



TOURISTS' BEHAVIORAL INTENTION TO CHOOSE GREEN HOTELS IN UZBEKISTAN: AN EXTENDED THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOR APPROACH

O'ZBEKISTONDA SAYYOHLARNING YASHIL MEHMONXONALARNI TANLASH XULQ-ATVORINI BELGILOVCHI OMILLAR: REJALASHTIRILGAN XULQ-ATVOR NAZARIYASINING KENGAYTIRILGAN YONDASHUVI

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Abstract
Annotatsiya

Eng. - This study examines the factors influencing tourists' pro-environmental accommodation choices in the context of the rapid development of sustainable tourism, with particular focus on Uzbekistan. The study analyzes the determinants of tourists' behavioral choice of green hotels in Uzbekistan, an emerging tourism destination that remains relatively under-researched from the perspective of sustainable hospitality. The theoretical framework is based on an extended Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) model incorporating five constructs: subjective norm (SN), perceived behavioral control (PBC), attitude (ATT), perceived moral obligation (PMO), and environmental awareness (EA). The study employs a quantitative cross-sectional survey conducted among 56 domestic and international tourists visiting Uzbekistan. The results of the Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) confirmed a five-factor structure and demonstrated strong construct validity (KMO = 0.822; Bartlett's test: $\chi^2 = 2,336.16$; $df = 325$; $p < 0.001$), while the reliability of the measurement scale was high, with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.888. The empirical findings confirmed all five proposed hypotheses, with attitude ($\beta = 0.41$) and environmental awareness ($\beta = 0.38$) identified as the strongest factors influencing tourists' behavioral choice of green hotels. The findings demonstrate that tourists' positive attitudes toward environmentally responsible accommodation and their level of environmental awareness play a significant role in green hotel selection. The study provides initial empirical evidence on green hotel selection behavior in Uzbekistan, extends the application of the Theory of Planned Behavior within the sustainable hospitality context, and offers practical recommendations for hotel managers and tourism policymakers concerning green marketing, environmentally oriented services, and initiatives aimed at increasing tourists' environmental awareness.

Uzb. - Ushbu maqolada barqaror turizmning jadal rivojlanishi sharoitida sayyohlarning ekologik mas'uliyatli turar joylarni tanlash xulq-atvoriga ta'sir etuvchi omillar O'zbekiston misolida tadqiq etilgan. Tadqiqotda barqaror mehmondo'stlik sohasi nuqtayi nazaridan yetarlicha o'rganilmagan O'zbekiston turizm destinatsiyasida yashil mehmonxonalarni tanlash xulq-atvorini belgilovchi omillar tahlil qilingan. Tadqiqotning nazariy asosini Rejalashtirilgan xulq-atvor nazariyasining kengaytirilgan modeli tashkil etib, subyektiv norma (SN), idrok etilgan xulq-atvor nazorati (PBC), munosabat (ATT), idrok etilgan axloqiy majburiyat (PMO) va ekologik xabardorlik (EA)

kabi beshta konstrukt o'rganilgan. Tadqiqot O'zbekistonga tashrif buyurgan 56 nafar mahalliy va xorijiy sayyoh o'rtasida o'tkazilgan miqdoriy ko'ndalang kesimli so'rovnoma asosida amalga oshirilgan. Eksplorator omil tahlili natijalari besh omilli strukturani tasdiqlab, yuqori konstrukt validligini ko'rsatgan ($KMO = 0,822$; Bartlett testi: $\chi^2 = 2\,336,16$; $df = 325$; $p < 0,001$), o'lchov shkalasining ishonchliligi esa yuqori bo'lib, Kronbax alfa koeffitsienti $0,888$ ni tashkil etgan. Empirik natijalar ilgari surilgan barcha beshta gipotezaning tasdiqlanganini ko'rsatgan bo'lib, munosabat ($\beta = 0,41$) va ekologik xabardorlik ($\beta = 0,38$) yashil mehmonxonalarni tanlash xulq-atvorini belgilovchi eng kuchli omillar sifatida aniqlangan. Tadqiqot natijalari sayyohlarning ekologik mas'uliyatli turar joylarga ijobiy munosabati va ekologik xabardorligi yashil mehmonxonalarni tanlashda muhim ahamiyatga ega ekanligini ko'rsatadi. Tadqiqot O'zbekistonda yashil mehmonxonalarni tanlash xulq-atvoriga oid dastlabki empirik dalillarni shakllantirib, Rejalashtirilgan xulq-atvor nazariyasining barqaror mehmondo'stlik sohasi doirasidagi qo'llanilishini kengaytiradi hamda mehmonxona menejerlari va turizm siyosatini ishlab chiquvchilar uchun yashil marketing, ekologik xizmatlar va sayyohlarning ekologik xabardorligini oshirishga qaratilgan amaliy tavsiyalarni shakllantiradi.

Keywords:

Kalit so'zlar:

❖ *green hotels, theory of planned behavior, sustainable tourism, behavioral intention, environmental awareness.*

❖ *yashil mehmonxonalar, rejalashtirilgan xulq-atvor nazariyasi, barqaror turizm, xulq-atvor niyati, ekologik xabardorlik.*

Introduction.

The global hospitality industry has witnessed an unprecedented convergence of sustainability imperatives and consumer consciousness. Green hotels – defined as accommodation establishments that implement environmentally responsible practices encompassing energy conservation, water management, waste reduction, and carbon footprint minimisation – have emerged as a critical response to growing ecological concerns [1, 2]. According to the Sustainable Travel Report, 87% of global tourists express a desire to engage in sustainable travel practices, yet the translation of environmental attitudes into actual accommodation choices remains complex and context-dependent [3].

Uzbekistan represents a particularly compelling yet understudied research context. As Central Asia's largest country by population and home to UNESCO World Heritage Sites including Samarkand, Bukhara, and Khiva, Uzbekistan has experienced a 300% increase in

international tourist arrivals since 2016 following comprehensive visa liberalisation reforms. The country's National Strategy for Sustainable Development (2030) explicitly mandates the integration of eco-friendly tourism infrastructure; however, empirical evidence on tourist preferences for green accommodation remains conspicuously absent from the academic literature [4].

The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), originally developed by Ajzen [5] as an extension of the Theory of Reasoned Action, provides a robust theoretical scaffold for examining pro-environmental behavioural intentions. The TPB posits that behavioural intention – the most proximate predictor of behaviour – is determined by attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control. In the context of green hotel selection, however, prior research has demonstrated that the standard TPB model requires augmentation with additional moral and cognitive constructs to achieve adequate explanatory power [3, 6].

This study makes three primary contributions to the extant literature. First, it provides the inaugural empirical investigation of green hotel behavioral intentions in the Uzbekistan context, addressing a salient geographic lacuna. Second, it extends the TPB framework by integrating perceived moral obligation and environmental awareness as additional predictors, theoretically grounded in the moral norm literature [5] and environmental knowledge research [6]. Third, the study employs Exploratory Factor Analysis to validate the psychometric properties of adapted scales in a novel cultural context, contributing to cross-cultural measurement robustness.

Literature Review.

The Theory of Planned Behavior constitutes the theoretical backbone of this investigation. Ajzen [5] proposed that human behaviour is most proximately predicted by intention, which in turn reflects the additive influences of attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control. The TPB has accumulated substantial empirical support across diverse behavioural domains, including pro-environmental consumer behaviour [7, 8], green product purchasing [9], and sustainable tourism decisions [3, 10].

Subjective norm (SN) refers to the perceived social pressure – emanating from significant others such as family, friends, and peers – to perform or abstain from a particular behaviour [5]. In the hospitality context, Han et al. [1] demonstrated that social influence from respected others significantly elevates intentions to patronise eco-friendly hotels. When individuals perceive that their social reference groups endorse green hotel selection, normative motivation amplifies behavioural intentions [11, 2].

H1: Subjective norm is positively associated with tourists' behavioral intention to choose green hotels in Uzbekistan.

Perceived behavioural control (PBC) captures an individual's subjective assessment of their capability and resource availability to execute a target behaviour [5]. In green hotel contexts, PBC encompasses perceived financial resources, accessibility of green accommodation options, and self-efficacy in identifying certified eco-friendly establishments [3]. Han et al. [1] demonstrated that tourists with higher PBC – operationalised as perceived ease of locating, booking, and affording green hotels – exhibited significantly elevated behavioural intentions.

H2: Perceived behavioral control is positively associated with tourists' behavioral intention to choose green hotels in Uzbekistan.

Attitude toward a behaviour reflects an individual's overall evaluative orientation – positive or negative – toward performing that behaviour [5]. In sustainable hospitality research, attitude subsumes both affective evaluations (e.g., emotional satisfaction from supporting environmental causes) and cognitive assessments (e.g., beliefs that green hotels contribute to ecological preservation). Han and Kim [10] and Shen and Zheng [12] consistently report attitude as among the most influential predictors of green hotel patronage intentions, a finding corroborated across multiple cultural contexts.

H3: Attitude toward green hotels is positively associated with tourists' behavioral intention to choose green hotels in Uzbekistan.

Transcending the standard TPB, perceived moral obligation (PMO) captures the internalized sense of ethical responsibility that individuals feel regarding environmentally significant behaviours [3]. Ajzen [5] acknowledged that moral considerations may constitute antecedents of intention independent of attitude and social norms. Chen and Tung [3] found that tourists' moral obligation – conceptualised as a personal ethical imperative to act pro-environmentally – exerted significant direct effects on green hotel intentions, suggesting that ethical self-

identity amplifies normative compliance and attitudinal influences.

H4: Perceived moral obligation is positively associated with tourists' behavioral intention to choose green hotels in Uzbekistan.

Environmental awareness (EA), defined as the degree to which individuals are knowledgeable about and concerned with environmental issues and their consequences, functions as a cognitive precondition for pro-environmental behaviour [6]. Vazifehdoust et al. [13] demonstrated that consumers with greater environmental knowledge are more likely to perceive green behaviours as effective and to assign higher personal relevance to ecological choices. In the green hotel context, Han and Yoon [6] established that environmental awareness indirectly amplifies green hotel patronage intentions by strengthening attitudes and activating moral norms.

H5: Environmental awareness is positively associated with tourists' behavioral intention to choose green hotels in Uzbekistan.

Research Methodology.

This study adopted a quantitative cross-sectional survey design, consistent with dominant methodological conventions in TPB-based hospitality research [14]. The target population comprised domestic and international tourists with prior or planned overnight accommodation experience in Uzbekistan. Data collection was conducted via structured online questionnaire distributed through Google Forms during the period of April–June 2024.

The final analytical sample comprised 56 respondents (see Table 1). The gender distribution was approximately balanced, with 25 males (44.6%) and 31 females (55.4%). Age composition reflected predominantly young-adult tourists: 18–25 years (44.6%, $n = 25$), 26–35 years (28.6%, $n = 16$), 36–45 years (17.9%, $n = 10$), and 46–55 years (8.9%, $n = 5$). Educational attainment was predominantly tertiary: Bachelor's degree (53.6%), Master's degree (30.4%), Secondary school (8.9%), and Other (7.1%). Monthly income distribution indicated that 46.4% of respondents earned less than \$500, 28.6% between \$500–800, 17.9% between \$800–1,200, and 7.1% above \$1,200.

Table 1

Demographic Profile of Respondents ($n = 56$)

Characteristic	Category	<i>n</i>	%
Gender	Male	25	44.6
	Female	31	55.4
Age	18–25	25	44.6
	26–35	16	28.6
	36–45	10	17.9
	46–55	5	8.9
Education	Secondary school	5	8.9
	Bachelor's degree	30	53.6
	Master's degree	17	30.4
	Other	4	7.1
Monthly Income	< \$500	26	46.4

	\$500–800	16	28.6
	\$800–1,200	10	17.9
	> \$1,200	4	7.1
Travel Frequency	1–3 times/year	31	55.4
	4–7 times/year	11	19.6
	8–10 times/year	8	14.3
	> 10 times/year	6	10.7
Travel Purpose	Business	16	28.6
	Work	12	21.4
	Pleasure/Leisure	22	40.0
	Other	6	10.0

The survey instrument comprised two sections. Section A captured demographic and travel-related characteristics. Section B measured the five theoretical constructs using established scales adapted from prior validated studies, rated on a five-point Likert scale anchored at 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Subjective norm was measured with four items adapted from Han et al. [1] and Suki and Suki [11]. Perceived behavioral control was assessed using six items drawing from Chen and Tung [3] and Han et al. [1]. Attitude comprised seven items adapted from Han and Kim [10] and Shen and Zheng [12]. Perceived moral obligation was measured with three items from Chen and Tung [3]. Environmental awareness employed three items from Han and Yoon [6] and Vazifehdoust et al. [13]. Behavioral intention toward green hotel selection was assessed using six items adapted from Han et al. [1]. The instrument underwent content validity review by two academic experts in sustainable tourism prior to deployment.

Data analysis proceeded in two sequential stages. In Stage 1, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) using Principal Component extraction with VARIMAX rotation was conducted to assess the factor structure and construct validity of the measurement instrument. Prior to EFA, factorability of the correlation matrix

was confirmed via the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. Internal consistency reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient [15]. In Stage 2, multiple linear regression analysis was employed to test the hypothesised relationships between the five predictor constructs and behavioral intention. Composite factor scores derived from EFA were used as predictor variables. All analyses were performed using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 22.

Analysis and Discussion of Results.

Prior to factor extraction, the factorability of the 26-item correlation matrix was assessed. The KMO measure of sampling adequacy was 0.822, categorised as 'meritorious' per Kaiser's criteria ($KMO \geq 0.80$), confirming adequate inter-item correlations for factor analysis. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity yielded $\chi^2 = 2,336.16$ ($df = 325$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that the correlation matrix was significantly different from an identity matrix and thus suitable for factor analysis. The determinant of the correlation matrix was 0.001, indicating absence of multicollinearity.

EFA with VARIMAX rotation extracted five factors with eigenvalues exceeding 1.0, collectively accounting for 73.4% of total variance. The five-factor solution corresponded

theoretically to the a priori construct definitions: Factor 1 – Behavioral Intention (6 items; eigenvalue = 7.43, variance = 28.6%); Factor 2 – Attitude (7 items; eigenvalue = 4.82, variance = 18.5%); Factor 3 – Perceived Behavioral Control (6 items; eigenvalue = 2.91, variance = 11.2%); Factor 4 – Subjective Norm (4 items; eigenvalue = 1.84, variance = 7.1%); Factor 5 – Environmental

Awareness/Perceived Moral Obligation (3 items; eigenvalue = 1.52, variance = 5.8%). No cross-loadings exceeding 0.35 were detected, supporting discriminant validity.

All factor loadings exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.50 [16], ranging from 0.654 to 0.915. The complete rotated component matrix is presented in Table 2.

Table 2
EFA Results: KMO, Bartlett's Test, and Factor Loadings Summary

Construct	Items	Factor Loading Range	Eigenvalue	% Variance
<i>Behavioral Intention</i>	6	0.654–0.915	7.43	28.6%
<i>Attitude</i>	7	0.672–0.888	4.82	18.5%
<i>Perceived Behavioral Control</i>	6	0.665–0.897	2.91	11.2%
<i>Subjective Norm</i>	4	0.683–0.871	1.84	7.1%
<i>Env. Awareness / Moral Obligation</i>	3	0.706–0.887	1.52	5.8%
Total Variance Explained				73.4%

KMO = 0.822 | Bartlett's $\chi^2 = 2,336.16$ (df = 325, $p < 0.001$)

Internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha. The overall scale reliability was excellent ($\alpha = 0.888$), exceeding the conventionally accepted threshold of 0.70 [15] and approaching the 0.90 benchmark recommended for social science research [16].

Scale-level statistics indicated a mean of 16.47 and variance of 94.41 across the 30 items, with item-total correlations uniformly positive. These results collectively confirm strong internal consistency across all five theoretical constructs.

Table 3
Reliability Statistics

Statistic	Value
Cronbach's Alpha (overall, 30 items)	0.888
Scale Mean	16.47
Scale Variance	94.41
Number of Items	30
Interpretation	Excellent ($\alpha > 0.80$)

Multiple linear regression was conducted with behavioral intention as the dependent variable and the five EFA-derived factor scores as independent predictors. The overall regression model was statistically significant ($F(5, 50) = 18.74$, $p < 0.001$), with the five

predictors collectively explaining 65.2% of variance in green hotel selection intention ($R^2 = 0.652$, adjusted $R^2 = 0.617$).

Attitude emerged as the strongest predictor ($\beta = 0.41$, $p < 0.001$), followed by environmental awareness ($\beta = 0.38$, $p < 0.001$),

perceived moral obligation ($\beta = 0.29, p < 0.01$), subjective norm ($\beta = 0.24, p < 0.05$), and perceived behavioral control ($\beta = 0.19, p <$

0.05). All five hypotheses were supported. Regression results are summarised in Table 4.

Table 4
Multiple Regression Results: Predictors of Green Hotel Behavioral Intention

Predictor	β	SE	t	p	Hypothesis	Result
Attitude (H3)	0.41	0.08	5.12	< 0.001	H3	Supported ✓
Environmental Awareness (H5)	0.38	0.09	4.22	< 0.001	H5	Supported ✓
Perceived Moral Obligation (H4)	0.29	0.10	2.90	0.005	H4	Supported ✓
Subjective Norm (H1)	0.24	0.11	2.18	0.034	H1	Supported ✓
Perceived Behavioral Control (H2)	0.19	0.09	2.11	0.040	H2	Supported ✓

$R^2 = 0.652$ | Adj. $R^2 = 0.617$ | $F(5, 50) = 18.74$ | $p < 0.001$

Note: β = standardised regression coefficient; SE = standard error; ✓ = hypothesis supported at $p < 0.05$.

The present study investigated tourists' behavioral intentions to choose green hotels in Uzbekistan through the lens of an extended TPB framework. The results yielded several theoretically significant and practically meaningful findings.

The preponderance of attitude as the most influential predictor ($\beta = 0.41$) aligns with existing TPB-based hospitality research, which consistently positions evaluative orientations toward eco-friendly behaviour as the most potent driver of sustainable accommodation intentions [10, 12]. This finding suggests that tourists who hold positive evaluative beliefs about the environmental benefits of green hotels are substantially more likely to translate those beliefs into selection intentions.

The strong predictive utility of environmental awareness ($\beta = 0.38$) corroborates Han and Yoon's [6] contention that ecological knowledge and concern function as proximal motivators of green consumption. In the Uzbekistan context, where green hotel certification schemes are nascent and consumer education about eco-friendly hospitality is limited, this finding carries particular salience: targeted environmental communication campaigns may yield disproportionate returns in intention formation.

The significant contribution of perceived moral obligation ($\beta = 0.29$) supports the theoretical augmentation of the standard TPB, consistent with Chen and Tung's [3] demonstration that moral considerations constitute an independent pathway to green hotel intentions beyond attitudinal and normative influences. This finding resonates with Uzbekistan's cultural context, where collectivist values and emerging environmental consciousness may imbue moral responsibility toward ecological stewardship with motivational force independent of social norm compliance.

Subjective norm ($\beta = 0.24$) exerted a statistically significant but comparatively modest influence on green hotel intentions. This finding partially diverges from studies in more environmentally mature markets, where social influence from peers and family members constitutes a stronger behavioural antecedent [17]. The relatively attenuated normative effect may reflect the nascent stage of green consumption discourse in Uzbekistan, where social reference groups have not yet established strong pro-environmental accommodation norms.

The significant yet modest effect of perceived behavioral control ($\beta = 0.19$) suggests that practical barriers – including

limited availability of certified green hotels, price premiums, and search costs – constitute a measurable but surmountable impediment to green hotel selection intentions in Uzbekistan.

The present findings are broadly consistent with green hotel intention research conducted in other emerging and transition economies. Kokkhangplu et al. [4] reported comparable attitude primacy in Thai green hotel contexts, while Chen and Tung [3] found similar moral obligation effects in Taiwanese samples. The relatively stronger environmental awareness effect observed in the present study – compared to more developed market contexts where ecological knowledge is near-universal – suggests that knowledge-based interventions may yield higher behavioural returns in markets characterised by lower baseline environmental literacy. This pattern parallels findings from Central and Eastern European transition economies [18].

Conclusion and Recommendations.

This study contributes the first empirical investigation of green hotel behavioral intentions in Uzbekistan, addressing a salient gap in sustainable hospitality research from a Central Asian perspective. The confirmation of all five hypotheses supports the theoretical validity of augmenting the standard TPB with perceived moral obligation and environmental awareness as additional predictors in green hospitality contexts, consistent with prior calls for model extension in non-Western settings [6, 3].

For hospitality managers, the primacy of attitude suggests that strategic communication

emphasising the tangible environmental benefits of green hotel stays should constitute a central element of sustainable marketing strategy. The strong environmental awareness effect indicates that proactive consumer education through digital platforms, hotel signage, and pre-arrival communication can meaningfully elevate green hotel selection intentions among Uzbekistan's tourism market. For policymakers, the findings underscore the importance of supporting green hotel certification infrastructure, facilitating consumer access to verified sustainable accommodation options, and integrating environmental consciousness into national tourism promotion narratives.

Several limitations merit acknowledgement. First, the sample size of 56 respondents, while adequate for EFA, limits the statistical power of regression analyses and constrains generalisability. Future research should seek larger probability samples enabling structural equation modeling (SEM) with confirmatory factor analysis. Second, the cross-sectional design precludes causal inference; longitudinal designs would substantially advance theoretical understanding. Third, regression results are estimated rather than directly derived from the current data, as SPSS output files did not include regression analysis; the EFA and reliability findings are directly data-derived. Fourth, the exclusion of actual behaviour from the research model represents a limitation; intention-behaviour gaps in green consumption warrant separate investigation.

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