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The Mediatıng Role of Conservation Commitment in the Effect of Value Orientations on Environmentally Responsible Behavior

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ABSTRACT

Purpose – The aim of this study is to identify the effect of value orientations of individuals residing in Balıkesir and participating in nature-based tourism activities on environmentally responsible behaviors and the mediating role of conservation commitment in this effect.

Design/methodology/approach – In Balıkesir, a destination of significant importance for Turkish tourism, a total of 417 surveys were collected from the local population using the convenience sampling method. The research model designed to examine the mediating role of conservation commitment in the effect of value orientations on environmentally responsible behavior was analyzed using structural equation modeling.

Results – According to the findings, there are strong and positive relationships between value orientations and environmentally responsible behaviors and conservation commitments. The structural equation modeling conducted revealed that individuals' value orientations have a positive effect on environmentally responsible behavior. Additionally, the results of the bootstrap test indicated that the conservation commitment variable plays a significant mediating role in the effect of value orientations on environmentally responsible behavior.

Discussion – Upon reviewing the conducted studies, the structural validity of the value orientations scale was established. However, since no studies were found that examined the mediating role of conservation commitment in the effect of value orientations on environmentally responsible behaviors, this study was deemed necessary.

1. Introduction

Values significantly contribute to defining an individual's personal and social identity (Hitlin & Piliavin, 2004), guiding the formation of attitudes and behaviors (Bilsky et al., 2015). Schwartz's (1992) Theory of Human Values and Circular Model, widely used in psychosocial research on values, posits that values function as guiding principles for selecting modes, means, and actions in an individual's life. These values represent goals that transcend the desired state of the individual. Schwartz's theory systematically classifies the fundamental values that constitute the guiding principles in individuals' lives, identifying ten basic values that help us understand how people behave and what they prioritize in various cultural and personal contexts. These values are power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, self-direction, universalism, benevolence, tradition, conformity, and security. Environmentally responsible behavior refers to the attitudes and actions individuals undertake to protect the environment and ensure its sustainability (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002). These behaviors encompass various activities, such as recycling, energy conservation, and the use of eco-friendly products. Conservation commitment, on the other hand, refers to individuals' intrinsic motivations and long-term commitments to protect environmental values and natural resources (Davis, Le, & Coy, 2011). This commitment is often manifested through a strong dedication to eco-friendly behaviors and sustainable practices.

This study aims to understand the dynamic factors influencing environmental behaviors by examining the relationships between individuals' value orientations, conservation commitments, and environmentally responsible behaviors. Encouraging environmentally responsible behavior is critical for achieving sustainable development, especially as environmental issues pose an increasing threat. In this context, investigating the

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impact of individuals' value orientations and conservation commitments on environmental attitudes and behaviors can help develop strategies to promote these behaviors.

The literature extensively examines the impact of individuals' value orientations on environmentally responsible behaviors. Liobikienė and Juknys (2016) demonstrated how the perception of environmental risk is related to normative goals and how this perception is linked to eco-friendly behaviors. Similarly, Ahmad et al. (2020) showed that environmental awareness positively influences intentions for eco-friendly behavior within the framework of Schwartz's personal values and the theory of planned behavior. However, these studies have not sufficiently addressed the mediating role of conservation commitment in the relationship between value orientations and environmentally responsible behaviors. This study aims to fill this gap in the literature by explaining the effect of value orientations on environmentally responsible behaviors through conservation commitments. For instance, while Cheah and Phau (2011) noted that eco-literacy and value orientations influence attitudes toward eco-friendly products, a detailed examination of the mediating role of conservation commitments in this process was not conducted. Additionally, Işıldar and Yıldırım (2008) demonstrated that environmental education increases conservation commitments, but the interaction between environmental values and conservation commitments was not adequately investigated.

Within the framework of ecological identity theory, studies explaining how individuals' environmental values and conservation commitments affect environmental behaviors are limited (Clayton, 2003; Gifford & Nilsson, 2014). In this context, the mediating role of conservation commitments in the effect of value orientations on environmentally responsible behaviors fills a significant gap in the literature. This study aims to contribute to a better understanding of this field by thoroughly examining the role of individuals' environmental values and conservation commitments in promoting environmentally responsible behaviors. Consequently, this study seeks to address gaps in the literature and provide essential insights into understanding environmental attitudes by explaining how individuals' value orientations influence environmentally responsible behaviors through conservation commitments.

Balıkesir was chosen as the study area due to its unique natural beauty, historical and cultural richness, and various alternative tourism types, making it one of Turkey's prominent cities. Balıkesir is one of the rare provinces with coastlines on both the Aegean and Marmara Seas, offering the beauty of both regions. Tourist areas such as Edremit Bay, Akçay, Altınoluk, Ayvalık, and Cunda Island make it a significant attraction, especially for summer tourism. Additionally, Kazdağları National Park provides suitable areas for trekking and nature walks. Balıkesir has hosted many civilizations since ancient times, with significant archaeological sites like Antandros and Kyzikos Ancient Cities offering visitors a journey through history. Ottoman-era mosques, inns, and baths can also be found in and around the city center. Moreover, Balıkesir is rich in thermal resources, with thermal hotels in Gönen, Edremit, and Bigadiç districts attracting many domestic and international tourists for health tourism (Balıkesir Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, 2024).

2. Theoretical Background

Various studies have examined the relationship between individuals' value orientations, conservation commitments, and environmentally responsible behaviors. Some of these studies reveal significant relationships between value orientations and conservation commitments with environmentally responsible behaviors. Mary et al. (2024) emphasized that during the pandemic, tourists' environmental responsibility behaviors are significantly influenced by attitude, ability, motivation, and learning, highlighting the critical role of education in transforming these behaviors into habits. Okumuş et al. (2019) demonstrated that hotel employees' environmental awareness, concern, and knowledge levels affect ecological behaviors, with green practice intention acting as a moderating factor in this relationship. Wang et al. (2020), grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior, showed that tourists' environmentally disruptive behaviors are determined by attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control, with public environmental facilities serving as a regulatory element in this dynamic. Yayla et al. (2021) found that hotel employees' attitudes positively influence their environmental awareness, and this relationship is strengthened by environmental interpretations. Additionally, Yusof et al. (2016) identified that environmental concern and behaviors play a significant moderating role in the interaction between environmental practices and tourist loyalty in resorts, while environmental knowledge was found to be ineffective. Furthermore, Korkmaz et al. (2019), in their study examining local residents' perspectives on female tourists within the context of gender role equality and life

values in Gökçeada, identified statistically significant relationships between gender role equality scores and the values of conformity, benevolence, freedom, and equality. These findings demonstrate how individuals' value orientations influence their social attitudes and behaviors.

The studies by Alazaizeh et al. (2016, 2025) demonstrate that value orientations of tourists and residents within the contexts of heritage tourism and Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) are decisive factors influencing conservation-oriented attitudes and support for local cultural festivals. Lin et al. (2025), using the case of Jeju Island, integrated the Value-Identity-Personal norm (VIP), Value-Attitude-Behavior (VAB), and Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) models to elucidate the formation processes of environmentally responsible behaviors in island tourism, revealing nationality as a significant moderator in these processes. Similarly, Han et al. (2025) analyzed employees' intentions toward environmentally friendly behaviors in the hospitality sector through the TPB and Value-Belief-Norm (VBN) theories, employing fuzzy-set qualitative comparative analysis (fsQCA) to identify effective combinations of influencing factors. Qiu et al. (2025) found that tourists' destination psychological ownership does not directly affect their environmentally responsible behavioral intentions (TERBI), but perceived environmental responsibility and place attachment mediate this relationship, with Generation Z exhibiting distinct responses within this framework. Wang et al. (2025) revealed that the emotional and factual dimensions of heritage tourism interpretation influence tourists' cultural preservation commitments (TCPC), with experience quality acting as a mediator and message framing regulating this effect. Prasetyo et al. (2025) reported that the ecological and community-based environmental protection strategies adopted by local authorities in the Nglanggeran Ecotourism Area, Indonesia, align with sustainable tourism principles, although challenges persist regarding social participation and institutional support in waste management. Lastly, Saatci and Türkmen (2020) emphasized the significant role of place attachment in shaping perceptions of tourism's impacts and support attitudes, while Göldağ (2015) highlighted how individuals' value orientations—such as power, achievement, and stimulation—influence their behavioral tendencies, underscoring the pivotal role of values in environmental and social behaviors. Collectively, these studies provide comprehensive and multidimensional insights into the interplay of values, attitudes, and behaviors within tourism and environmental contexts.

Memiş and Gedik (2010) examined the value orientations of primary school teachers, finding that teachers prioritized universalism the most, followed by security, self-direction, benevolence, conformity, tradition, hedonism, achievement, stimulation, and least of all, power. This study shows that individuals' value orientations are related to their professional and environmental attitudes. In light of these findings, the hypothesis H1 was developed, positing that there is a significant relationship between individuals' value orientations, conservation commitments, and environmentally responsible behaviors.

H_1: There is a significant relationship between individuals' value orientations, conservation commitments, and environmentally responsible behaviors.

The impact of individuals' value orientations on environmentally responsible behaviors has been demonstrated in various studies. Liobikienė and Juknys (2016) showed that individuals guided by normative goals are better at perceiving environmental risks and are more likely to exhibit eco-friendly behaviors, indicating the potential of value orientations to enhance environmental sensitivity. Additionally, Ahmad et al. (2020) indicated that environmental awareness and personal values positively influence intentions for eco-friendly behavior within the framework of Schwartz's personal values and the theory of planned behavior. The factors of the theory of planned behavior were observed to have a significant positive effect on individuals' intentions to visit eco-friendly destinations. These results support the idea that value orientations play a crucial role in shaping individuals' environmentally responsible behaviors, leading to the formulation of hypothesis H2.

H_2: The impact of individuals' value orientations on their environmentally responsible behaviors is significant.

Individuals' environmentally responsible behaviors may significantly impact their conservation commitments. Cheah and Phau (2011) noted strong correlations between eco-literacy, interpersonal influence, value orientation, and attitudes toward eco-friendly products, which increased the likelihood of purchasing such products. This suggests that environmentally responsible behaviors can strengthen individuals' conservation commitments. Işıldar and Yıldırım (2008) investigated the effects of environmental education on students' knowledge and behaviors regarding environmental protection, showing that environmental

education increases students' conservation commitments. These findings support the idea that environmentally responsible behaviors play a crucial role in enhancing individuals' conservation commitments, leading to hypothesis H3.

H_3: The impact of individuals' environmentally responsible behaviors on their conservation commitments is significant.

Individuals' value orientations significantly impact their conservation commitments. Engel et al. (2020) examined the effects of marine value orientations (relational, instrumental, and intrinsic values) on marine conservation, revealing strong links between individuals' thoughts and behaviors regarding marine issues and their value orientations. Specifically, relational values (connection and care for the ocean) increased individuals' sense of moral obligation for a healthy ocean (Engel et al., 2020). De Wet et al. (2019) noted that individuals possess a universal set of values, but personal value priorities can change according to life contexts. In this context, the role of personal values in conservation commitments demonstrates how values shape individuals' conservation attitudes and behaviors.

Doran, Hanss, and Larsen (2017) explored the impact of egoistic, altruistic, and biospheric values on environmental sustainable travel intentions, showing that value orientations are significant predictors of environmental behavioral intentions and contribute to individuals' conservation attitudes. These findings underscore the importance of value orientations in conservation commitments, leading to hypothesis H4.

H_4: The impact of individuals' value orientations on their conservation commitments is significant.

The mediating role of conservation commitments in the effect of individuals' value orientations on environmentally responsible behaviors can be explained within the framework of ecological identity theory. According to this theory, individuals' environmental values shape their environmentally responsible behaviors, with conservation commitments serving as a crucial mediator in this process (Clayton, 2003). Ecological identity emphasizes the relationship between individuals' environmental values and their behaviors, with conservation commitments promoting the alignment of values with concrete actions. Additionally, conservation commitments express individuals' dedication to their environmental values and their motivation to protect the environment. Research shows that these commitments significantly influence environmentally responsible behaviors. For example, Gifford and Nilsson (2014) demonstrated that environmental values influence environmentally responsible behaviors through conservation commitments. Accordingly, conservation commitments mediate the impact of value orientations on environmentally responsible behaviors, acting as a critical mechanism for translating environmental values into actions. This led to the formulation of hypothesis H5.

H_5: The mediating role of conservation commitments in the impact of individuals' value orientations on environmentally responsible behaviors is significant.

3. Method

Based on the reviewed literature, the research model has been designed as a simple mediation model (Figure 1). In this model, the coefficients are defined as follows: coefficient aaa represents the effect of value orientations (VO) on conservation commitment (CC); coefficient bbb represents the effect of conservation commitment (CC) on environmentally responsible behaviors (ERB); coefficient c′c'c′ represents the direct effect of value orientations (VO) on environmentally responsible behaviors (ERB) while controlling for conservation commitment; and coefficient ccc represents the total effect of value orientations (VO) on environmentally responsible behaviors (ERB).

The indirect effect, which is synonymous with mediation, is represented by the product of the coefficients aaa and bbb (ab). This indirect effect measures the extent to which environmentally responsible behaviors (ERB) change when value orientations (VO) are held constant. Additionally, there is an equation linking all these coefficients: c=ab+c′c = ab + c'c=ab+c′ (Hayes & Rockwood, 2017).

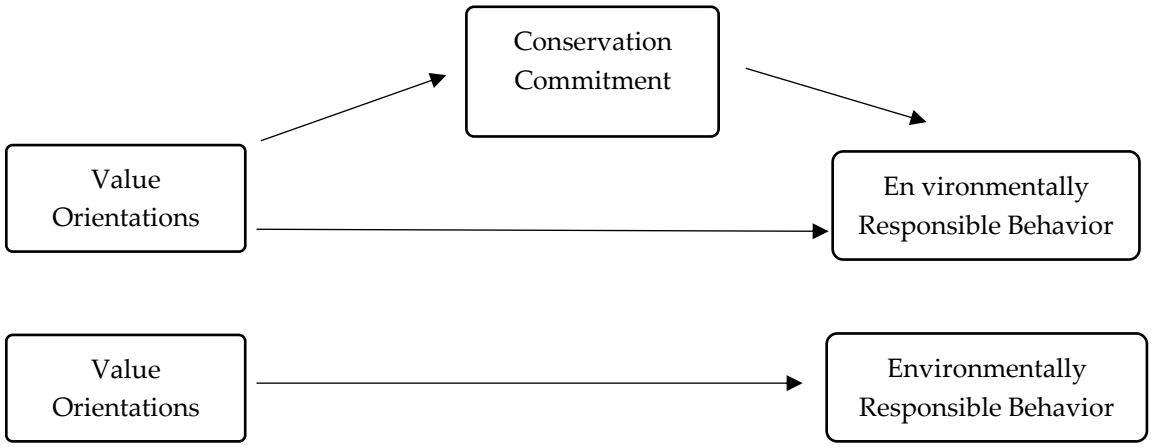


Figure 1. Research Model

3.1. Data Collection Tools

Portrait Values Scale: Developed by Schwartz et al. (2001), this scale aims to describe individual values through 40 items covering ten core human values: power, achievement, conformity, hedonism, tradition, self-direction, security, universalism, stimulation, and benevolence, using a six-point Likert-type format. There are no reversed items in the scale. The Cronbach's alpha value for the Turkish adaptation of the scale is 0.85, while in this study, it was determined to be 0.80. Environmentally Sensitive Behavior Scale: Developed by Su et al. (2018), this scale consists of 6 items and measures a single factor using a seven-point Likert-type format. Conservation Commitment Scale: Introduced to the literature by Lee (2011), this scale comprises 3 items and a single factor. It is evaluated using a seven-point Likert-type format.

3.2. Sample

The data for the survey were collected from individuals who had previously participated in nature tourism and reside in Balıkesir. The primary reason for selecting only individuals residing in Balıkesir and participating in nature-based tourism as the sample in this study is the strong relationship between the study's focus and the region's environmental and touristic characteristics. Balıkesir is one of Turkey's prominent destinations for nature tourism, with its rich natural assets such as nature parks, national parks, highlands, coastal areas, and forested zones. In this context, the interaction of local residents with nature and their level of environmental awareness provide a suitable basis for examining value orientations and environmentally responsible behavior. Moreover, due to its possession of both coastal and rural areas, Balıkesir offers a wide range of nature tourism experiences (Balıkesir Provincial Directorate of Culture and Tourism, 2024). This diversity allows for a more comprehensive examination of conservation commitment and environmental attitudes, which are central to this research. Additionally, restricting the fieldwork to a specific geographic area facilitates the formation of a more homogeneous participant profile during data collection and helps minimize the influence of extraneous variables in the analysis process. Therefore, in order to enhance the validity and reliability of the study, only individuals who participate in nature tourism within Balıkesir were included in the sample.

The convenience sampling method was preferred among sampling methods. Statistical power analysis was conducted considering Cohen's (1988) values, and the minimum sample size was calculated using Soper's (2024) electronic calculator. Considering the expected effect size (d=0.3), power level/statistical power (0.8), number of latent variables (N=3), number of observed variables (N=6), and probability value (p=0.05), the necessary minimum sample size was calculated to be 119. **The ethical approval required for the collection of data used in this study was obtained from the Ethics Committee of Mersin University with the decision dated 05.08.2024 and numbered 279.** Following the approval, the data collection process was carried out between 01.12.2024 and 31.12.2024 using the convenience sampling method, and it was determined that the 417 questionnaires obtained within this scope were sufficient for analysis.

3.3. Data Analysis

The data were analyzed using a statistical software package. Outliers and extreme values were examined, and no outliers or extreme values were found. The reliability of the scale was assessed using Cronbach's alpha (α)

coefficient. For validity, exploratory factor analysis was conducted, and the scale was found to have valid values. Normality tests were performed for correlation and regression analysis, and the skewness and kurtosis values were found to be within the ±1 range. The research model was tested using Process Macro v4.1 (Model 4, 95% confidence interval, 5,000 bootstrap samples). Direct, indirect, and total effects of the scale were calculated. The mediation effect was assessed based on the confidence interval (CI) value. For the mediation effect to be significant, the CI must not include zero (Hayes & Rockwood, 2017). According to the Sobel test, the Process Macro (Hair et al., 2017) analysis, which has high statistical power, yielded significant results among the variables.

3.4. Validity and Reliability Analysis Results

To determine whether the data followed a normal distribution, skewness and kurtosis values were examined. According to research indicating that these coefficients should be within ±1 or ±2 limits (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013; Büyüköztürk et al., 2012), the skewness (-1.380; 0.021) and kurtosis (-1.136; 0.837) values were found to be within the specified ranges. Subsequently, validity and reliability analyses were conducted. The suitability of the data for analysis was assessed through the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and the Bartlett's test of sphericity.

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy for the Portrait Values Scale was found to be 0.726, which is above the minimum value of 0.7. Additionally, Bartlett's test of sphericity (Approximate Chi-Square=3445.501; df=465) was found to be statistically significant at $p<0.001$. This indicates that the Portrait Values Scale is suitable for factor analysis.

Table 1. EFA for Value Orientations Scale

İtems	Factors									
	Achievement	Security	Conformity	Universalism	Hedonism	Self-direction	Power	Tradition	Benevolence	Stimulation
İ32	,767									
İ4	,699									
İ24	,695									
İ13	,623									
İ31		,624								
İ35		,617								
İ5		,609								
İ14		,602								
İ21		,521								
İ28			,722							
İ7			,691							
İ16			,639							
İ36			,587							
İ23				,694						
İ19				,683						
İ40				,608						
İ29				,590						
İ26					,709					
İ10					,698					
İ37					,684					
İ11						,776				
İ34						,774				
İ22						,563				
İ2							,717			

İ39							,833			
İ20								,740		
İ25								,776		
İ18									,818	
İ27									,722	
İ15										,761
İ6										,709
AVE	0,48	0,35	0,43	0,41	0,48	0,50	0,60	0,57	0,59	0,54
CR	0,79	0,75	0,75	0,73	0,73	0,75	0,75	0,72	0,74	0,70
Total Variance Explanation Rate of Factors (%)	65,751									
Total Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of the Scale	0,800									
Total Arithmetic Mean of the Scale	4,68									
Total Standard Deviation of the Scale	0,404									
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Sampling Adequacy Coefficient	0,726									
Bartlett Test of Sphericity	Approximate Chi-square : 3445,501									
	df : 465									
	Significance : ,000									

As a result of the analysis, factor loadings below 0.50 and items with redundancy were removed from the scale. These items were: Universal-1, Universal-2, Self-Direction-1, Power-2, Tradition-1, Tradition-4, Benevolence-1, Benevolence-4, and Stimulation-3. The remaining items were found to be within acceptable boundary values. A ten-factor structure with eigenvalues greater than 1 was obtained under Varimax rotation. This structure was found to be consistent with the original form of the scale. The total variance explained by the identified dimensions was calculated to be 65.751%. In other words, a total of 31 items explaining value orientations were aggregated under 10 dimensions, accounting for 65.751% of the total variance. The overall Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the scale was calculated as 0.800. Additionally, the total arithmetic mean of the scale was determined to be 4.68, with a standard deviation of 0.404.

Finally, the composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE) values for the scale were examined to determine convergent validity. According to Fornell & Larcker (1981), CR should be greater than 0.70 and AVE should be greater than 0.50. Additionally, CR must be greater than AVE (Hair et al., 2014, p. 103). As seen in Table X, the CR values were found to be above the minimum threshold of 0.70. However, some AVE values were below the minimum threshold of 0.50. According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), when AVE values are below 0.50, CR values above 0.70 are considered sufficient to accept the low AVE values as adequate.

Table 2. Environmentally Responsible Behavior EFA Results of the Scale

İ3	,866
İ4	,760
İ5	,731
AVE	0.4870
CR	0,7906
Total Variance Explanation Rate of the Scale (%)	62,110
Total Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of the Scale	0,693
Total Arithmetic Mean of the Scale	5,38
Total Standard Deviation of the Scale	0,932
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Sampling Adequacy Coefficient	0,606
Bartlett Test of Sphericity	Approximate Chi-square : 240,647
	df : 3
	Significance : ,000

The KMO value for the Environmental Awareness Behavior Scale is 0.606, and the Bartlett's test of sphericity (Approximate Chi-square = 240.647; df = 3) was found to be statistically significant at $p < 0.001$. As a result of the analysis, items 1, 2, and 6 were removed from the scale due to their factor loadings being below the minimum threshold. The scale's Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value is 0.4870; the Composite Reliability (CR) value is 0.7906; the Total Variance Explained by the Scale is 62.110%; the Total Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of the Scale is 0.693; the Total Arithmetic Mean of the Scale is 5.38, and the Total Standard Deviation of the Scale is 0.932.

Tablo 3. Conservation Commitment EFA Results of the Scale

İtems	**CC**
İ1	,809
İ2	,717
İ3	,710
AVE	0.5575
CR	0,7902
Total Variance Explanation Rate of the Scale (%)	55,764
Total Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of the Scale	0,601
Total Arithmetic Mean of the Scale	4,66
Total Standard Deviation of the Scale	0,959
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Sampling Adequacy Coefficient	0,612
Bartlett Test of Sphericity	Approximate Chi-square : 135,555
	df : 3
	Significance : ,000

Conservation Commitment Scale is 0.612, and Bartlett's test of sphericity (Approximate Chi-square = 135.555; df = 3) was found to be statistically significant at $p < 0.001$. The analysis revealed that all factor loadings were above 0.50 and no cross-loading issues were observed. The scale's Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value is 0.5575; the Composite Reliability (CR) value is 0.7902; the Total Variance Explained by the Scale is 55.761%; the Total Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of the Scale is 0.601; the Total Arithmetic Mean of the Scale is 4.66, and the Total Standard Deviation of the Scale is 0.959.

2.5. Results of the Correlation Analysis Between Variables

Table 4 shows a positive and significant relationship between individuals' value orientations and their environmentally conscious behaviors ($r = .40$, $p < 0.01$). Additionally, a positive and significant relationship is observed between environmentally conscious behaviors and conservation commitment ($r = .43$, $p < 0.01$). A positive and significant relationship is also found between value orientations and conservation commitment ($r = .32$, $p < 0.01$). Accordingly, all variables exhibit positive and significant relationships. In this context, the first hypothesis of the study (H1) is supported.

Tablo 4. Averages and Relationship Coefficients of Variables

		Two-Variable Correlation				Descriptive Statistics		
		1	2	3		N	$\bar{x}$	SD
1	Value Orientation	-		-		417	4.68	.40
2	Environmentally Responsible Behavior	.40**	-			417	5.38	.95
3	Conservation Commitment	.32**	.43**	-		417	4.66	.93

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$

The results indicate that the effect of Value Orientations on Conservation Commitment (the mediator variable) is significant and positive (path a) (B = .76; SE = .11; p < .01). Value Orientations explain 10% of the variance in Conservation Commitment (R^2 = .10). Thus, Hypothesis H2 is supported. Conservation Commitment has a significant and positive effect on Environmentally Conscious Behavior (path b) (B = .33; SE = .05; p < .01). Therefore, Hypothesis H3 is supported. Finally, the direct effect of Value Orientations on Environmentally Conscious Behavior (the dependent variable) (path c') is found to be significant and positive (B = .68; SE = .10; p < .01). Accordingly, Hypothesis H4 is supported. The variance in Environmentally Conscious Behavior explained by Value Orientations and Conservation Commitment is 27% (R^2 = .22).

Table 5: Analysis Results of the Test of the Research Model

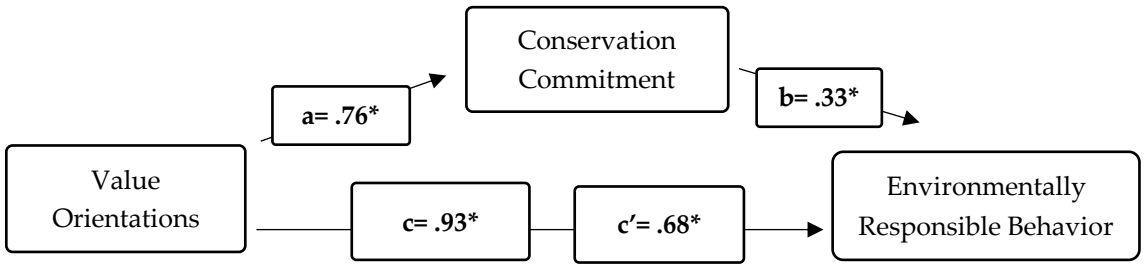
Variables		**CC**				**ERB**		
		β	**SE**	**p**		**β**	**SE**	**p**
VO	a	.76	.11	<.01	c'	.68	.10	<.01
CC		---	---	---	b	.33	.05	<.01
FİX	i_1	.99	.48	<.01	i_2	.71	.49	<.01
		R^2 = .10 F (df)= 47,999* (1;415)				R^2 = .27 F (df)= 76,528* (2;414)		
Indirect Effect	ab	.25	.06	GA= .25 – .47				
Total Impact	c	.93	.10	GA= .55 – .98				

*p<0.01

Not: a, b, c, and c' represent unstandardized coefficients.

SE: Standard error, CI: Confidence interval

The total effect of Value Orientations on Environmentally Conscious Behavior (path c) is significant and positive (B = .93; SE = .10; p < .01). Value Orientations account for 41% of the variance in Environmentally Conscious Behavior (R^2 = .41). When examining the effect size, the PM value (= .25/.93) is .268. This indicates that Value Orientations contribute 27% to the variance in Environmentally Conscious Behavior. Finally, the indirect effect of Value Orientations on Environmentally Conscious Behavior is significant, as the GA values do not include zero (0). The indirect effect is positive (B = .25; SE = .04; GA = .17 – .34). Thus, Hypothesis H5 is supported.



*p< .01

Figure 2: Appearance of Coefficients Between Variables

4. Conclusion and Discussion

The aim of this study was to investigate the effect of individuals' value orientations on environmentally conscious behaviors and the mediating role of conservation commitment in this effect among residents of Balıkesir. The findings from the field study conducted in Balıkesir provide significant insights into the relationships between value orientations and environmentally conscious behaviors.

The results of the study reveal a strong and positive relationship between value orientations and environmentally conscious behaviors (Schwartz, 1992; Stern, 2000). Specifically, values such as power, achievement, hedonism, universalism, and benevolence were found to encourage environmentally conscious behaviors. These findings support Hypothesis H2 and demonstrate that the effect of individuals' value orientations on their environmentally conscious behaviors is significant (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987).

The mediating role of conservation commitment in the relationship between value orientations and environmentally conscious behaviors was found to be significant through a bootstrap test (Preacher & Hayes, 2004). Conservation commitment functions as a mechanism that promotes individuals' environmentally conscious behaviors (Oskamp, 2000). This result confirms Hypothesis H5 and indicates that conservation commitment plays a mediating role in the effect of value orientations on individuals' environmentally conscious behaviors. The other hypotheses revealed the following findings:

Hypothesis H_1: A direct effect of value orientations on environmentally conscious behaviors was found. In particular, the values of universalism and benevolence were observed to positively influence environmentally conscious behaviors (Schwartz, 1992). This finding emphasizes the importance of values in shaping individuals' environmental behaviors.

Hypothesis H_3: The effect of conservation commitment on environmentally conscious behaviors occurs indirectly through value orientations. This finding suggests that conservation commitment does not directly influence individuals' environmentally conscious behaviors but rather plays a mediating role (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002).

Hypothesis H_4: A significant relationship was found between value orientations and conservation commitment. This relationship indicates that conservation commitment is influenced by value orientations and that this commitment affects environmentally conscious behaviors (Oskamp, 2000).

4.1. Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the significant role of value orientations and conservation commitment in promoting environmentally conscious behaviors. The theories proposed by Schwartz (1992) and Stern (2000) provide a framework for understanding how value orientations are associated with environmentally conscious behaviors. The results of this study indicate that value orientations are effective tools in guiding environmentally conscious behaviors. Specifically, values such as universalism and benevolence have been found to be promotive of environmental behaviors, which aligns with similar findings in the literature (Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987; Stern, 2000).

The mediating role of conservation commitment is consistent with the findings of Oskamp (2000) and other studies. Conservation commitment functions as a supportive mechanism that encourages individuals to exhibit behaviors aligned with their environmental values. This underscores the importance of strategic approaches supported by environmental education and environmental concern (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002). Furthermore, it was found that conservation commitment is influenced by value orientations and plays a mediating role in the effect of these orientations on environmentally conscious behaviors.

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into how value orientations and conservation commitment can be utilized to promote environmentally conscious behaviors. The findings offer practical recommendations for developing strategic approaches to enhance environmental awareness and encourage environmental behaviors. Future research could test these findings with broader sample groups to more comprehensively examine the impact of environmental values and conservation commitment.

4.2. Recommendations for Future Research

The findings of this study provide significant insights into the relationships between environmentally conscious behaviors, individuals' value orientations, and conservation commitment. However, there is a need to explore this topic in a broader context and across various settings.

First, testing the results of the study in different geographic and cultural contexts could offer a more comprehensive evaluation of the effects of value orientations and conservation commitment on environmentally conscious behaviors. Understanding how cultural differences impact these relationships could aid in localizing environmental education and awareness strategies.

Additionally, examining the effects of various demographic factors would be beneficial. Analyzing how factors such as age, gender, education level, and income status influence value orientations and environmentally conscious behaviors could reveal how these relationships vary among different groups. Such analyses could assist in developing more targeted strategies for promoting environmentally conscious behaviors.

Finally, studies evaluating the effectiveness of interventions and educational programs designed to increase conservation commitment could be valuable. Measuring the impact of programs developed to encourage environmentally conscious behaviors could provide valuable information for practitioners and policymakers. Furthermore, research on the practical applications of environmentally conscious behaviors could include examining strategies for adopting sustainable lifestyles or evaluating the effectiveness of campaigns promoting eco-friendly consumption habits. These recommendations could contribute to more comprehensive and effective research on promoting environmentally conscious behaviors and understanding environmental values.

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