


Article

Charting a Course for Sustainable Hospitality by Exploring Leadership Theories and Their Implications

Yoon Jung Jang 

School of Hotel, Food Service & Culinary Arts, Woosong University, Daejeon 34606, Republic of Korea; yjang@wsu.ac.kr; Tel.: +82-42-630-9253

Abstract: A literature review was undertaken to examine the present state of research on sustainability-related leadership in the hospitality field. Twenty-two articles from renowned hospitality journals were carefully selected for analysis. The review findings indicate that several leadership theories, like transformational and responsible leadership, have been employed to comprehend the influence of leadership on sustainability performance in organizations. Most of the research conducted so far has focused on Asian cultures and hotel settings, with quantitative surveys being the predominant research method utilized. Notably, environmental sustainability has received more attention than social sustainability concerns within the existing body of literature. Based on the identified research gaps, this paper sets the groundwork for future research on sustainable leadership. By addressing the limitations observed in current research, further investigations can expand our knowledge and understanding of sustainable leadership practices within the hospitality industry.

Keywords: hospitality; sustainable leadership; environmental sustainability; social sustainability



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1. Introduction

Capitalism and consumerism have been significant contributors to numerous social and environmental challenges. It is crucial to re-evaluate the current capitalist system, which has led to inequality, unemployment, declining living standards, climate change, resource scarcity, and pollution of air and water. The United Nations has established goals that emphasize a holistic approach to ensure a high quality of life and create sustainable economies and communities. Sustainability, defined as “the concept of improving and maintaining a healthy ecological, social, and economic system for human development” [1], has gained prominence as a key strategy for long-term survival among companies. Many organizations now prioritize sustainability in their policies, strategies, and operations, driven by the need to demonstrate positive social and environmental impact to a wide range of stakeholders while pursuing business profitability and economic growth [2,3].

In the hospitality industry, companies are increasingly held accountable for promoting sustainable development and shifting their core strategies from a short-term shareholder-centric approach to one that embraces long-term sustainable value, considering the interconnection of the economy, society, and the environment. Sustainability is seen as an opportunity for hospitality companies to transform their businesses and ensure long-term survival, leading to a heightened sense of responsibility among their leaders [4,5]. This has given rise to the concept of “sustainable leadership” [6,7], as new business leaders are required to drive sustainability initiatives and make organizations more competitive.

The Brundtland Commission of the United Nations stated, “Humanity has the ability to make development sustainable—to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs” [8]. In alignment with this perspective, the notion of sustainability and sustainable leadership is guided by Elkington’s triple-bottom-line framework [9]. This framework encourages businesses to adopt a sustainable approach by considering the interests of the planet, people, and profit

in order to secure a sustainable future for the organization [10]. McCann and Sweet [11] assert that sustainability represents a fundamental shift in business thinking, emphasizing long-term survival over short-term profits. They argue that sustainable leadership is crucial for shaping organizational culture and instilling sustainable values among employees and stakeholders. This, they contend, leads to a sustainable competitive advantage over time [12].

The overarching goal of sustainable leadership, therefore, should be the creation of meaningful value for a diverse range of stakeholders, including those within and outside the organization [2,11,13]. According to Avery and Bergsteiner [1], sustainable leadership incorporates elements of humanistic management by placing value on individuals and considering the organization as a contributor to social well-being. Sustainable leaders adopt a long-term perspective in designing business strategies and aim to create value that enhances the lives of customers and employees, thus promoting overall well-being for all stakeholders [14]. Consequently, sustainable leadership involves characteristics such as involving diverse groups in decision-making processes for organizational change, generating innovative solutions to complex problems, and balancing the interests of people, profits, and the planet [13,15].

While sustainability research has made progress in recent decades, studies in the hospitality field have often neglected the role of corporate leaders in promoting sustainability initiatives [4,16]. Although previous research in the hospitality sector has applied several relevant leadership theories [13,17–20], many of these theories have limitations when it comes to understanding organizational sustainability issues. This gap calls for an integrated approach to comprehending hospitality sustainability and sustainability-specific leadership. This paper serves as an initial step toward defining sustainable leadership, reviewing sustainability-relevant leadership studies, and proposing future directions for research. This review focuses on articles that primarily explore leadership in the hospitality context, particularly concerning sustainability issues. This study delved into the following research questions (RQs):

RQ1: What is the current state of sustainability-relevant leadership studies in the hospitality literature? Specifically, what contexts and sectors within the hospitality industry have been analyzed, and what research methods were utilized?

RQ2: Which leadership theories have been employed to comprehend the influence of leadership on a business's sustainability performance?

RQ3: How have the selected leadership theories been hypothesized and measured within the sustainability framework?

RQ4: What are the primary directions for future studies on sustainable leadership within the hospitality industry?

These research questions aim to provide a clear understanding of the existing literature on sustainability-relevant leadership within the hospitality sector and to identify gaps and opportunities for further exploration.

2. Study Methodology

To comprehend the study of sustainability-relevant leadership in hospitality settings, a systematic literature review was carried out, adhering to the five-step approach suggested by Khan et al. [21]: formulating research inquiries, identifying pertinent articles, evaluating article eligibility, summarizing findings, and interpreting the results (Figure 1).

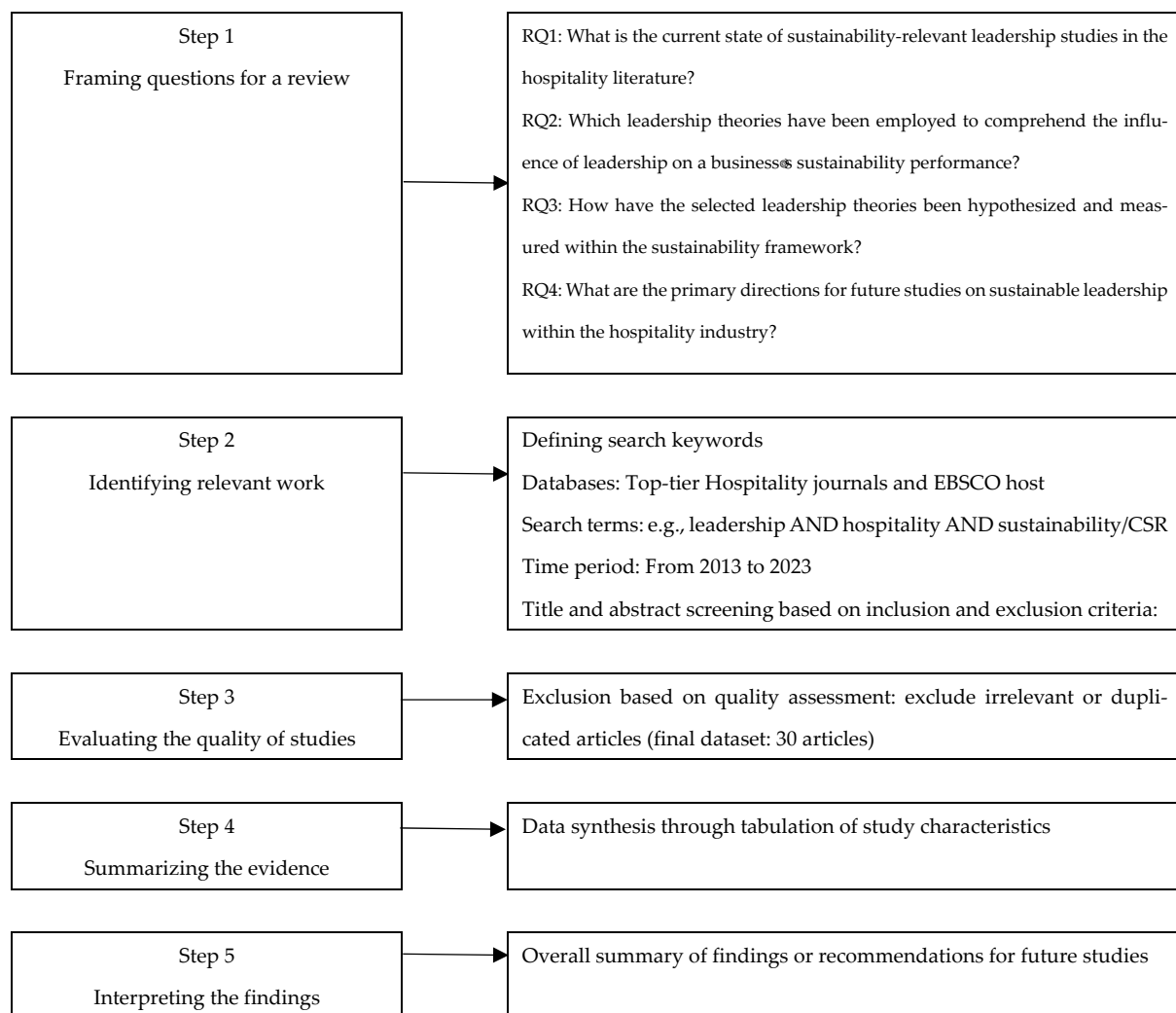


Figure 1. The literature review process.

We selected the framework proposed by Khan et al. [21] for this study because of its comprehensive nature in conducting a literature review. Bavik [22] advocates for a systematic approach to conducting a literature review in the hospitality sector, a view supported by Kim et al. [23]. This approach allows for an integrative literature review, which is more explicit and structured compared to conventional reviews [21].

Initially, articles were manually searched in top-ranked hospitality and sustainability journals recommended by Huertas-Valdivia et al. [24], including the *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, *Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management*, and *Sustainability*. Additionally, widely used databases, such as EBSCO Host, were consulted to ensure comprehensive coverage and minimize the chances of missing any relevant articles. The outputs from both manual and database searches were combined and examined to remove any duplicate articles.

The search utilized keywords such as hospitality, restaurant, hotel, leadership, sustainable, sustainability, environment, and social responsibility/CSR. No restrictions regarding the publication year were imposed during the search process. The eligibility of articles was determined based on specific criteria: focusing on leadership as the primary topic, utilizing data samples from the hospitality sector, and addressing sustainability issues encompassing environmental or social concerns. Articles failing to meet at least one of these criteria were excluded from further analysis. Each article's full text underwent a com-

prehensive evaluation to ensure compliance with the established criteria. After completing the evaluation process, a total of 81 articles were initially identified. Among them, 51 articles were excluded due to duplication and eligibility criteria. Consequently, 30 articles published between 2013 and 2023 were selected for further analysis.

Table 1 presents the source journals from which the sample was drawn, along with the corresponding number of articles identified from each journal.

Table 1. Articles published in top hospitality journals on leadership and sustainability.

Journal	No. of Articles
International Journal of Hospitality Management	10
International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management	6
Sustainability	6
Journal of Hospitality Tourism and Research	1
Cornell Hospitality Quarterly	1
Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management	5
Journal of Hospitality Marketing and Management	1
Total	30

The *International Journal of Hospitality Management* contributed the most articles on this topic, with 10 articles. This was followed by the *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, which contributed 6 articles, and *Sustainability*, which contributed 6 articles. Content analysis was employed to examine the data in terms of contextual information, research methods, measurement approaches, leadership theories, hypothesized relationships, and findings.

3. Findings

The findings are analyzed and presented in relation to the research questions.

3.1. Context and Methods Employed in the Review Articles

In addressing RQ1, Tables 2 and 3 present the context and methods employed in the review articles. Our findings indicate that research on sustainability-relevant leadership has been conducted in various countries (Table 2), including China ($n = 8$), Pakistan ($n = 5$), USA ($n = 3$), Vietnam ($n = 3$), Turkey ($n = 2$), Cyprus ($n = 1$), Italy ($n = 1$), Macau ($n = 1$), Malaysia ($n = 1$), and Portugal ($n = 1$). Among the research sectors, most studies focused on the hotel industry ($n = 25$), specifically examining employees working in hotels. For example, Zhao and Zhou [25] surveyed 270 employees working in a state-owned chain of hotels in Shanghai, China. Luu [26] gathered data from employees from hotels in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Kim et al. [19] collected data from employees in green-certified hotels in Thailand. Teng and Yi [27] surveyed 325 front-line service employees in a Taiwanese hotel. Kara et al. [18] conducted their study with 443 employees in five-star hotels in Turkey. Wood et al. [20] analyzed data from supervisors (936) and employees (2,284) across 184 hotels located in the United Arab Emirates. In the context of the restaurant industry, Tosun et al. [28] gathered data from a sample of 300 employees employed in 60 restaurants in North Cyprus. Jang et al. [13] gathered data from 250 restaurant managers in the United States.

Table 2. Study context.

	Frequency
Country	
China	8
Cyprus	1
Italy	1
Macau	1

Table 2. *Cont.*

	Frequency
Malaysia	1
Pakistan	5
Portugal	1
Spain	1
Thailand	1
Taiwan	1
Turkey	2
United Arab Emirates	1
USA	3
Vietnam	3
Sector	
Hotel	25
Restaurant	6

Wang et al. [14] used the data from employees both from hotels and restaurants.

Table 3. Methods employed in the review articles.

	Frequency
Research design	
Quantitative survey	29
Qualitative	1
Data analysis	
SEM	20
Macro PROCESS	2
Mplus	5
Lisrel	1
Hierarchical linear regression	1
NVivo	1

A quantitative approach utilizing surveys was the primary method ($n = 29$) employed for data collection in studies investigating sustainability-relevant leadership in the hospitality sector. Regarding data analysis, most studies ($n = 20$) employed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to investigate the relationships posited in their hypotheses (Table 3).

3.2. Leadership Theories Applied to Address Sustainability Issue

To address RQ2, this study examined the theories utilized in hospitality leadership research with a focus on sustainability issues. The most employed theories were transformational leadership and responsible leadership. Transformational leaders inspire employees' dedication to organizational goals and foster innovation in organizational performance [29,30]. The challenges in discovering the link between transformational leadership and corporate social and environmental responsibility have been highlighted in several studies [19,20,29,31–33].

Scholars have recently turned their attention to responsible leadership to better understand leadership qualities in contemporary hospitality. This concept emphasizes the need for leaders to balance the values of stakeholders both within and outside the organization [34]. Responsible leaders incorporate these values into the formulation of strategies and objectives while also motivating and empowering followers to align their actions with the stakeholders' values [4,34]. Implementing responsible leadership has been proposed as a way to enhance employees' perception of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and organizational citizenship behavior, ultimately leading to improved social or environmental performance [4,13].

Ethical leaders prioritize organizational goals and serve as role models for ethical behavior within the organization. By doing so, they encourage their subordinates to adopt ethical responsibility and promote organizational sustainability [35,36]. Prior studies have

shown the importance of ethical leadership in impacting followers' socially responsible behavior (e.g., [21]).

Other frequently mentioned theories include authentic leadership, servant leadership, and inclusive leadership. Authentic leadership, which is grounded in the concept of authenticity, involves acting in accordance with an internalized moral perspective and prioritizing organizational goals over personal self-interest. Cultivating positive relationships with employees and recognizing their capabilities can enhance job satisfaction and inspire them to participate in extra-role behaviors, such as generating creative solutions for sustainability [37]. Past research has offered proof of the critical role of authentic leadership in shaping organizational citizenship behaviors [28,38] as well as driving organizational sustainability [37].

In the hotel industry, where creative employees can make a substantial contribution to organizational sustainability with their unique and innovative ideas, servant leadership has garnered interest. Servant leadership, a concept introduced by Greenleaf [39], emphasizes a leader's dedication to serving others rather than focusing solely on exercising authority. Within the hospitality industry, research indicates that servant leadership has beneficial impacts on employees' creativity, innovative behavior, and organizational citizenship behavior [18,40,41].

Additionally, inclusive leaders foster an environment that welcomes ideas from all employees, creating a win-win situation where diverse perspectives are valued [42]. Given the dynamic nature of service operations in the hotel industry, employees' creative ideas regarding products and services are considered significant assets that can contribute to the company's positioning and competitive advantage. Previous research suggests that inclusive leadership influences employee outcomes, such as well-being, citizenship behavior, and employee creativity [43–45].

Table 4 illustrates the leadership theories utilized to comprehend sustainability issues, along with the citation counts of the review articles. The citation count serves as a crucial indicator for evaluating the influence and quality of research work [46].

Table 4. Leadership theories and the citation counts of the review articles.

Leadership Theories	Author	Publication Year	Total Citations
Transformational leadership	Kara et al. [19]	2013	446
	Kara et al. [47]	2018	88
	Kim et al. [20]	2020	164
	Kim et al. [48]	2021	71
	Gurmani et al. [49]	2021	43
	Tosun et al. [29]	2022	46
	Xu et al. [50]	2022	38
	Xin and Wang [51]	2023	2
	Zheng et al. [33]	2023	2
Responsible leadership	Jang et al. [13]	2017	217
	He et al. [52]	2019	98
	Zhao and Zhou [26]	2019	128
	Freire and Gonçalves [4]	2021	29
	Jang et al. [53]	2022	20
	Tuan [54]	2022	48
	Garcia et al. [55]	2023	23
	Wang et al. [14]	2023	5
	Zhou and Zheng [56]	2023	2
Ethical leadership	Wood et al. [21]	2021	73
	Ali and Hassen [17]	2023	5

Table 4. Cont.

Leadership Theories	Author	Publication Year	Total Citations
Authentic leadership	Qiu et al. [38]	2019	204
	Teng and Yi [28]	2022	13
	Farrukh et al. [37]	2023	18
Servant leadership	Bavik et al. [18]	2017	189
	Luu [40]	2019	171
	Aboramadan et al. [57]	2021	73
Inclusive leadership	Luu [27]	2019	45
	Aboramadan et al. [43]	2022	27
	Shao et al. [58]	2022	15
	Asghar et al. [59]	2023	2

3.3. How Each Leadership Hypothesized and Measured

To address RQ3, Table 5 provides data regarding sample articles from the reviewed studies. In terms of transformational leadership, researchers have hypothesized and examined its impact on social and environmental sustainability. For instance, Kara et al. [19] examined the impacts of transformational leadership on hotel employees' quality of work life. Their survey of 443 hotel employees in Turkey utilized the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) validated by Avolio and Bass [60] to assess transformational leadership. The findings indicated that transformational leadership positively impacts employee well-being, improves the quality of work life, enhances life satisfaction, and reduces burnout. Kim et al. [20] explored the reasons behind hotel employees' demonstration of citizenship behaviors related to organizational sustainability. They collected data from employees from green-certified hotels in Thailand and assessed environmental-transformational leadership with Avolio and Bass's [60] MLQ. Sample items used in the measurement of transformational leadership included statements like "Talks about his/her most important values and beliefs about the environment" and "Spends time teaching and coaching on environmental issues". The results confirmed that environmental transformational leadership, environmental policy, and training had significant influences on citizenship behavior related to the environment. Using data from 935 employees in Chinese hospitality corporations, Zheng et al. [33] investigated how transformational leadership influences employee pro-environmental behaviors through their distinct personality systems. The findings revealed that transformational leaders have a positive impact on employee pro-environmental behaviors by cultivating a personality system that fosters a focus on work promotion while reducing emotional exhaustion. Transformational leadership was assessed using Avolio and Bass's [60] 20-item scale, which is divided into three dimensions: "charisma, individual consideration, and intellectual stimulation" (p. 5).

In a study involving 292 employees in small and medium-sized restaurants, Tosun et al. [29] examined the effects of green transformational leadership on employees' green performance. Their findings indicated that while green transformational leadership did not directly affect green performance, its relationship was mediated by corporate social responsibility (CSR). Green transformational leadership was evaluated using six questions adapted from Chen and Chang [61], including statements like "The leader of my restaurant provides a clear environmental vision for the employees to follow" and "The leader of my restaurant gets the employees to work together for the same environmental goals".

Xin and Wang [51] also utilized the scale developed by Chen and Chang [61] to investigate the impact of green transformational leadership on green intellectual capital, encompassing green human capital, green structural capital, and green relational capital, and its influence on green competitive advantage in the context of Spanish hotels.

Kim et al. [48] highlighted that transformational leadership during a crisis has a positive impact on employees' quality of work life. Additionally, they found that employees'

commitment to change acts as a mediator in the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' quality of work life. Differing from the studies mentioned earlier, Kim et al. [48] utilized a seven-time scale borrowed from Carless, Wearing, and Mann [62].

Studies have explored responsible leadership concerning employees' social responsibility (CSR), organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), and sustainable behavior. Freire and Goncalves [4] conducted a study involving 214 front-line employees from four- and five-star hotels in Portugal. They examined how responsible leadership contributes to understanding citizenship behavior by examining employees' organizational identification and social responsibility as mediators. Their study found that responsible leadership significantly influenced both mediators, which subsequently influenced their engagement in extra-role behavior, such as organizational citizenship. Zhao and Zhou [26] aimed to identify the type of leadership that affects employees' sustainability-related behavior. They collected data from 302 employees employed at a chain hotel in Shanghai, China, and examined the mechanism through which leadership influences employees' citizenship behavior towards the environment (OCBE). Responsible leadership was assessed using the five-item scale developed by Voegtlin [34]. Examples of items included statements like "My direct supervisor demonstrates awareness of the relevant stakeholder claims" and "My direct supervisor considers the consequences of decisions for the affected stakeholders". The findings suggested that responsible leadership, directly and indirectly, promoted sustainable behavior, such as OCBE, with the identification of the leader playing a mediating role. This study aligns with Jang et al.'s [13] argument that responsible leadership contributes to organizational sustainable behavior by sharing sustainable values and priorities with stakeholders. With 268 front-line employees from 15 hotels in Shanghai, China, Zhou and Zheng [56] suggested that responsible leadership in the hospitality sector has a positive impact on employees' external CSR activities, such as environmental or community development investments. This relationship was found to be mediated by the satisfaction of employees' needs.

All the reviewed studies employed the original five-item scale of responsible leadership, validated by Voegtlin [34], to assess responsible leadership (e.g., [4,26,52,54]). Jang et al. [13] modified the original scale of Voegtlin [34] to fit the specific focus of their study on environmental sustainability. An exception is Wang et al.'s [14] study, which employed a measurement consisting of 18 items adapted from Agarwal and Bhal [63]. Their research, which included 212 top management team members from various service organizations such as hotels and restaurants, clearly demonstrated the significant impact of CEO-responsible leadership on enhancing both Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives and organizational performance through the cultivation of positive organizational climates.

Scholars have suggested that supervisors' ethical leadership behavior can impact employees' engagement in corporate social responsibility (CSR) and environmental practices [21]. Wood et al. [21] performed a study involving supervisors and employees across 184 hotels in the United Arab Emirates. They evaluated ethical leadership with the original 10-item scale validated by Brown et al. [64]. Within their model, they hypothesized that ethical leadership influenced employees' environmental behavior. The findings demonstrated that ethical leadership significantly contributed as a precursor to CSR. CSR, in turn, influenced trust, which served as a motivator for employees to participate in environmentally friendly behavior. Ali and Hassen [17] examined the mediated impact of ethical leadership on the relationship between trust and green behavior intention in hotels. They utilized a seven-item scale validated by Mahsud et al. [65], which was based on scenario-based research and adapted to suit the study context. Their study findings suggested that ethical leadership enhances the connection between trust and intention to engage in green behaviors, especially when trust is built through practices based on commitment.

Authentic leadership has been the subject of empirical research investigating its impact on employees' extra-role service behaviors [28] and green creative behavior [37]. Teng

and Yi [28] conducted research to investigate how authentic leadership contributes to encouraging prosocial behaviors in the hospitality industry. The sample included 325 hotel employees, including front-line service employees, in Taiwan. The survey questions created by Neider and Schriesheim [66] were utilized, encompassing four dimensions: “self-awareness, relational transparency, internalized moral perspective, and balanced information processing”. Their study’s results showed that authentic leadership had a positive impact on person–job fit, leading to an enhancement in prosocial service behaviors. The findings of their study revealed that authentic leadership positively influenced person–job fit, which in turn enhanced prosocial service behaviors. Farrukh et al. [36] focused specifically on environmentally specific authentic leadership (ESAL) and its ability to predict employees’ green creativity, which is vital for organizational sustainability. Their study gathered data from full-time employees working in three- to five-star hotels in Pakistan, encompassing both international and local hotel brands. The measurement of leadership was adapted from Walumbwa et al. [67], with sample items such as “Our leader rarely presents a false front to others”. The results validated that ESAL significantly impacted green creativity, with this connection mediated by the team’s clarity of environmental goals. Moreover, the influence of ESAL on green creativity was moderated by the team’s environmentally harmonious passion. This study underscored the importance of ESAL in nurturing employees’ green creativity and emphasized the mediating and moderating factors at play in this association.

In the realm of servant leadership, Luu [19] conducted a study examining the impact of “environmentally specific servant leadership” on employees’ organizational citizenship behavior for the environment (employee OCBE). The data for this study were collected from 1603 employees working at resort hotels in central Vietnam. Environmentally specific servant leadership was assessed using a 12-item scale adapted from Liden et al. [68]. The findings revealed that environmentally specific servant leadership positively influenced employee OCBE, and this relationship was mediated by employee environmental engagement. Moreover, this study identified two moderators, namely organizational support for green behaviors and person–group fit, which enhanced the influence of environmental servant leadership on employee OCBE. This research offered valuable insights into how servant leadership promotes employees’ engagement in pro-environmental behaviors. Aboramadan et al. [57] investigated the effects of environmentally specific servant leadership on employees’ green work outcomes, including green innovative work behavior and OCBE. The findings revealed a positive association between environmentally specific servant leadership and green work outcomes. Furthermore, the results indicated that the climate for green creativity mediates the relationship between environmentally specific servant leadership and green innovative work behavior and employees’ OCBE. Bavik et al. [18] explored how employee job crafting mediates the connection between servant leadership and individual employees’ interpersonal citizenship behaviors directed at both internal and external stakeholders. Their study involved a sample of 238 hotel employees. Servant leadership was measured using a 14-item scale developed by Ehrhart [69]. The findings demonstrated that servant leadership has a positive impact on employees’ behaviors towards leaders, coworkers, and customers, fostering a culture of citizenship. Furthermore, research revealed that employee job crafting plays a mediating role in linking servant leadership to individual employees’ citizenship behaviors. One of the sample items used in the measurement of servant leadership was “My supervisor is sensitive to team members’ responsibilities outside the workplace”. This study shed light on the significance of servant leadership in shaping employees’ behaviors towards various stakeholders and emphasized the role of employee job crafting as a mediator in this relationship.

Inclusive leadership has been the subject of investigation concerning employee well-being and creativity in the context of social responsibility [27,58,70,71]. Shao et al.’s [58] hotel study confirmed that employee perceptions of corporate social responsibility (CSR) significantly influenced employee creativity, and this relationship was mediated by inclusive leadership. The support provided by leaders can enhance employees’ trust in

their leaders and foster creativity. This study underscored the essential role of inclusive leadership in fostering employee creativity within the framework of social responsibility. The inclusive leadership scale used in this study was adapted from Carmeli et al. [72]. In Vietnam, Luu [27] examined the contribution of inclusive leadership to the well-being of hotel employees with physical disabilities. Their study recruited 1603 employees from various hotels in Vietnam. The findings showed that inclusive leadership positively impacted employees' job satisfaction and affective commitment. In Luu's [27] study, a 13-item scale adapted from Cheng et al. [73] was used to assess the influence of inclusive benevolent leadership on job satisfaction and affective commitment of employees with disabilities. This research emphasized the positive impact of inclusive leadership on the well-being of employees, particularly those with physical disabilities. Aboramadan et al. [43] examined the impact of green, inclusive leadership on employees' green innovative work behavior, using data collected from employees and supervisors in three-star hotels in Italy. Their study utilized the revised nine-item scales developed by Carmeli et al. [72] to assess the green, inclusive leadership scale, specifically focusing on the statement, "The supervisor is open to hearing new environmental and green ideas" (p. 5). The results indicated a positive relationship between green inclusive leadership and green innovative work behavior, green knowledge-sharing behavior, green service recovery, and perceived green organizational support. This suggests that when managers exhibit and practice green inclusive leadership, employees perceive their workplace as more supportive of sustainable practices, leading to increased engagement in green behaviors. Consistent with Aboramadan et al.'s [43] study, Asghar et al. [59], who utilized an item scale adapted from Carmeli et al. [72], also confirmed the significant effect of inclusive leadership on green innovative service behavior among hotel employees.

Table 5 presents a selection of sample articles from the reviewed studies.

Table 5. Sample articles from the reviewed studies.

Author (Year)	Applied Leadership	Sample	Measurement	Hypothesized Relationship and Findings
Kara et al. [19]	Transformational leadership	A total of 443 employees working in five-star hotels in Turkey.	Transformational leadership adapted from a 20-item instrument developed by Avolio and Bass [60].	Transformational leadership had a positive impact on employee well-being. Specifically, it significantly affected employees' perceptions of their quality of work life, leading to increased life satisfaction and reduced burnout.
Freire and Goncalves [4]	Responsible leadership	A total of 214 front-line employees in four- and five-star hotels in Portugal.	Responsible leadership adapted from a five-item scale proposed by Voegtlin [34].	Responsible leadership significantly influenced employees' perception of social responsibility and organizational identification, which in turn affected their extra-role behavior, including organizational citizenship.
Wood et al. [21]	Ethical leadership	A total of 936 supervisors and 2284 employees from 184 hotels in the United Arab Emirates.	Ethical leadership adapted from a 10-item measurement from Brown et al. [64].	Supervisory ethical leadership behavior indirectly impacts green behavior through its influence on CSR, employees' well-being, and responsibility behavior.
Teng and Yi [28]	Authentic leadership	A total of 325 hotel employees in Taiwan (including front-line service employees).	Authentic leadership adapted from a 16-item scale borrowed from Neider and Schriesheim [66].	Authentic leadership had a positive impact on P-J fit, which then influenced both role-prescribed service behaviors and extra-role service behaviors. Specifically, P-J fit mediated the relationship between authentic leadership and employees' PSBs.
Bavik et al. [18]	Servant leadership	A total of 238 full-time hotel employees in five-star hotels in Macau.	Servant leadership 14-item scale developed by Ehrhart [69].	Servant leadership's impact on employees' citizenship behaviors was mediated by employee job crafting.
Luu [27]	Inclusive leadership	A total of 586 employees from hotels in Vietnam.	A 13-item scale adapted from Cheng et al.'s [73].	Inclusive leadership showed positive effects on employees' job satisfaction and affective commitment.

3.4. Suggestions for Future Research

Hospitality professionals are instrumental in advancing the comprehension of sustainable leadership theories. To contribute to this endeavor, it is crucial to cultivate a thorough understanding of sustainability, identify the most relevant theories, and recognize the leadership qualities specific to the hospitality industry that promote organizational sustain-

ability. This paper serves as a foundation for future research on sustainable leadership by highlighting the research gaps in previous studies and suggesting potential avenues for further investigation in the context of hospitality.

Firstly, there is a need to explore sustainable leadership within Western cultures, as most existing studies have focused on Asian cultures. Cultural values play a significant role in shaping employees' perceptions of sustainability and leadership, and understanding potential cultural variations is crucial. Additionally, while most research has been conducted in hotel settings, it is important to broaden the scope and include other hospitality contexts, such as restaurants. The unique characteristics of these different settings may impact employees' views on leadership and sustainability, warranting further exploration.

To address the limitations of prior studies, it is advisable to utilize a blend of quantitative and qualitative methods. Techniques like the Delphi method or focus group interviews can provide valuable insights and compensate for any shortcomings in current leadership research. Measurement scales used in previous research varied, with some researchers modifying existing scales to address specific social and environmental sustainability aspects. However, there is still a need to develop appropriate measurement tools for assessing sustainability-specific leadership. Collaborative efforts between researchers, practitioners, and academia can facilitate the development of robust measurement scales.

While environmental sustainability has received more attention, future research should not neglect social sustainability aspects, including employee well-being. In addition to examining employees' citizenship behavior related to the environment, it is important to explore their creative and innovative behaviors toward sustainability. This will enable us to develop a comprehensive understanding of organizational sustainability. Moreover, identifying leadership theories that align with these behaviors will significantly enhance our understanding of this field.

The integration of additional theoretical perspectives, such as stakeholder theory and self-determination theory, can improve our understanding of how sustainable leadership impacts employees' sustainable behavior. By incorporating psychological theories, researchers can gain deeper insights into the underlying psychological processes that drive employees' sustainability-relevant behaviors.

Most importantly, this study has demonstrated that existing leadership research lacks sufficient understanding, measurement, and evaluation of the qualities required for sustainable leaders in the hospitality sector. It is crucial to establish a precise definition of sustainability and sustainable leadership, agreed upon by academic and industry experts, as a foundation for future research through collaboration between academia and practitioners. With a clear definition of sustainability, subsequent outcome variables related to achieving organizational sustainability, such as employees' creative and innovative behaviors toward sustainability, will be clarified. This clarity will also help define the necessary qualities of a leader, contributing to the development of a measurement scale for new sustainable leadership.

4. Conclusions

While sustainability research has advanced significantly in recent decades, there has been a tendency in the hospitality field to overlook the role of corporate leaders in promoting sustainability initiatives. Despite the application of several relevant leadership theories in previous research within the hospitality sector, many of these theories have limitations in addressing organizational sustainability issues.

This study, thus, aims to address the following research questions: understanding the current state of sustainability-relevant leadership studies in terms of study context and methods, identifying leadership theories that have been used to comprehend the influence of leadership on a business's sustainability performance, examining how these leadership theories have been hypothesized and measured, and finally, suggesting directions for future studies on sustainable leadership. These research questions are addressed through an integrative literature review, following the approach outlined by Khan et al. [22].

The findings confirm that most existing studies have focused on the hotel sector in Asian cultures, primarily utilizing quantitative research designs. Leadership theories that have been frequently utilized were found to be transformational, responsible, and ethical leadership, followed by authentic, servant, and inclusive leadership. Transformational leadership theory has been hypothesized to understand its connection to corporate social and environmental responsibility [19,20,29,31,32]. Responsible leadership has been found to enhance employees' views of social responsibility or sustainability, leading to improved social or environmental performance [4,13,26]. Ethical leadership has been explored in the context of employees' social behaviors [17,21], and servant leadership has been associated with hospitality employees' citizenship behavior [18,40,57]. Inclusive and authentic leadership has also been investigated as significant antecedents of employees' prosocial service behaviors and creativity pertaining to social activities and well-being [28,43,58]. Measurement scales used in previous research varied, with some researchers modifying existing scales to address specific social and environmental sustainability aspects without appropriate measurement tools for assessing sustainability-specific leadership.

As discussed, hospitality researchers have applied various leadership theories, many of which have limitations in comprehending organizational sustainability. These issues may stem from the lack of clarity in defining sustainability and sustainable leadership. Future studies should aim to clarify sustainability and sustainable leadership in the hospitality industry through collaboration between academia and practitioners. This collaboration will enable research to progress in a desirable direction, advancing the literature in this field. It is our hope that this paper provides future researchers with an opportunity to address this problem, enabling sustainability-specific leadership research to advance and continue contributing insights to the leadership literature in the forthcoming decades.

This study makes a significant theoretical contribution to existing knowledge about sustainability and the leadership literature. This research identifies leader qualities discussed in previous sustainability studies, indicating a need for additional qualitative research to pinpoint essential leader traits for sustainable leadership and to enhance current knowledge. Despite substantial advancements in sustainability research over the past decade, research specifically focused on sustainability leadership remains in its nascent stages. This paper is anticipated to ignite further interest in leadership within the context of promoting organizational sustainability.

This study's limitations suggest several avenues for future research. It is crucial to acknowledge the limitations inherent in this study. The literature review included only top-tier academic journal articles in the hospitality field. Future studies could use meta-analysis to offer a more comprehensive and statistically robust analysis, integrating a wider array of studies from diverse journals on this topic.

The conclusions and discussions in this study are based on just 30 studies. Future research should consider expanding the scope to include a greater number of studies to enhance the robustness of the analysis. There is a need to research the role of sustainable leadership in the tourism, culture, and heritage sectors. Sustainable leadership plays a crucial role in minimizing negative impacts, fostering positive contributions to communities and environments, and ensuring the long-term viability of tourism destinations.

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