable consumption behaviors.

Lastly, this study includes the millennial generation to conceptualize sustainable consumption behaviors through a proactive work behaviors lens. Different studies on sustainability and consumption carried out previously (Quoquab, & Mohammad, 2020;

Kaur, Mogaji, Wadera, & Gupta, 2022; Batool, et al., 2022) however, the inclusion of millennials specifically in energy consumption context has not been empirically tested earlier. Hence, this will give a contributing insight to policy makers, and practitioners to hire, train and retain these millennials behaviors and aspects to gain sustainable consumption behaviors.

**Conceptual Framework**

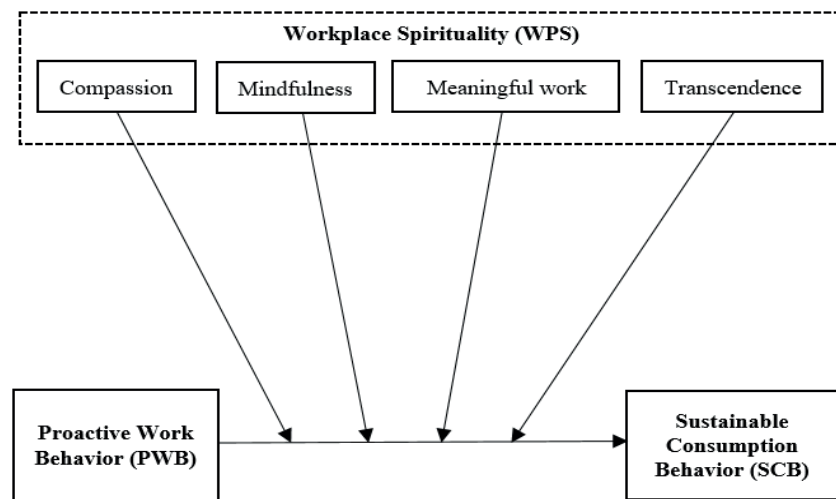


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework.

**6.4.1. Framework Explanation**

Self-determination theory is the foundation for the conceptual framework’s explanation. Self-determination theory is based on motivational theories in concern to behave in a more effective, productive and healthy way. Self-determination theory is based on social and cultural factors which influence and affect the quality of individual performance (Deci & Ryan, 2012). According to the visual depiction of the phenomena, if employees exhibit positive proactive work behavior, they can develop sustainable consumption behavior. It is conceptualized that in some situations, employees may not exhibit specific proactiveness, which can be maintained through the moderating role of workplace spirituality. This shows that even with proactive work behavior maybe employees are not showing sustainable consumption behaviors when they feel burdened or accountable under work dynamic. Then, the workplace spirituality plays a crucial role in tightly linking sustainable behavior with the value of ethics, morality, and spirituality in long-term consistency. In this way, all variables will contribute to develop and maintain

the sustainable consumption behaviors of millennials of the energy sector with future stability and behavioral consistency.

## 7. Discussion

Recognizing the values of sustainable consumption behaviors to achieve 2050 sustainability targets of energy sector, this paper reviewed the major findings to propose the conceptual model and respective implications. This study integrates the values and behavioral phenomenon to predict sustainable consumption behaviors of the millennial generation. Proactive work behavior is conceptualized as a significant variable that can produce the sustainable consumption behaviors of employees at the workplace. Proactive employees can be beneficial for the organization and can produce better results which is fruitful for the organization as well as the environment (Srivastava, 2017; Somech, 2016). In a complex business environment with an uncertain work dynamic, organizations require additional values and behavioral skills, such as employees who work independently and take initiative when necessary to achieve organizational benefits and environmental goals (Svensson, & Padin, 2019; Ma, Kao, Kao, & Cho, 2020). Proactive employees have the ability to work autonomously, take initiative in accordance with goals, suggest innovative strategies to achieve goals, demonstrate responsibility, and work in an uncertain environment. This study proposes proactive work behavior will improve consumption patterns. Furthermore, this study horizon comprises Generation Y (millennials), who will be the workers in 2050, and they have the ability to adapt and perform better even under uncertain and pressure time. Thus, the policy maker establishes achievable targets to achieve 2050 goals as the millennial generation will be implementing and executing this target.

Concerning behavioral consistency, many studies have indicated that employees who have particular moral values showed interest in preservation and sustainable actions for the environment (Meng, Lee, Chua, & Han, 2022). While conceptualizing the role of proactive work behavior with sustainable consumption behaviors; there are several belief systems and values phenomena which can be gripped tightly, and can be achieved through workplace spirituality (Batoool, et al., 2022). This study conceptualizes the relationship of workplace spirituality in link with proactive work behaviors to maintain the sustainable consumption behaviors with morality principles even under no supervisor. Workplace spirituality is inner meaningful work that can take place in the community context. Integrating spirituality into the workplace is becoming increasingly important in order to attain high performance while maintaining integrity and self-accountability

(Meng, Lee, Chua, & Han, 2022). Sustainability is a complicated and multifaceted phenomenon that can be deeply ingrained with spiritual values. The workplace spirituality can serve as an act of responsibility and accountability even 'when no one is watching' (Wahab, 2017). Therefore, this study proposed moderating the relationship of workplace spirituality between sustainable consumption behaviors and proactive work behavior.

## 7.1. Theoretical and Practical Implications

The purpose of this study is to highlight the importance of sustainable consumption behaviors of employees in the workplace to achieve environmental sustainability goals of global and national 2050 plans. The conceptual and theoretical contribution of this study presents the comprehensive model to achieve sustainable consumption behaviors from the lens of proactive work behavior and predictive factors (including workplace spirituality). The moderating role of the workplace through linking behavioral factors (proactive work behaviors) to achieve sustainable consumption behaviors is addition to the body of knowledge and expands theoretical understanding to the self-determination theory. Previously, many studies were conducted, but combining the values and behavioral perspectives to achieve and maintain sustainable consumption behaviors is itself a novel attempt and contribution to the existing body of knowledge.

This study provides practical implications to the managers and policymakers working on energy consumption and sustainability programmes with practical consequences. The organization will benefit from the inclusion of the recommended model and the execution of organizational interventions on proactive and sustainable consumption practices. The context of millennials in the energy sector will be another illuminating effort that was not explored previously from the perspective of sustainability and the energy sector. This study is a novel attempt to propose sustainable consumption behaviors. Millennials are the future generation who will be working on their future 2050 goals. They have potential to plan, target and achieve sustainable goals and secure the energy resources for next generations. Recommendations for this generation might include training, growth opportunities, promotion, and well-being assistance programs from the organization. Hence, this study signifies the demographic contribution in sustainable goals implications with the millennial generation characteristics.

## 8. Limitations and Future Research

The study proposed the conceptual framework based on literature search which lacks empirical findings. To serve this purpose, a model is proposed to be tested empirically on millennials employees in the energy sector. The outcome of empirical findings will provide accurate and validate implications to practitioners to design strategies on millennials and improve sustainable consumption behaviors in the workplace. An upgraded eco-friendly system in organization will benefit employees, organizations as well as the environment.

Another limitation of this study is the English language. This review did not include literature from other languages. Hence, there is a possibility of exclusion of any significant literature from this conceptual development. Future research can improve conceptual understanding by adding different constructs published in other languages.

## 9. Conclusion

Conclusively, this study proposes several emerging theoretical relationships among all constructs which is the novel attempt towards conceptual underpinning and body of knowledge. All gaps will significantly contribute conceptually and demographically in the existing literature. This study will give directions and recommendations to practitioners and policy makers in the context of millennials' employee and sustainable consumption goals of 2050. It will give demographic understanding to millennial generations especially in the energy sector for future implementations and executions of energy consumption and global sustainable plans.

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