

WORK CLIMATE AND ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE IN SUSTAINABLE COMPANIES

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Abstract

This research aimed to investigate the relationship between work climate, sustainability practises and perceived economic performance in sustainable companies, focusing on the impact of Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) initiatives. The main objective is to assess how workplace climate influence economic performance and how sustainability practices contribute to employee satisfaction. The study uses a quantitative methodology based on a questionnaire consisting of 15 questions distributed to employees of sustainable companies. The collected data were statistically analysed using SPSS software, with correlation and linear regression tests to validate the hypotheses. Three main hypotheses were tested in the study: (H1) the positive relationship between a favourable work climate and economic performance, (H2) the contribution of sustainability practises to improving work climate, and (H3) the correlation between involvement in ESG initiatives and employee satisfaction. The results indicate a significant correlation between a positive work climate and perceived economic performance as well as a correlation between the implementation of ESG initiatives and employee satisfaction. This research contributes to the understanding of how sustainability practises can influence both employee satisfaction and overall business performance and provides guidance for improving organisational strategies in sustainable companies.

Keywords: sustainability, work climate, economic performance, ESG, employee satisfaction

JEL Classification: M14, L25, Q56

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1. Introduction

In the current context, where climate change, social responsibility and strict environmental regulations are becoming increasingly relevant, the concept of sustainability (Gutterman, 2022) has emerged as a major priority for companies. These organisations are increasingly aware of the need to integrate sustainable practises into their operations, not only to meet stakeholder expectations, but also to ensure longevity and competitiveness in the marketplace. In this framework, the work environment (Bocken, 2023) plays a crucial role as it directly influences not only the well-being of employees but also the overall economic performance of companies that want to operate responsibly and sustainably.

Recently, the concept of sustainability (Kiesnere & Baumgartner, 2019) has become a central pillar in the development and management of modern companies. This concept goes beyond the traditional framework of corporate social responsibility and encompasses a holistic approach to the impact an organization has on the environment, society and the economy. A sustainable company (Gorski & Dumitraşcu, 2023) focuses not only on maximising profits, but also on creating long-term value for all its stakeholders, including employees, customers, the community and the environment.

The work climate plays a crucial role in the context of sustainable companies and is a key factor for long-term success (Harrach, et al., 2020). A positive work climate is characterised by an organisational environment that supports employees, encourages innovation and promotes collaboration. In

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sustainable companies, the working climate is often closely linked to the values of the organisation, including a commitment to sustainability and social responsibility. Employees who feel valued and aligned with the organisation's mission and values are more motivated, productive and loyal, which translates into better economic performance (Mendes, et al., 2021).

The relevance of this topic is emphasised by the profound changes in the global business environment, where sustainability and social responsibility are no longer options but strategic necessities (Samaibekova, et al., 2021). At a time when consumers, investors and regulations are demanding ever higher standards of corporate behaviour, companies that succeed in integrating a positive work climate with sustainable practises have a significant competitive advantage.

The purpose of this research is to explore and analyse the relationship between work climate and economic performance in the context of sustainable companies. Thus, this research aims to provide a detailed overview of how a positive work climate, characterised by employee engagement, collaboration and satisfaction, can contribute to improving economic performance in a sustainable company.

The research objectives are structured to address several fundamental questions. Firstly, the main objective is to identify and define the essential characteristics of a positive work climate in a sustainable company. This includes assessing factors such as effective communication, leadership, professional development opportunities and work-life balance. Secondly, the aim is to analyse the extent to which these characteristics of the work climate influence the economic performance of the company. Thirdly, another key objective is to examine the correlations between sustainability practises and work climate. This includes investigating how a company's commitment to social and environmental responsibility affects employee morale and satisfaction and how it impacts economic performance. Finally, the research intends to provide concrete recommendations for companies that want to improve both their work climate and their economic performance, emphasising the importance of integrating sustainability principles into organizational culture.

The article is structured into five sections to thoroughly explore the relationship between sustainable organisational culture and economic success. The introduction discusses the context and significance of the topic, defines the research purpose and objectives, and formulates the research questions that will guide the subsequent analysis. The literature review describes how work climate influences economic performance in sustainable companies, emphasising the crucial role of environmental, social and governance (ESG) aspects. It also examines previous studies and relevant theories such as the resource-based view, motivation theory and stakeholder theory that support the article's hypotheses. The methodology section explains the research methods used, including a quantitative approach using questionnaires and statistical analyses. The results section presents and discusses the data obtained and compares it with the existing literature. The conclusions provide answers to the research questions, including practical recommendations for companies and suggestions for future research.

2. Literature review

This section begins by explaining the terms used in this research, such as work climate, economic performance and sustainability, on the basis of the relevant literature.

According to (Permatasari & Ratnawati, 2021), work climate is defined as the totality of employees' perceptions and attitudes towards various aspects of the organisational environment, including leadership style, institutional norms and values, communication and collaboration practises, level of management support and recognition, and the overall working conditions.

In the work of (Pham, et al., 2020), economic performance is described as a complex and multidimensional measure of an organisation's financial success that includes indicators such as profitability, revenue growth, return on investment and resource efficiency. It is influenced by internal factors such as operational efficiency, innovation and human resource management as well as external factors such as the general economic situation, regulations and market dynamics. Assessing economic performance therefore requires an integrated analysis of these elements, providing a holistic perspective on a company's financial health and sustainability.

The sustainability of a company (Rahman, et al., 2022) refers to its ability to conduct economic activities in a way that ensures not only short-term profitability but also a long-term balance between economic, social and environmental needs. In essence, sustainability in business (Spiliakos, 2018) is about adopting practises that balance and integrate economic, environmental and social interests so that the company contributes to societal well-being and environmental protection while remaining profitable in the long term.

In this context, ESG (Iazzolino et al., 2023) represents a set of criteria used to evaluate a company's performance in critical areas for long-term sustainability, focussing on three main dimensions: Environmental, Social and Governance, as follows:

- **Environmental** (Linnenluecke, 2022) assesses the company's impact on the environment, including the management of carbon emissions, the use of natural resources, pollution and waste management, and the adoption of green technologies.
- **Social** (Radzi, et al., 2023) refers to how the company manages relationships with employees, communities, and other stakeholders. This includes aspects such as employee rights and working conditions, diversity and inclusion, health and safety in the workplace, the company's impact on the community and society at large, as well as consumer satisfaction and well-being.
- **Governance** (Rehman, et al., 2021) pertains to the company's leadership structure and practices, including the board of directors' structure and accountability, transparency and reporting, business ethics, and compensation and reward practises.

To understand the relationship between work climate and economic performance in sustainable companies, it is essential to explore relevant theories from the literature that provide fundamental perspectives on organisational dynamics and their impact on corporate success:

- **Resource-Based View – RBV** – (Lubis, 2022) assumes that an organization's competitive advantage arises from its unique resources and capabilities, which are valuable, rare, inimitable and non-interchangeable. These resources can include tangible assets such as technology and infrastructure as well as intangible assets such as knowledge, organisational culture and human capital. The implication of this theory (Kero & Bogale, 2023) in the context of the research is that a positive work climate can be considered a valuable intangible resource that contributes to the company's competitive advantage. A healthy work climate can attract and retain talent, stimulate innovation and increase productivity, which has a direct impact on economic performance.
- **Motivation Theory** (Acquah, et al., 2021), includes several theories, such as Maslow's (Chiriță, et al., 2024), which explore the factors that determine employee motivation at work. Self-Determination Theory emphasizes the importance of satisfying the needs for autonomy, competence and relatedness for the intrinsic motivation of employees. In sustainable companies (Rahman, et al., 2023), a positive work climate that supports autonomy and employee development can lead to higher motivation, job satisfaction and ultimately better economic performance. Motivated employees are more likely to contribute to the company's sustainability goals, innovate and collaborate effectively.
- **Stakeholder Theory** (Valentinov, 2023) – Developed by R. Edward Freeman, this theory asserts that a company must manage its relationships not only with shareholders but also with all relevant stakeholders, including employees, customers, suppliers, local communities, and the environment. Applied to sustainable companies, this theory (Schaltegger, et al., 2019) emphasises the importance of integrating ESG practices into business strategy and how a positive work climate can contribute to meeting the needs of different stakeholder groups.
- **Positive Organizational Behavior – POB** - This theory (Manuti & Giancaspro, 2019) focuses on identifying and developing employees' positive psychological resources, such as self-efficacy, hope, optimism and resilience. The POB theory (Pradhan, et al., 2020) states that employees who possess these resources are more likely to perform highly and contribute to organisational success. In the context of sustainable companies, a work climate that fosters these positive resources can lead to a more engaged, innovative and resilient workforce, which in turn can boost economic performance.
- **Planned Change Theory** (Andersson, 2024) - this theory describes the process by which organisations can implement effective and sustainable change. According to this theory, organisational change comprises three stages: unfreezing, changing, and refreezing. Effective

change management is essential for sustainable organisations to implement ESG initiatives and create a positive work climate. Companies that apply this theory can improve the acceptance and integration of sustainable practises by their employees and thus contribute to improved long-term economic performance.

These theories provide a valuable framework for understanding how a positive work climate in sustainable companies can directly influence economic performance. They highlight the importance of human resources, motivation, stakeholder relations, positive organisational behaviour and change management for the long-term success of companies that place a strong emphasis on sustainability.

Based on the literature, we have developed research questions to explore various aspects of the relationship between work climate, sustainability and economic performance. Each question focuses on a specific link or interaction between these variables. In addition, hypotheses are derived from these questions that propose specific relationships between the variables to be tested by analysing the data collected through a questionnaire. The research questions and hypotheses are as follows:

Research Question 1: What is the impact of a positive work climate on the economic performance of sustainable companies?

This question examines the direct relationship between employees' perceptions of the work climate and the financial or non-financial outcomes of the company. The Resource-Based View (RBV) suggests that a healthy work climate is a valuable intangible resource that can provide a sustainable competitive advantage. Empirical studies confirm that organisations that invest in creating a positive work environment increase employee satisfaction, which leads to higher productivity and consequently better economic performance. For example, research (Covaş, 2019) shows that a positive organisational culture has a significant impact on the long-term success of companies, including their financial performance.

Hypothesis 1 (H1): There is a positive relationship between a positive work climate and the economic performance of sustainable companies.

Research Question 2: To what extent do sustainability practices contribute to improving the work climate within companies?

This question examines whether and how sustainability initiatives influence employees' perceptions of organisational climate. Recent literature (Zhivkova, 2022) suggests that employees in sustainable companies perceive a genuine management commitment to ethical values and social responsibility, which improves their perception of the work environment. Stakeholder Theory (Sady, 2023) emphasises the importance of meeting the needs of all parties involved, with employees as major stakeholders being positively influenced by sustainability practises. Therefore, this research question aims to explore the extent to which these practises contribute to a favourable work climate in companies.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): The company's sustainability practises significantly contribute to improving the work climate.

Research Question 3: Is there a correlation between employee satisfaction and the company's involvement in ESG initiatives?

This question examines the relationship between the company's commitment to ESG criteria and the level of employee satisfaction and motivation. The literature suggests that employees are more motivated and loyal when they perceive their organizations as genuinely committed to socially and environmentally responsible. Research (Zhang, et al., 2024) shows that ESG initiatives can enhance the company's reputation and employee engagement, thereby increasing employee satisfaction. In this context, the research question examines this relationship and analyses the extent to which involvement in ESG influences employee well-being and job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): There is a positive correlation between the company's involvement in ESG initiatives and employee satisfaction.

3. Methodology

For this study, we applied a quantitative research methodology as it allows us to objectively measure and analyse the relationships between the variables of interest, such as workplace climate, sustainability and economic performance. The quantitative approach is suitable for achieving our research objectives as it provides the capability to collect numerical data using a structured questionnaire and to test the formulated hypotheses using rigorous statistical techniques. This allows us to directly relate the research questions exploring the impact of workplace climate and ESG initiatives on economic performance and employee satisfaction with the hypotheses to be validated. This approach enables us to identify and quantify the relationships between the variables, contributing to a deeper understanding of the dynamics in sustainable companies.

A sample consisted of employees from sustainable companies who were selected according to specific criteria in order to ensure the relevance and representativeness of the data collected. A non-probabilistic sampling method which involved selecting participants based on convenience and accessibility (e.g. industry type, hierarchical level), reflecting the diversity of experiences and perceptions regarding the work climate and ESG initiatives. In addition, the study employed a snowball sampling technique, where the initial respondent, after completing the questionnaire, were encouraged to share it with colleagues or other professionals working in sustainable companies. The sample size was determined to ensure sufficient statistical power for the hypothesis tests and that the results could be generalised to the target population. This sample allows us to objectively analyse the relationships between the variables of interest and draw solid conclusions about the impact of workplace climate on economic performance in sustainable companies.

The data collection period lasted from July 15 to August 15, 2024. The questionnaire was distributed online via Google Forms, and shared through social media platforms such as LinkedIn and WhatsApp, which allowed for quick and efficient access to a large number of respondents. This method was chosen to ensure flexibility and accessibility and to allow respondents to complete the questionnaire at their convenience. The platform used was configured in such a way as to maintain the confidentiality of the data, preserve the anonymity of the respondents and thus encourage honest and open participation.

For data analysis, we used SPSS software, which is known for its ability to manage and analyse statistical data efficiently and rigorously. In this study, we applied several statistical tests to test the formulated hypotheses. To examine the relationship between a positive organisational climate and the economic performance of sustainable companies (H1), we used Pearson correlation analysis, which allows us to identify and quantify the strength and direction of the relationship between these variables. For the hypothesis regarding the impact of sustainability practises on organisational climate (H2), we used linear regression to assess the direct influence of these practises on employee perceptions. Finally, to test the correlation between the company's involvement in ESG initiatives and employee satisfaction (H3), we performed a multiple regression analysis to help us identify specific ESG factors that significantly contribute to employee satisfaction. These tests allow us to demonstrate whether there are statistically significant relationships between the variables of interest, providing a solid basis for the study's conclusions.

The questionnaire used in this research was designed to investigate the relationship between workplace climate and economic performance in sustainable companies, with a particular focus on employee perceptions of sustainability and ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) initiatives. The questionnaire is structured into four main sections, all aimed at collecting important information to test the formulated hypotheses and answer the research questions. With this instrument, we aim to obtain a comprehensive and detailed picture of how factors related to workplace climate and sustainability influence employees' perceived performance and satisfaction.

The first section of the questionnaire is dedicated to collecting the demographic data of the respondents. The questions in this section relate to aspects such as age, gender, level of education, position in the company and length of employment. The purpose of this section is to create a profile of the respondents that allows for a more detailed analysis and a better understanding of how demographic characteristics can influence perceptions of workplace climate and sustainability initiatives.

The second section, which focuses on workplace climate, aims to assess the climate in sustainable companies. The questions aim to measure employees' perceptions of various aspects of the work environment, such as the quality of communication, management support, collaboration among colleagues and organizational culture. By analysing the answers to these questions, we can determine whether there is a positive workplace climate within the company and how this might affect economic performance and employee satisfaction. This section also enables us to test hypotheses related to the relationship between a favourable working atmosphere and the economic success of the company.

The section on Sustainability and ESG Initiatives explores employees' perceptions of the company's commitment to sustainability practises and ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) initiatives. The questions aim to determine the extent to which employees are aware of the company's efforts in the areas of environmental protection, social responsibility and corporate governance and how much they value these initiatives. Analysing the responses from this section can provide valuable insights into how the perception of sustainability might influence workplace environment and employee satisfaction, as well as their contribution to the company's economic performance.

The final section of the questionnaire, which focuses on Employee Satisfaction and perception of Economic Performance, is centred on evaluating overall satisfaction of employees and their perception of the economic performance of the organisation. The questions in this section are critical for testing hypotheses about how employee satisfaction and perceptions of workplace climate correlate with economic performance. In addition, these answers help to identify links between employee satisfaction and ESG initiatives, which contributes to a deeper understanding of the internal dynamics of sustainable companies.

Below is a graphical representation of the conceptual model underlying this study, which includes the following components:



Fig. no. 1. Conceptual Model
Source: Created by the author

As shown in the previous diagram, workplace climate directly influences employee satisfaction. A positive workplace climate is expected to lead to higher employee satisfaction. As for sustainability and ESG initiatives, these act as moderators that can amplify or diminish the relationship between the above variables. In other words, if employees feel that their company is environmentally, socially and ethical standpoint, they may be more satisfied, even if the workplace climate has some shortcomings. Employee satisfaction in turn affects the perception of economic performance. Satisfied employees are more likely to rate the economic success of the company positively. Ultimately, all of these variables work together to provide a comprehensive picture of the relationship between Workplace Climate, ESG Initiatives, Employee Satisfaction and Perceived Economic Performance.

4. Results

The questionnaire used in this research consisted of 15 structured questions designed to assess employees' perceptions of workplace climate, sustainability and ESG initiatives, as well as perceived satisfaction and the economic performance of the companies. The initial questions aimed to establish a demographic profile of respondents, including variables such as age, gender, education level and tenure within the company. The remaining questions were organized on a Likert scale and were designed to evaluate respondents' subjective perception of the workplace climate, the ESG initiatives implemented by the company and their impact on employee satisfaction and economic performance. The questionnaire was thus designed to test the hypotheses formulated in the previous chapter and to

address the relevant research questions and was distributed online to a sample of employees working in sustainable companies in the Bucharest area, resulting in a total of 107 unique responses.

Following the administration of the questionnaire and the first 5 questions, a profile of the respondents was created. Of the total 107 respondents, 48 are male, representing 44.9%, while the remaining 55.1% are female. As can be seen in the next graph, the respondents were categorised into 5 age categories, with the majority falling into the 26-35 age group.

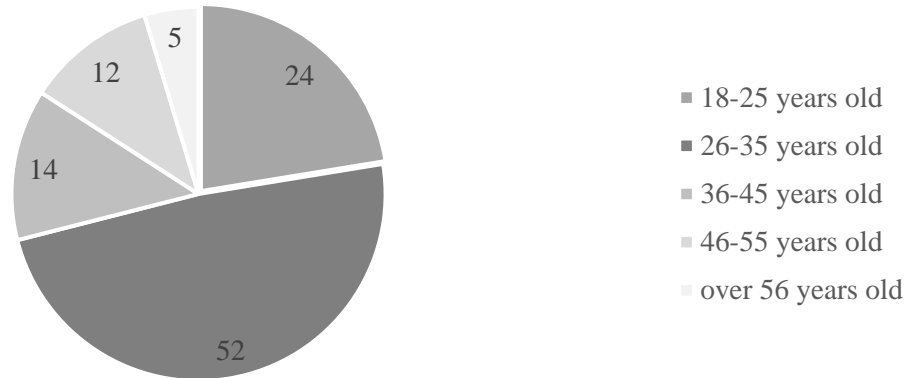


Fig. no. 2. Age of Respondents

Source: Based on SPSS output

In terms of the respondents' level of education, 57.9% have a Master's degree and 29.9% have a Bachelor's degree. When analysing the positions they hold within the company, 56 of them are senior employees, 18 are junior employees and the same number hold a managerial position. Analysing the correlation between the age of the respondents and their position within the organization, the following table shows a relationship between the two:

Table 1. Crosstabs Between Position Held in the Company and Age of Respondents

	Intern	Junior Employees	Senior Employees	Managers	Directors/Executives
18 – 25 years old	4	8	12	0	0
26 – 35 years old	0	8	36	8	0
36 – 45 years old	0	0	8	6	0
46 – 55 years old	0	2	0	4	6
over 56 years old	0	0	0	0	5

Source: Based on SPSS output

It is crucial to obtain a clear and detailed overview of the distribution of responses to the 10 questions that provide a comprehensive understanding of participants' perceptions of the work climate and economic performance in sustainable companies. These statistics lay the groundwork necessary for the subsequent interpretation of the data and testing of the hypotheses.

In order to assess the reliability and internal consistency of the scale used in the questionnaire, a Reliability Test was conducted and Cronbach's alpha coefficient was applied. This measure is important to check the degree of correlation between the items within each section of the questionnaire and to ensure that the questions asked of respondents consistently reflect the constructs being analysed, such as workplace climate, sustainability and ESG initiatives and employee satisfaction.

Table 2. Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.891	0.892	10

Source: Based on SPSS output

The results of the reliability test (Cronbach's Alpha) for the scale used in the questionnaire indicate a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of $\alpha = 0.891$, which means good internal consistency. This suggests that the 10 questions measuring the main construct, namely workplace climate and economic performance, are well correlated with each other.

Table 3. Item-Total Statistics

Questions	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1. How do you evaluate the overall work environment in your company?	0,682	0,877
2. How do you assess the effectiveness of the implementation of sustainability policies and practices within your company?	0,751	0,871
3. How much do you value the support provided by management for your professional and personal development?	0,772	0,869
4. How often do you receive constructive feedback from your supervisors?	0,620	0,881
5. How do you evaluate the economic performance of the company?	0,590	0,885
6. How well do you think the company's economic performance influences employee satisfaction and morale?	0,546	0,886
7. What is your level of satisfaction with your current job?	0,670	0,877
8. How do you assess the impact of sustainability strategies on the company's economic success?	0,681	0,877
9. How much do you believe that a positive organizational culture contributes to the company's economic success?	0,413	0,893
10. How do you think the company's social responsibility policy influences its economic performance?	0,610	0,882

Source: Based on SPSS output

To highlight the reliability of the scale used in the research, we also present the Corrected Item-Total Correlation and Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted. In the case of the Corrected Item-Total Correlation, this column is of crucial importance as it measures how well the individual questions correlate with the other questions in the questionnaire. We find that questions 2 and 3 show very good correlations (0.751 and 0.772). Regarding Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted, this column is key as it shows how the alpha coefficient alpha would change if a particular question were removed. In this case, none of the questions lead to a significant increase in the coefficient, which indicates that all questions contribute positively to the consistency of the scale.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for Key Variables

Questions	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. How do you evaluate the general work climate in your company?	3,85	0,899
2. How do you assess the effectiveness of implementing sustainability policies and practices in your company?	3,79	0,998
3. How much do you appreciate the support provided by management for professional and personal development?	3,82	1,131
4. How often do you receive constructive feedback from your superiors?	3,76	1,063
5. How do you evaluate the economic performance of the company?	3,75	1,267
6. How well do you think the company's economic performance influences employee satisfaction and morale?	4,05	1,031
7. What is your level of satisfaction with your current job?	4,19	0,982
8. How do you evaluate the impact of sustainability strategies on the company's economic success?	3,78	0,974
9. How much do you believe that a positive organizational culture contributes to the company's economic success?	4,41	0,752
10. How do you think the company's social responsibility policy influences its economic performance?	4,29	0,789

Source: Based on SPSS output

Next, we aim to analyse the first hypothesis, H1: There is a positive relationship between a positive work climate and the economic performance of sustainable companies. This is done using a Pearson correlation test, whereby we have opted for a one-sided analysis due to the direction of our hypothesis, which assumes a positive relationship between the variables. The correlation was calculated between the variable "Work Climate" (measured by the question "How do you rate the general work climate in your company?") and the variable "Perceived Economic Performance" (measured by the question "How do you evaluate the economic performance of the company?").

Table 5. Pearson Correlation Test for Hypothesis 1

		How do you evaluate the general work climate in your company?	How do you evaluate the economic performance of the company?
How do you evaluate the general work climate in your company?	Pearson Correlation	1	0,422**
	Sig(1-tailed)		0,000
	N	107	107
How do you evaluate the economic performance of the company?	Pearson Correlation	0,422	1
	Sig(1-tailed)	0,000	
	N	107	107

***. Correlation is significant at the 0,01 level (1-tailed).*

Source: Based on SPSS output

The results of the Pearson correlation test between the two variables show a moderate and statistically significant positive correlation. The Pearson coefficient, $r=0.422$, indicates a moderately positive relationship between perceived work climate and perceived economic performance. The Sig. (1-tailed) value of 0.000 means that the result is statistically significant at a 99% confidence level ($p < 0.01$). These results support the first hypothesis of this research.

To test the second hypothesis H2: *The company's sustainability practices significantly contribute to improving the work climate*, we will use both the Pearson correlation test and linear regression analysis. The first test will evaluate the strength and direction of the linear relationship between sustainability assessment and work climate, providing a preliminary view of the association between these variables. The linear regression analysis will extend this assessment and provide a detailed measure of the direct impact of sustainability practises on work climate and allow the identification of the specific effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable.

The Pearson correlation test revealed a significant positive correlation between the assessment of sustainability practises and work climate, $r = 0.513$, $p < 0.01$, indicating a moderate to strong relationship between the variables. Furthermore, this relationship was confirmed by a linear regression analysis, which showed that the assessment of sustainability practises explained about 26.3% of the variation in work climate ($R^2 = 0.263$). The regression coefficient of 0.462 ($p < 0.01$) suggests that for every unit increase in the effectiveness assessment, the work climate improves by 0.462 units. These results support the above hypothesis.

To test the final hypothesis H3: *There is a positive correlation between the company's involvement in ESG initiatives and employee satisfaction*, we will use a Pearson correlation test, opting for a one-tailed analysis, similar to H1.

The results of the Pearson correlation test showed a significant positive correlation between the effectiveness of the implementation of sustainability policies and practises and the job satisfaction of employees. The Pearson correlation coefficient was $r = 0.579$, with a p -value < 0.01 (1-tailed), indicating a moderate positive relationship between the two variables. This result suggests that employees rate the effectiveness of the company's ESG practises more positively and therefore tend to be more satisfied.

Table 6. Pearson Correlation Test for Hypothesis 3

		How do you evaluate the effectiveness of implementing sustainability policies and practices in your company?	What is your level of satisfaction with your current job?
How do you evaluate the effectiveness of implementing sustainability policies and practices in your company?	Pearson Correlation	1	0,579**
	Sig(1-tailed)		0,000
	N	107	107
What is your level of satisfaction with your current job?	Pearson Correlation	0,579	1
	Sig(1-tailed)	0,000	
	N	107	107

***. Correlation is significant at the 0,01 level (1-tailed).*

Source: Based on SPSS output

In addition, a linear regression analysis was carried out, which confirmed these results. The regression model showed that the effectiveness of implementing sustainability policies and practises explained 33.5% of the variation in employee satisfaction ($R^2 = 0.335$). The regression coefficient for the variable "Effectiveness of implementing sustainability policies and practises" was $B = 0.570$, with a p-value < 0.01 , indicating that the effectiveness of implementing ESG initiatives has a significant and positive impact on employee satisfaction.

5. Conclusions and discussions

The research findings indicate that the established objectives were achieved and the proposed hypotheses were confirmed by demonstrating significant relationships between the studied variables. The main purpose of the research was to investigate the relationship between the work climate, the perceived economic performance of sustainable companies and their involvement in sustainability and ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) practises, taking into account employee satisfaction.

The first hypothesis H1 was formulated to analyse the relationship between the work climate and economic performance: There is a positive relationship between a positive work climate and the economic performance of sustainable companies. The correlation between the overall work climate and perceived economic performance was analysed using the Pearson correlation test. The results confirmed a significant positive relationship between a positive work climate and the perceived economic performance of sustainable companies, which supports the first hypothesis.

The impact of sustainability practises on the work climate were investigated by analysing the second hypothesis H2. The sustainability practises of the companies were correlated with the perception of the work climate, and the analysis demonstrated that these practices significantly to its improvement. Both the correlations and the applied linear regression indicated a significant influence and thus validating the second hypothesis.

Regarding the analysis of the link between ESG initiatives and employee satisfaction, the third hypothesis H3 was proposed: There is a positive correlation between a company's involvement in ESG initiatives and employee satisfaction. The applied correlation and regression analyses demonstrated a positive relationship between the engagement of companies in ESG initiatives and employee satisfaction and confirmed that employees in companies that are more involved in ESG are generally more satisfied.

The reliability of the scale used in the questionnaire was evaluated using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient, which reached a high level of internal consistency ($\alpha = 0.891$ for the 10 items). This result

suggests that the scale was reliable and consistent, ensuring confidence in the accuracy of the measurements obtained through the questionnaire.

The descriptive analysis of the 10 key questions in the questionnaire provided an overview of the distribution of respondents' perceptions. The average responses were consistent, with moderate variations, suggesting that most respondents perceive the work climate, performance and sustainability practises of their companies positively. The standard deviations showed a moderate spread of responses, but no extreme values that would indicate significant differences in perception.

The results of this study align with prior research indicating that a positive organizational climate and a culture of sustainability can contribute to better economic performance. The findings related to the correlation between ESG initiatives and employee satisfaction also support existing literature, which suggest that employees tend to be more motivated and engaged in organizations that promote values of sustainability and socially responsible practices.

Although this research provided valuable results, there are some limitations that should be noted. Firstly, the sample consisted only of employees from sustainable companies, which limits direct comparison with the perceptions of employees from companies that do not apply sustainability practises. In addition, the data collected was based on the subjective perceptions of the respondents, which can lead to a certain degree of subjectivity and does not necessarily reflect objective economic performance. Moreover, the questionnaire included a relatively small number of questions, which may limit the depth of analysis of the variables and the relationships between them.

For future research, it would be useful to extend the study to a more diverse sample, including both companies that adopt sustainability practises and those that do not have such initiatives. Such a comparison could provide a clearer picture of the impact of sustainability on work climate and economic performance. In addition, it would be beneficial to investigate other factors that could influence the relationships under investigation, such as company size, industry or organisational culture. Integrating objective financial data could improve the external validity of the research and provide a more detailed perspective on the impact of ESG initiatives on employee satisfaction and economic performance.

Based on the study's findings, several actionable recommendations can support sustainable companies in enhancing both employee satisfaction and economic performance. Managers should prioritize developing the organizational climate by investing in initiatives that promote a supportive and collaborative environment, such as continuous feedback programs and professional development sessions. Integrating ESG Initiatives is also essential, given the positive association between ESG engagement and employee satisfaction, companies are encouraged to further develop and transparently promote these practices. Continuous evaluation and monitoring are recommended, involving an ongoing system to assess employee perceptions of the work climate and ESG initiatives. This approach facilitates timely policy adjustments based on feedback, which helps sustain a positive organizational climate and can lead to improved satisfaction and performance.

To summarise, this research has highlighted the importance of a positive work climate and sustainability practises in enhancing economic performance and employee satisfaction emphasizing the need to integrate ESG initiatives to improve both organizational culture and economic outcomes.

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