

# The Effect of Environment Knowledge and Pro-Environment Psychological Climate on Environmental Citizenship Behaviour: The Mediating Role of Environmental Commitment

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of environmental knowledge and pro-environmental psychological climate on environmental citizenship behaviour with the mediating effect of environmental commitment. The primary data were collected from 177 employees of five selected commercial banks in the Batticaloa Region of Sri Lanka through self-reported questionnaires and analyzed by using univariate, bivariate, and multi-step mediational analyses. The findings of this study highlighted that environmental knowledge, pro-environmental psychological climate, environmental citizenship behaviour, and environmental commitment are at high levels among the surveyed banks. In addition, the findings discovered that there are positive and significant relationships existing among environmental knowledge, pro-environmental psychological climate, environmental commitment, and environmental citizenship behaviour of employees. Moreover, the mediating analysis revealed that environmental commitment partially mediates the relationship between environmental knowledge and environmental citizenship behaviour as well as the pro-environmental psychological climate-environmental citizenship behaviour linkage. This study has significant implications for managers who want to promote environmental citizenship behaviours, as they can benefit from improving the environmental knowledge of employees and developing a pro-environmental psychological climate in their organizational context.

**Key Words:** Environmental Commitment, Environmental Citizenship Behaviour, Environmental Knowledge, Pro-environmental Psychological Climate

## Introduction

Organizations' environmental footprints have attracted much interest over the last few decades. Although organizations contribute significantly to environmental degradation, they also have the potential to enhance environmental preservation (Ones and Dilchert, 2012; Opatha, 2019). Organizations are implementing many environmental initiatives to improve their environmental performance. At the same time, employees are engaging in pro-environmental behaviours which are not part of their formal job descriptions, contributing to the success of formal environmental management systems (Robertson and Barling, 2017). One of the major challenges facing organizations today is to ensure that environmental sustainability is properly integrated into human resource management policies and practices. And, along with its attempts to contribute to greening, organizational concern for the environment aims to involve workers in environmental activities (Renwick, Redman, and Maguire, 2013; Malsha, Arulrajah, and Senthilnathan, 2020). According to Boiral and Paille (2012), employee efforts have a significant impact on greening organizations apart from traditional management systems, policies, or technology initiatives. Barr (2007) suggests that when an employee's knowledge regarding waste management, environmental management systems, and corporate green policies increases, it is likely to enhance voluntary environmental behaviours at the workplace such as turning off lights, commuting on bicycles, and avoiding usage of disposable cups etc. Further, a sense of commitment to a cause or a socially relevant target, such as the natural environment, is seen as developing on both affective and normative grounds (Meyer and Parfyonova, 2010).

In addition, in the field of organizational behaviour, the psychological climate is considered to be an important contextual factor that might influence employees' attitudes and behaviours. Pro-environmental psychological climate refers to an employee's perceptions and interpretations of the organization's policies, procedures, and practices regarding environmental performance (Boxall, Guthrie, and Paauwe, 2016). Boiral (2009, p. 223) defined environmental citizenship behaviour as "individual and discretionary social behaviours that are not explicitly recognized by the formal reward system and that contribute to a more effective environmental management by organizations".

Despite the fact, the banking sector is one of the major sources of financing for many industries and businesses, it creates considerable responsibility and accountability for banks because this can indirectly contribute to environmental pollution if banks fail to practice strong monitoring measures about the negative environmental impact of those industries and businesses prior to financing. Hence, the processes behind employee organizational citizenship behaviour of environment (OCBE) in the banking sector need to be investigated. Although the environmental conduct of employees plays an important role in supporting enterprise-level sustainability management (Felin, Foss, and Polyhart, 2015). But the research works related to environmental knowledge, pro-environmental psychological climate, and impact of environmental commitment on environmental citizenship behaviour are lacking in terms of empirical evidence. A clear empirical knowledge gap exists in this research area. Moreover, several researchers analyzed environmental behaviour at the strategic level in the

context of organizational sustainability, however there are more needs to investigate environmental behaviour at the employee level (Galpin and Whittington, 2012).

In addition, only few studies are available regarding environmental citizenship behaviour in the context of Sri Lanka. For example, Weerarathna, Jayarathna, and Pintoe (2017) conducted a study of factors affecting employee green behaviour in organizations in the manufacturing and service sector in Sri Lanka by taking environmental citizenship behaviour into consideration. Another study was conducted by Sachitra (2022) in Sri Lankan context regarding environmental citizenship behaviour and waste disposal practices among Sri Lankan youth. Thus, in the Sri Lankan banking context, this study aims to fill the empirical knowledge gap regarding environmental knowledge, pro-environmental psychological climate, environmental commitment and environmental citizenship behaviour. Hence, this research is intended to gain a better understanding about the above-mentioned study variables. The specific research objectives of this empirical investigation are to assess:

1. the mediating role of environmental commitment in the relationship between environmental knowledge and environmental citizenship behaviour, and
2. the mediating role of environmental commitment in the relationship between pro-environmental psychological climate and environmental citizenship behaviour.

Further, the rest of the present research paper proceeds as follows. The next section provides a brief review of the literature followed by the formulation of hypotheses and the conceptual model. The subsequent section describes the method, which is followed by the results, discussion, and conclusion. Finally, contributions, recommendations, the main limitations of the study and directions for future research have been provided.

## Literature Review

### Environmental Knowledge

Environmental knowledge is a word used to indicate understanding and consciousness of environmental issues and alternatives (Zsoka, Szerenyi, Szechy, and Kocsis, 2013). Knowledge of an individual about environmental issues, procedures, and solutions improves concern and awareness of their role in environmental protection. Knowledge of the environment and sustainability issues are crucial to find the appropriate solutions for environmental and social problems (Fryxell and Lo, 2003). According to Laroche, Bergeron, and Barbaro-Forleo (2001), environmental knowledge is described as a capacity to recognize environmental protection-related symbols, ideas, and conduct patterns based on the data obtained from the environment. Taufique, Siwar, Chamhuri, and Sarah (2016) referred to the knowledge of the environment as understanding and awareness of environmental issues and possible alternatives to them. These definitions show a multidimensional understanding of the environment. The most significant elements of individual environmental awareness are environmental knowledge and consciousness. The environmental knowledge substantially impacts the decision-making of an individual. People tend to stay away from situations that they do not know much about, and therefore increasing their understanding of environmental

issues can contribute to the concerns and consciousness of individuals (Bamberg and Moser, 2007).

### **Pro-Environmental Psychological Climate**

The organizational climate is always challenged by the growing number of modifications that currently affect organizations. Organizational climate relates to the shared perceptions and interpretations of an employee's organizational policies, the procedures that translate policies into rules, and the practices that the organization expects and rewards (Beermann, 2011). Organizational climate can be seen as an illustrative concept that reflects every individual's frequent perspective and knowledge of the various parts of the organization, such as structure, frameworks, and procedures (McMurray and Scott, 2003). Pro-environmental psychological climate comes from the organizational climate. Pro-environmental psychological climate reflects the shared perceptions of staff of the pro-environmental policies, processes, and practices of their organizations. Employees should agree on the extent to which their organization has adopted formal "green policies" in different areas of business activities. For example, whether there are organizational procedures which support sustainable activities to protect the environment or not? And whether everyday work place practices reflect the organization's environmentally friendly goals and values? etc. (Norton, Zacher and Ashkanasy, 2014). Pro-environmental psychological climate refers to the perceptions and interpretations of an employee's environmental performance policies, processes, and practices of an organization (Boxall, Guthrie, and Paauwe, 2016).

### **Environmental Citizenship Behaviour**

An organization's greening is not based solely on formal leadership structures, operations, or techniques. Discretionary employee initiatives such as proposing improvements in procedures of power effectiveness, sorting and recycling waste, or setting up a green committee can also have an important effect on environmental performance (Ramus and Steger 2000). Green organizational citizenship behaviour (GOCB) is defined as the extent to which the employee engages in positive voluntary actions aimed at helping the organization as a whole to achieve greening (Opatha, 2013; Opatha and Arulrajah, 2014; Opatha, 2015; Opatha, 2019; Opatha and Kottawatta, 2020<sup>1</sup>; Opatha and Kottawatta, 2020<sup>2</sup>). Organizational citizenship behaviour for the environment (OCBE) can be defined as "individual and discretionary social behaviours that are not explicitly recognized by the formal reward system and that contribute to a more effective environmental management by organizations" (Boiral 2009, p. 223). Environmental workplace citizenship involves more than showing discretionary behaviours in conservation. It indicates a wider behavioural pattern that involves activities such as maintaining up with the company's environmental issues, expressing one's views on environmental issues and policies, and making creative environmental suggestions, in addition to supporting colleagues' ecological issues, volunteering in operations linked to the environment and encouraging others to do the same (Boiral and Paille, 2012).

### **Environmental Commitment**

Commitments are notable in that they guide the behaviours of individuals and in particular promote the achievement of primary objectives by exceeding individual self-interests. Meyer

and Herscovitch (2001) defined employee environmental commitment as “an internal, obligation-based motivation” (p. 599) and as “emotional attachment, identification, and involvement with environmental behaviours” (p. 36). This commitment has a pro-ecological orientation; that is, it focuses on preserving various types of life and the equilibrium of the environment. It consists of a collection of psychosocial dimensions of knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, standards, values, and world views which are concretized into procedures to care for and preserve the environment, based on situational variables. Merely engaging in symbolic communications on environmental issues without substantially addressing them through action can be perceived as untrustworthy and opportunistic (King and Lenox, 2000), and mere lip service to environmental commitments means that environmental objectives cannot be met.

### **Environmental Knowledge and Environmental Citizenship Behaviour**

Barr (2007) suggests that when an employee’s knowledge regarding waste management, environmental management systems, and corporate green policies increases, it is likely to enhance voluntary pro-environmental behaviours at the workplace such as turning off lights, commuting on bicycles, and avoiding usage of disposable cups. Afsar, Badir, and Kiani (2016) found that employees’ environmental knowledge affects their intentions to engage in pro-environmental behaviours.

Bamberg and Möser (2007) indicated that increased knowledge of the environment leads to increased environmental concerns, while Arisal and Atalar (2016) found that knowledge of the environment has a negligible impact on environmental concerns. Environmental knowledge can lead to understanding and incentivizing individuals to behave (or refrain from behaving) in particular ways. According to Cheng and Wu (2015), if an employee possesses a greater degree of knowledge about the environment, he or she would exhibit pro-environmental workplace behaviours. The higher the knowledge an individual has about the environment, the greater the likelihood that the employee would engage in conservation behaviours (Frick, Kaiser, and Wilson, 2004). According to Smederevac-Lalic, Finger, Kovach, Lenhardt, Petrovic, Djikanovic, Conti, and Boeve-de Pauw (2020), environmental knowledge has an essential role in developing environmental citizenship behaviour. These literature evidences indicate the positive association between Environmental Knowledge and Environmental Citizenship Behaviour. Hence, this study develops the following hypothesis:

*H<sub>1</sub>: There is a positive relationship between Environmental Knowledge and Environmental Citizenship Behaviour.*

### **Pro-Environmental Psychological Climate and Environmental Citizenship Behaviour**

According to Saeed, Afsar, Hafeez, Khan, Thahir, and Afridi (2018), employees feel that pro-environmental behaviours are effective and appropriate in the given context by forming descriptive norms through psychological climate perceptions. Employees first perceive and make sense of their work environments and then act accordingly. According to Burke, Borucki, and Kaufman (2002), pro-environmental psychological climate suggests that employees perceive and make sense of the characteristics of their work environment by

creating climate perceptions that their organizations are environmentally friendly and therefore conduct themselves in environmentally responsible ways.

A positive psychological climate for the environment is expected to give employees a deeper understanding of behaviours that the organization values and rewards (Norton, Zacher, and Ashkanasy, 2014). When an organization values the environment and its protection as central to its overall strategy and acts environmentally friendly, it indicates to employees that they are also expected to act environmentally friendly. The following hypothesis is formulated on the basis of above literature evidences:

*H<sub>2</sub>: There is a positive relationship between Pro-Environmental Psychological Climate and Environmental Citizenship Behavior.*

### **Environmental Knowledge and Environmental Commitment**

Pro-ecological commitment expresses a commitment assumed with the effective practice of environmental care accruing from a bond established with the environment. Chan, Hon, Chan, and Okumus (2014) study shows that recycling knowledge is a significant predictor for recycling activities and perceived environmental commitment. If employees have adequate environmental knowledge, the commitment of staff to environmental activities will be enhanced. It can therefore be concluded that knowledge affects the green commitment of employees. Bamberg and Möser (2007) indicated that increased knowledge of the environment leads to increased environmental concerns, while Arisal and Atalar (2016) found that knowledge of the environment has a negligible impact on environmental concerns. According to Thevanes and Arulrajah (2016), environmental training develops environmental knowledge, skills and awareness of the employees. And environmental knowledge, skills and awareness of employees lead to environmental commitment of employees. An increase in knowledge about environmental problems may elevate peoples' environmental concern and commitment (Zsoka, Szerenyi, Szechy, and Kocsis, 2013). Based on these literature shreds of evidence, the following hypothesis is formulated:

*H<sub>3</sub>: There is a positive relationship between Environmental Knowledge and Environmental Commitment.*

### **Pro-Environmental Psychological Climate and Environmental Commitment**

Organizational climate is considered an important contextual factor in the field of management psychology that reflects the attitudes and behaviours of employees. Norton (2014) introduced the concept of a green psychological climate on the basis of organization. A study at the organizational level showed that corporate environmental strategy could have a positive impact on the psychological green climate (Norton, Zacher, Parker, and Ashkanasy, 2017). Employee engagement with the organization therefore, represents the extent to which he/she is connected with or connected to an organization.

Organizational commitment, a common term in organizational behaviour literature, is an alternative word for employee engagement with the organization showing the degree to

which the employee is faithful to the organization. It is the degree to which the worker is connected to his or her organization and is interested in remaining within it (Arulrajah, Opatha, and Nawaratne, 2015). Individual environmental commitment is the extent to which an individual is devoted to environmental sustainability and is prepared to participate in pro-environmental behaviours (Mesmer-Magnus, Viswesvaran, and Wiernik, 2012). In general, there are an understanding and an acceptance among the researchers that the pro-environmental psychological climate of an organization positively enhances the environmental commitment of the employees. This study considers the beneficial connection between pro-environmental psychological climate and environmental commitment. Based on the above literature, the following hypothesis is formulated as follows:

*H<sub>4</sub>: There is a positive relationship between Pro-Environmental Psychological Climate and Environmental Commitment.*

### **Environmental Commitment and Environmental Citizenship Behaviour**

Having employees with strong organizational citizenship behaviour is becoming crucial today, especially since past research has shown that OCBs affect organizational performance. Organizational commitment is one factor that can develop OCB. Employees who are committed to an organization have shown loyalty and positive behaviour in achieving organizational goals. This behaviour has been referred to as behaviour of organizational citizenship (OCB).

Environmental commitment is considered an important factor in predicting behaviour that is environmentally responsible (Kerstetter and Bricker, 2009). Environmental commitment among individuals (employees and other stakeholders) leads to pro-environmental behaviours. However, employee green behaviours can only successfully take place in organizations committed to environmental sustainability. Individuals who are environmentally committed are likely to be attracted to, selected by, or remain with organizations. In the event that they work for organizations with a commitment to the environment, they would manifest their pro-environmental behaviour in their work as well as personal lives. Hence, the following hypothesis is formulated based on the above literature evidence:

*H<sub>5</sub>: There is a positive relationship between Environmental Commitment and Environmental Citizenship Behaviour.*

### **Environmental Commitment mediates the relationship between Environmental Knowledge and Environmental Citizenship Behaviour**

When people commit to particular behaviours, they adhere to their obligations, resulting in short-and long-term modifications in behaviour. If employees have adequate environmental understanding, the commitment of staff to environmental operations will be enhanced. It can therefore be concluded that awareness affects the green commitment of staff (Chan, Hon, Chan, and Okumus, 2014). Environmental commitment is regarded a significant factor in anticipating conduct that is environmentally accountable (Kerstetter and Bricker, 2009). With

regard to previous literature evidences, environmental knowledge and awareness seem to have a positive impact on green behaviour with respect to the mediating role of green commitment of employees. The following hypothesis is formulated on the basis of empirical evidence and discussion.

*H<sub>6</sub>: Environmental Commitment mediates the relationship between Environmental Knowledge and Environmental Citizenship Behaviour.*

### **Environmental Commitment mediates the relationship between Pro-Environmental Psychological Climate and Environmental Citizenship Behaviour**

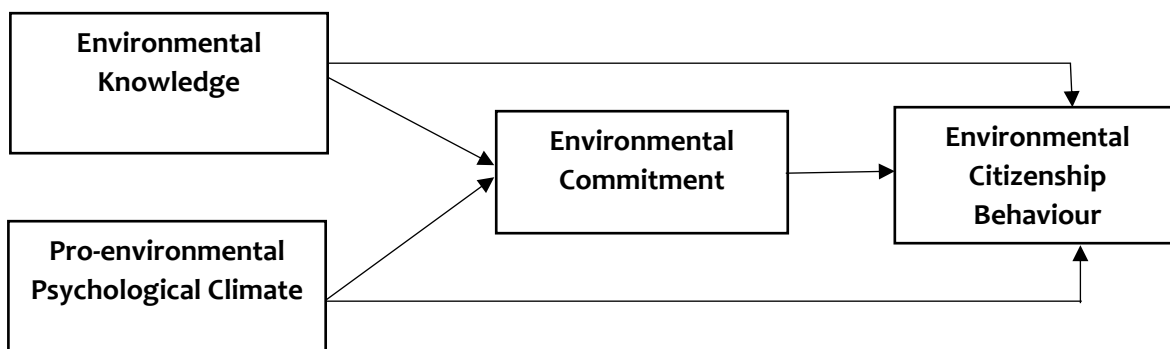
Compared to broad-based environmental views or attitudes, as frequently measured by the New Ecological Paradigm (NEP) scale (Dunlap, Van Liere, Mertig, and Jones, 2000), the engagement idea added value to the research of worker behaviours. Ramus and Steger (2000) have shown that corporate environmental policy, as communicated by the environmental strategy, management structures, and procedures of a company, can generate an atmosphere of support that indicates organizational support and eventually leads to creative environmental behaviours. Organizational concern for the environment and attempts to contribute to greening are aimed at staff engaging in environmentally friendly activities (Renwick, Redman, and Maguire, 2013). With regard to the above literature, environmental commitment appears to have a mediating role between the pro-environmental psychological climate and environmental citizenship behaviour. The following hypothesis is developed on the basis of empirical evidences and debate.

*H<sub>7</sub>: Environmental Commitment mediates the relationship between Pro-Environmental Psychological Climate and Environmental Citizenship Behaviour.*

### **Conceptual Framework**

Based on the theoretical background and review of the previous literature, for this study a conceptual framework was developed to examine the impact of environmental knowledge and pro-environmental psychological climate on environmental citizenship behaviour while having environmental commitment as the mediator.

**Figure 1. Conceptual Framework**



(Source: Saeed, Afsar, Hafeez, Khan, Tahir and Afraid, 2018; Raineri and Paille, 2016)



## Theoretical Support for the Conceptual Model

### Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) Theory

According to Stern (2000), the Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) is seen as the best way to explain environmental behaviours such as ecological citizenship, political support, and private behaviour. The VBN theory suggested by Stern (2000) incorporates the value and standard components of the standard general environmental beliefs and concerns and the need for action to address environmental issues. Both the standard activation model and VBN of the pro-environmental behaviour model emphasize the meaning basis of pro-environmental action and how values turn into internalized norms that force individuals to behave in an environmentally friendly manner (Nordfjaern and Rundmo, 2019; Van der Werff and Steg, 2015; Onwezen, Antonides, and Bartels, 2013). VBN theory has been applied by a significant number of studies in the study of the sustainable mode of travel (Nordfjaern and Zavareh, 2017). Therefore, by replacing values with environmental knowledge, researchers suggest that VBN theory may be suitable for analyzing the influence of environmental education on pro-environmental behaviour. Training for environmentally friendly actions requires not only having specific knowledge but also having a requisite understanding of why one should act on that knowledge, including a significant moral element. By applying the concept of VBN, this study revealed the effect of environmental understanding on pro-environmental actions through an evolutionary perspective, behavioral implications sensitivity, and environmental responsibility.

### Social Identity Theory

The theory of social identity provides a theoretical basis for the psychological process of a firm's green actions by its employees. Employees who are likely to adopt positive organizational principles (Ashforth and Mael, 1989; Carmeli, 2006; Peterson, 2004) tend to show deep organizational commitments based on social identity theory (Turker, 2009). When workers are worried about the protection of the environment, when employees are interested in their company emotionally, they are likely to show a higher level of organizational commitment to the company (Bhattacharya, Sreekumar, and Mukherjee, 2009). Furthermore, previous studies rarely saw the eco-friendly actions of employees as a variable outcome of organizational commitment. The theory of social identity suggests that people are happier to be connected to groups that have positive roles as joining helps to improve their self-concept with respect to their involvement with the group (Ashforth and Mael, 1989; Abrams and Hogg, 2004). However, the theory of social identity postulates the organizational commitment of employees to their behaviour (O'Reilly and Chatman, 1986). Shen and Benson (2016) suggested that the organizational commitment of employees speeds up their extra-role behaviour beyond their responsibilities, often referred to as the behaviour of organizational citizenship (OCB). The next section of this study deals with research method.

## Method

### Sampling and Data Collection

Due to limited research regarding the mediating role of environmental commitment in the relationship between environmental knowledge and environmental citizenship behaviour and

pro-environmental psychological climate and environmental citizenship behaviour, a quantitative investigation was done on the basis of the review of the literature. The research philosophy of this study is positivism. Because the researcher's role in this study is limited to the data collection and interpretation of it through the objective approach and the findings of the research are markedly noticeable and measurable and the research approach is deductive as the variables are well defined.

The study considered a survey of 236 employees (total population of the study) at all hierarchical levels ranging from banking trainees to managerial level people of five selected commercial banks in Manmunai North and Eravur Pattu Divisional Secretariat (DS) in Batticaloa District of Sri Lanka. Given that environmental issues and environmental citizenship behaviours are intertwined with all employees in the banks, this study includes all hierarchical levels of employees. Furthermore, the reason for selecting two specific district secretariat areas in Batticaloa district is the fact that the majority of the bank branches in Batticaloa District are concentrated in these DS regions out of 14 DS divisions. Since the population of this study consisted of a small number of employees from chosen banks, the stratified random sampling technique was employed to validate and achieve the objectives. The details about the study population and sample size are given in Appendix 1. Every single employee is considered as a unit of analysis.

This study mainly considered primary data. The total population of the study was 236 respondents. Accordingly, 236 questionnaires were distributed, and out of those 177 valid questionnaires were received from respondents.

### **Measures**

A self-reporting close-ended questionnaire consisting of 29 statements which are made up of the questions extracted from the previous studies was used to collect the data about research variables. In previous research, the reliability and validity of these questionnaires have been confirmed. Each item was measured using a five-point Likert Scale model, the model used to evaluate the variables and this scale consists of five boxes ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The numerical value was given for the purpose of quantification of variables such as 1 for Strongly Disagree, 2 for Disagree, 3 for Neutral, 4 for Agree, and 5 for Strongly Agree.

*Environmental knowledge* was measured with 9 items from Gaterslebe, Steg, and Vlek (2002), *Pro-environmental psychological climate* was measured with 5 items from Chou (2014), *Environmental commitment* was measured with 8 items from Boiral and Paille (2012), and *Environmental citizenship behaviour* was measured with 7 items from Allen and Meyer (1990).

In case of the internal consistency of the instrument Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient, all the measures had Cronbach Alpha values of 0.883, 0.841, 0.851, and 0.841 respectively which are higher than 0.70 and the instrument had good reliability. In order to achieve the objectives of the study, it has employed univariate, bivariate, and multi-step mediation analyses to analyze the collected data in SPSS version 22.0. In order to test the mediating role of environmental

commitment of employees, this study has followed four steps of the mediational process of Baron and Kenny (1986) in which several regression analyses are conducted and the significance of the coefficient is examined at each step. In addition, the mediational effect is measured using the test of statistical significance as proposed by Sobel (1982).

## Results and Discussion

### Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage of 177 respondents from selected banks. Further, according to age level frequency distribution, 37.3% of employees under 18-28, 47.5% of employees under 29-38 years, 13% of employees under 39-48 years and 2.3% of employees above 49 years of age groups were involved with this study. Regarding the gender of respondents, the result of the frequency distribution explains that 48.6% of employees are male and 51.4% of employees are female. Similarly, the Table indicates the education level percentage of employees. The 25.4% have GCE A/L, 13.6% have a Diploma, 24.9% have Bachelor's Degree, 9% have a Master's Degree and 27.1% possess other qualifications such as IABF/DABF, ICASL, CIMA, CMA, ACCA or any other qualification.

**Table 1. Profile of the Respondents**

Respondent's Profile	Classification	Number of Respondents	Percentage (%)
Bank Name	Bank 1	25	14.1
	Bank 2	24	13.6
	Bank 3	22	12.4
	Bank 4	48	27.1
	Bank 5	58	32.8
	<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Age	18-28	66	37.3
	29-38	84	47.5
	39-48	23	13.0
	Over 49	04	2.3
	<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100</b>
Gender	Male	86	48.6
	Female	91	51.4
	<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100</b>
Educational Qualification	Ordinary Level	00	00.0
	Advance Level	45	25.4
	Diploma	24	13.6
	Bachelor's Degree	44	24.9
	Master's Degree	16	09.0
	Others	48	27.1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100</b>
Job Position	Banking Trainee	28	15.8
	Banking Assistant	70	39.5

	Executive	18	10.2
	Officer	25	14.1
	Assistant Manager/ Manager	29	16.4
	Others	07	04.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100</b>
Job Experience	Below 2 years	31	17.5
	2-5 years	31	17.5
	6-8 years	38	21.5
	Above 8 years	77	43.5
	<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100</b>

Out of 100%, 15.8% are banking trainees, 39.5% are banking assistants, 10.2% are executives, 14.1% are Officers, 16.4% are assistant managers or managers and 4% are other categories of employees. Likewise, according to the Table 1, 17.5% of employees have experience of below 2 years, 17.5% of employees have 2-5 years of experience, 21.5% of employees have 6-8 years and 43.5% of employees have experience of more than 8 years.

### Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Analysis

In this study, univariate analysis was used for descriptive statistics, bivariate analysis was used to analyze the relationship between the study variables, and multi-step mediational analyses were used to analyze the mediating role of environmental commitment. The descriptive statistics and correlation analysis are shown in Table 2. According to the employees' rating, the average value of environmental knowledge is 4.02, the pro-environmental psychological climate is 4.17, environmental citizenship behaviour is 4.03 and the environmental commitment is 4.05, which indicates that there are high levels of environmental knowledge, pro-environmental psychological climate, environmental citizenship behaviour and environment commitment among the bank employees, as the values fall within the range of  $3.40 < X \leq 4.20$  among 177 employees.

Correlation analysis is used to find out the relationship between the variables. Person's correlation analysis was used to determine the nature and the degree of association between two or more variables in this study. Rules of thumb about the interpretation of the correlation coefficient are: coefficient range  $\pm 0.5$  to  $\pm 1.00$  = strong relationship,  $\pm 0.3$  to  $\pm 0.49$  = Moderate relationship,  $\pm 0.1$  to  $\pm 0.29$  = weak relationship.

**Table 2. Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix**

Variable		Mean	Standard Deviation	1	2	3
1	Environmental Knowledge	4.02	0.603			
2	Pro-Environmental Psychological Climate	4.17	0.609			
3	Environmental Commitment	4.05	0.523	0.671**	0.684**	
4	Environmental Citizenship Behaviour	4.03	0.547	0.680**	0.576**	0.627**

Notes: N=177, \*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The analysis of this study reflects that there is a strong positive and significant relationship between each of the independent variables and dependent variable as the correlation values of environmental knowledge and environmental citizenship behaviour, and pro-environmental psychological climate and environmental citizenship behaviour are 0.680 and 0.576 respectively with the significant level p-value: 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ). And also, there is a strong positive and significant relationship between independent variables and mediating variables as the correlation values of environmental knowledge and environmental commitment, and pro-environmental psychological climate and environmental commitment are 0.671 and 0.684 respectively with a significant level p-value that is 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ). Similarly, there is a strong positive and significant relationship between mediating variable and dependent variable as the correlation value of environmental commitment and environmental citizenship behaviour is 0.627 with a significant level p-value that is 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ).

### Mediation Analysis

Baron and Kenny's (1986) four-step mediational analysis was used to analyze the mediational effect of environmental commitment. As per the four steps approach, several regression analyses are conducted and the significance of the coefficients is examined at each step.

### Mediation Analysis-Model One

Four step analysis of simple mediation is used to find out the mediating effect of environmental commitment on the relationship between environmental knowledge and environmental citizenship behaviour.

**Table 3. Simple Mediation Analysis-Model One**

Step	Path	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	R <sup>2</sup>	B	Sig.	F-statistic
1	c	Environmental Knowledge	Environmental Citizenship Behaviour	0.462	0.617	0.000	150.195
2	a	Environmental Knowledge	Environmental Commitment	0.450	0.583	0.000	143.288
3	b	Environmental Commitment	Environmental Citizenship Behaviour	0.394	0.655	0.000	113.563
4	c'	Environmental Knowledge	Environmental Citizenship Behaviour	0.515	0.427	0.000	0.515
		Environmental Commitment			0.326	0.000	

According to the regression result, the B coefficient for environmental knowledge is 0.617, which means if environmental knowledge is increased by one unit environmental citizenship behaviour will improve by 0.617 units. And also, the R Square statistic is 0.462 which means that 46.2% of the variation in environmental citizenship behaviour is explained by environmental knowledge. Thus, step one concludes that environmental knowledge positively and significantly impacts environmental citizenship behaviour and the first condition necessary for the mediation is fulfilled.

Further, the B coefficient for environmental knowledge is 0.583, which means if environmental knowledge is increased by one unit environmental commitment will improve by 0.583 units. And also, the R Square statistic is 0.450 which means that 45% of the variation in environmental commitment is explained by environmental knowledge. Thus, step two concludes that environmental knowledge positively and significantly impacts environmental commitment and the second condition necessary for the mediation is fulfilled.

Similarly, the B coefficient for environmental commitment is 0.655, which means if environmental commitment is increased by one unit environmental citizenship behaviour will improve by 0.655 units. And also, the R Square statistic is 0.394 which means that 39.4% of the variation in environmental citizenship behaviour is explained by environmental commitment. Thus, step three concludes that environmental commitment has a positive and significant impact on environmental citizenship behaviour and the third condition necessary for the mediation gets fulfilled.

Finally, the B coefficient for environmental knowledge is 0.427. This means that on average if environmental knowledge goes up by 1 point on the scale, environmental citizenship behaviour will improve by 0.427 units. The B coefficient for environmental commitment is

0.326. This means that on average if environmental commitment goes up 1 point on the scale, environmental citizenship behaviour will improve by 0.326 units.

And also, the R Square statistic is 0.515 meaning that 51.5% of the variation in environmental citizenship behaviour is explained by environmental knowledge and environmental commitment. Thus, step 4 concludes that environmental knowledge and environmental commitment positively and significantly impact environmental citizenship behaviour.

Finally, the result of this study shows that environmental commitment partially mediates the relationship between environmental knowledge and environmental citizenship behaviour, because environmental knowledge is still significant when environmental commitment is controlled but the strength of the relationship has been reduced. Further, the finding indicates that 30.8% of the total variation in environmental citizenship behaviour caused by environmental knowledge is attributed to environmental commitment.

As there is a partial mediation, mediation effect or indirect effect is calculated as the product of coefficients of path **a** and **b** as suggested by (Sobel, 1982).

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Indirect Effect} &= a \times b = 0.583 \times 0.326 = 0.190 \\ \text{Total Effect (C}_1) &= \text{Direct Effect (C}'_1) + \text{Indirect Effect (ab)} \\ 0.617 &= 0.427 + 0.190 \end{aligned}$$

Magnitude of indirect effect is 0.190 which means on average 0.190 units of the overall difference of environmental knowledge on environmental citizenship behaviour can be attributed to difference in environmental commitment. Statistical significance of the mediation has been tested with a test of statistical significance proposed by Sobel (1982). Values of regression coefficients have been applied to Sobel calculator and the results as follows:

$$Z = \frac{ab (0.583 \times 0.326)}{\sqrt{b^2 S_a^2 + a^2 S_b^2} \sqrt{0.326^2 0.074_a^2 + 0.583^2 0.049_b^2}} = 4.131$$

According to Mallinckrodet, Abraham, Wei and Russel (2006), since z-score (4.131) is greater than 1.96, the mediation is said to be statistically significant at 5% level of significance.

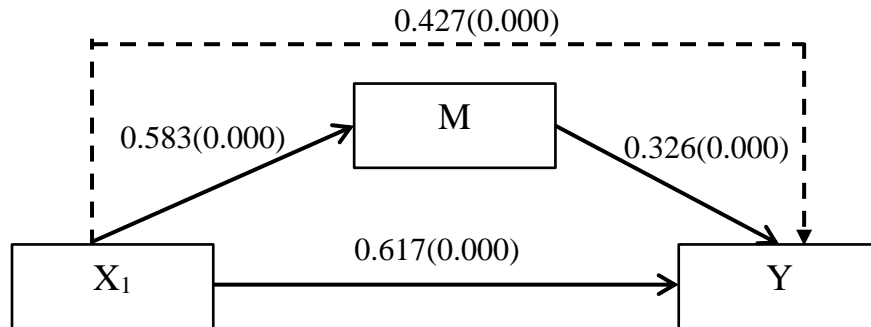
It means that environmental commitment significantly carries the influence of environmental knowledge on environmental citizenship behaviour. As per Sobel test since mediation is statistically significant, proportion of the effect that is mediated is calculated with the use following formula:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Proportion of mediation effect} &= \frac{\text{Indirect Effect (ab)}(0.583 \times 0.326)}{\text{Total Effect (c)} (0.617)} \times 100 \\ &= 30.8\% \end{aligned}$$

Proportion of the partial mediation is 30.8% which indicates that 30.8% of total variation caused by environmental knowledge in environmental citizenship behaviour is explained by environmental commitment.

It can be concluded from the findings that environmental commitment partially mediates the relationship between environmental knowledge and environmental citizenship behaviour. The results of this findings are shown in Figure 2.

**Figure 2. Results of Mediator Model One**



**Mediation Analysis-Model Two**

The same four step analysis of simple mediation was applied for model two also. It is about finding out the mediating effect of environmental commitment on the relationship between pro-environmental psychological climate and environmental citizenship behaviour.

**Table 4. Simple Mediation Analysis-Model Two**

Step	Path	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	R <sup>2</sup>	B	Sig.	F-statistic
1	c	Pro-Environmental Psychological Climate	Environmental Citizenship Behaviour	0.332	0.518	0.000	87.102
2	a	Pro-Environmental Psychological Climate	Environmental Commitment	0.468	0.588	0.000	154.088
3	b	Environmental Commitment	Environmental Citizenship Behaviour	0.394	0.655	0.000	113.563
4	c'	Pro-Environmental Psychological Climate	Environmental Citizenship Behaviour	0.434	0.249	0.000	66.791
		Environmental Commitment			0.458	0.000	



In the process of step 1, step 2 and step 3 significance values are less than 0.05, pro-environmental psychological climate has positive and significant impact on environmental citizenship behaviour, pro-environmental psychological climate has positive and significant impact on environmental commitment and environmental commitment has positive and significant impact on environmental citizenship behaviour. Finally, step 4 concluded that pro-environmental psychological climate and environmental commitment have positive and significant impacts environmental citizenship behaviour.

Eventually, the result of this study shows that environmental commitment partially mediates the relationship between pro-environmental psychological climate and environmental citizenship behaviour, because pro-environmental psychological climate is still significant when environmental commitment is controlled but the strength of the relationship has been reduced. According to Sobel Test (1982), the partial mediation also confirmed and the indirect effect is calculated as follow:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Indirect Effect} &= a \times b = 0.588 \times 0.458 = 0.269 \\ \text{Total Effect (C}_1\text{)} &= \text{Direct Effect (C}'_1\text{)} + \text{Indirect Effect (ab)} \\ &0.518 = 0.249 + 0.269 \end{aligned}$$

The extent of the indirect effect is 0.269, which means that the difference in environmental commitment accounts for 0.269 units of the overall difference in pro-environmental psychological climate on environmental citizenship behaviour. In addition, by using Sobel calculator the statistical significance was measured and the results are given as follows:

$$Z = \frac{ab (0.588 \times 0.458)}{\sqrt{b^2 S_a^2 + a^2 S_b^2} \sqrt{0.458^2 0.062_a^2 + 0.588^2 0.047_b^2}} = 6.361$$

The mediation is statistically significant at 5% level as the z-score (6.361) is greater than 1.96 according to Mallinckrodet, Abraham, Wei and Russel (2006). That is, environmental commitment has a significant influence on environmental citizenship behaviour attributable to a pro-environmental psychological climate.

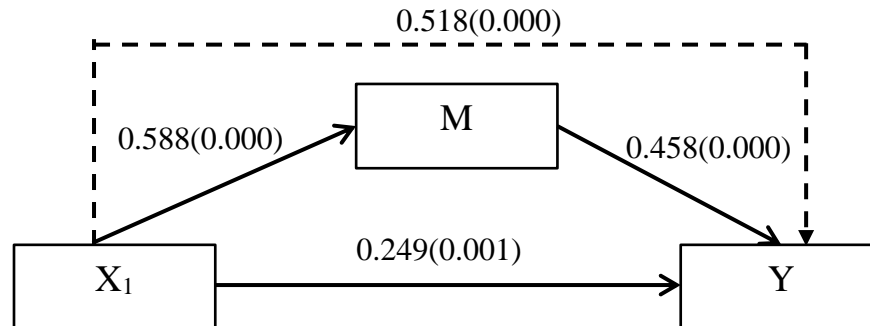
Since mediation is statistically significant, the Sobel test calculates the proportion of the effect that is mediated by using the following formula:

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Proportion of mediation effect} &= \frac{\text{Indirect Effect (ab)}(0.588 \times 0.458)}{\text{Total Effect (c)} (0.518)} \times 100 \\ &= 51.98\% \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, conclusion reached that, environmental commitment partially mediates the relationship between pro-environmental psychological climate and environmental citizenship behaviour and 51.98% of the variation in environmental citizenship behaviour is explained by

pro-environmental psychological climate and environment commitment. Figure 3 depicts the findings of this mediator model two.

**Figure 3. Results of Mediator Model Two**



The results support the first hypothesis of the study that there is a strong positive and significant relationship between environmental knowledge and environmental citizenship behaviour. The finding is empirically supported by the finding of Afsar, Badir, and Kiani (2016), who found that employees' environmental knowledge affects their intentions to engage in pro-environmental behaviours. Cheng and Wu (2015) if an employee possesses a greater degree of knowledge about the environment, he or she would exhibit pro-environmental workplace behaviours.

Results further indicate that there is a strong positive and significant relationship between pro-environmental psychological climate and environmental citizenship behaviour and support the second hypothesis. The finding is empirically supported by the finding of Saeed, Afsar, Hafeez, Khan, Thahir, and Afridi (2018) that employees feel that pro-environmental behaviors are effective and appropriate in the given context by forming descriptive norms through psychological climate perceptions. A positive psychological climate for the environment is expected to give employees a deeper understanding of behaviors that the organization values and rewards (Norton, Zacher, and Ashkanasy, 2014).

And also, the result has shown that there is a strong positive and significant relationship between environmental knowledge and environmental commitment accepting the third hypothesis. The finding is empirically supported by the finding of Chan, Chan, and Okumus (2014), if supervisors have adequate environmental knowledge, the commitment of staff to environmental activities will be enhanced. Bamberg and Möser (2007) indicated that increased knowledge of the environment leads to increased environmental concerns, while Arisal and Atalar (2016) found that knowledge of the environment has a negligible impact on environmental concerns.

In addition, it is observed that there is a strong positive and significant relationship between pro-environmental psychological climate and environmental commitment. The finding is

consistent with the finding of Berberoglu (2018): perceived organizational environment was found to have an effect on organizational engagement.

The results indicate that there is a strong positive and significant relationship between environmental commitment and environmental citizenship behaviour. The finding is empirically supported by the finding of Kerstetter and Bricker (2009), environmental commitment is considered an important factor in predicting behaviour that is environmentally responsible.

More than these, analyses have shown that environmental commitment partially mediates the relationship between environmental knowledge and environmental citizenship behaviour. The finding is empirically supported by the finding of Chan, Chan, and Okumus (2014). If managers have adequate environmental understanding, the commitment of staff to environmental operations will be enhanced. It can therefore be concluded that environmental knowledge/awareness affects the green commitment of staff. Environmental commitment is regarded as a significant factor in anticipating conduct that is environmentally accountable (Kerstetter and Bricker, 2009).

Finally, the analyses have shown that environmental commitment partially mediates the relationship between pro-environmental psychological climate and environmental citizenship behaviour. It can be concluded that pro-environmental psychological climate affects the environmental commitment of staff.

## **Conclusion**

Based on results and discussion, findings of this study lead to following conclusions.

Environmental knowledge, pro-environmental psychological climate, environmental citizenship behaviour, and environmental commitment are at high levels among the surveyed banks in the Batticaloa Region of Sri Lanka. Moreover, the findings lead to conclude that there are positive and significant relationships existing among the four key study variables such as environmental knowledge, pro-environmental psychological climate, environmental commitment, and environmental citizenship behaviour of employees. Besides, multi-step mediational analysis and Sobel test results show that it is possible to conclude that environmental commitment partially mediates the relationship between environmental knowledge and environmental citizenship behaviour as well as the relationship that exists between pro-environmental psychological climate and environmental citizenship behaviour.

## **Contributions and Recommendations of the Study**

This research contributes in several ways to the existing body of literature. The conclusion suggests that the environmental knowledge of employees and the psychological climate of the workplace ultimately affect the actions of environmental citizenship and the important role of personal factors in determining the environmental citizenship behaviour of the employee. Further, this study has shown how a pro-environmental psychological climate can effectively shape the actions of environmental citizenship behaviour by creating an

environmental commitment in the employee. Through these all, this study has contributed to filling the research gaps that existed in the area of research to some extent.

In addition, the findings of the study have some practical implications in addition to the theoretical contribution. The study helps banks to define their specific levels and formulate strategic plans for the future in terms of these study variables effectively. The study found that the environmental citizenship behaviour of employees will be increased if banks properly concentrate on the environmental knowledge of employees and the pro-environmental psychological climate in the workplace. Therefore, the results of the study will also be useful to further enhance and enrich environmental education to the employees.

The study suggests that employees' environmental responsibility activity derives from environmental knowledge. The organization should therefore provide the employees with sufficient knowledge and awareness of environmental issues and solutions including waste management, environmental management systems, and green corporate policies. And they also need to be developed to improve knowledge and awareness about environmental issues and ultimately lead to employees embracing organizational objectives.

The finding suggests that the pro-environmental psychological climate of the workplace determines employee behaviour concerning the environment. Furthermore, the bank needs to ensure that the employees are consistently connected with their environmental policies, strategies, and activities through internal channels. Bank management should empower employees to express their ideas and views on environmental issues, engage in coordinated environmental events, and carry out environmentally friendly actions in their day-to-day activities. Managers can effectively translate environmental practices at the bank level and empower employees from the time they entered the bank to promote environmental actions. Another important lesson from this study is that bank management would inspire the employee's environmental commitment. For example, management should take necessary actions to embed and sustain it through green reward management policies and practices. These practices would inspire most of the employees of the banks to behave in a pro-environmental way in the workplaces.

### **Limitations of the Study and Direction for Future Research**

Despite these contributions of this study, a number of limitations should be acknowledged. First, data were obtained only from selected commercial banks in Batticaloa Region. The extent to which the results can be generalized is limited because of this fact. The research work might have included multi-sector organizations; it might be safer for generalizations. The use of cross-sectional design in this research is another drawback. The data were collected at a single point, so no conclusion can be made on causal relationships. The study has used only the quantitative method, using qualitative research such as interviews and observations will be useful in providing further information about the study's objectives.

The study includes a small number of variables to assess employee environmental citizenship behaviour but, these may not be adequate to evaluate the environmental citizenship

behaviour of employees. In addition to environmental knowledge, pro-environmental psychological climate, and environmental commitment variables, there are more variables impacting the environmental citizenship behaviour of employees such as perceived corporate environmental policies, personal environmental values, pro-environmental behaviour, supervisory behaviour, and environmental attitudes. In this analysis, these variables were not included.

Researchers suggest extending this study to include more samples as recommendations for future researchers to generalize the results. The analysis only takes into account two independent variables. The result will be more important in the future if any analysis considers more independent variables. This study was carried out in the banking sector. Future researchers may also include comparative studies between the service sector and the manufacturing sector, as there are more environmental problems in the manufacturing sector than in the service sector.

This research considers environmental commitment as part of our analysis. Future studies may examine the impact of other mediators to better explain the environmental citizenship behaviour of the employee such as employee environmental involvement and personal investment in environmental issues. Future research will explore multiple and sequential mediations in this study looking at two single and simple mediations separately.

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**Appendix 1. Study Population and Sample Size**

Staff Category	Bank-1		Bank-2		Bank-3		Bank-4		Bank-5		Total Population	Total Sample
	Population	Sample	Population	Sample	Population	Sample	Population	Sample	Population	Sample		
Banking Trainee	02	02	09	08	08	08	08	07	03	03	30	28
Banking Assistant	20	13	12	06	08	07	17	14	41	30	98	70
Executive	06	06	02	02	02	01	07	05	05	04	22	18
Officer	04	02	03	02	04	02	16	14	06	05	33	25
Assistant Manager/Manager	03	02	04	04	06	04	15	08	14	11	42	29
Others	-	-	03	02	-	-	01	-	07	05	11	07
<b>Total</b>	35	25	33	24	28	22	64	48	76	58	236	177