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# Green Practices amidst COVID-19 Pandemic among Restaurants: Basis for an Enhancement Program

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**Abstract:** *In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, this study was done to assess green practices in local restaurants. This study used a descriptive research design to reveal green practices encountered and practiced by restaurant employees. A downloaded, modified questionnaire was used to gather information. Three hundred eighty-seven (387) restaurant workers from Tagum City, Davao del Norte, participated in this study as respondents. Results show that the level of green practices among restaurants in Tagum City is high. Generally, the indicators green buildings and construction and the other indicators; water efficiency and conservation; recycling and composting; sustainable food; non-toxic cleaning and chemical products are high; and energy efficiency and conservation is moderate respectively. Moreover, green practices among restaurants are followed by the restaurant's employees in Tagum City. This study has a proposed enhancement program based on the results. Lastly, this study was designed to extend help and awareness to the hospitality industry in maximizing the use of green practices for sustainability.*

**Keywords:** *Green Practices, Restaurants, Enhancement Program.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Traveler and consumer behavior, including food and eating habits, alter to accommodate a new reality in a world that is changing quickly due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Present-day diners' perceptions of "overall perceived quality" appear to include green practices in food production, preparation, and meal service [1]. Therefore, the absence of environmentally friendly methods in food production and services can have a significant negative effect on the environment.

The rising hospitality sector's effects on the environment have become crucial [2]. According to the UN World Tourism Organization, the hospitality and tourism industries account for about 5% of all global polluting emissions since these sectors consume a significant number of natural resources and have a negative impact on the environment [3–4]. Because of this,



"green practices," which are defined as environmentally friendly practices that help to protect the environment by taking steps to save water and energy and reduce solid waste, have been acknowledged for more than ten years as a long-term trend and a crucial component of success in the hospitality and tourism industries [5].

In fact, customers are more interested in buying "green" goods and services because of their increased awareness of environmental issues [1]. According to the findings of a Trip Advisor survey, 79% of respondents preferred to stay at hotels that practice environmentally friendly practices, demonstrating that in the hospitality sector, customers prefer to stay at hotels and eat at restaurants that take action to protect the environment to support environmental sustainability [1].

The future generation is ignored while decades of progress are made without regard for the consequences, which shapes how the world will develop. It is now crucial to express concern for our environment due to the impending threat of global warming and increased worldwide awareness [6]. The hospitality industry can do so much to help with this issue. The time has come to investigate further what we as members of the hotel industry can do to support and execute current standards while also taking the initiative to create and maintain green practices.

Studies are very limited concerning green practices in Tagum City. Not to mention that no local study has ever been conducted on the immediate effect of green practices among restaurants in the locale. With these predominant situations, the lack of sustainable green practices in food production and services impacts the environment substantially. This study aims to evaluate the level of green practices among restaurants: basis for an enhancement program.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

The study is quantitative by design. The study sought to determine the level of green practices among restaurants in Tagum City. Quantitative research was used for the study since it dealt with collecting numerical data that was then analyzed with statistical tools. Such was the case for studies that dealt with similar designs. The research is more specifically descriptive quantitative research. This kind of studies seek to explain the status of identified variables. Furthermore, a survey was used to gather the data that was distributed to 387 participants. A study suggested that the appropriate sample size for quantitative studies will range from 30 to 500 respondents [7]. This was observed in existing studies that were quantitative by nature [8-10].

The respondents of this study were three hundred eighty-seven (387) restaurant employees from ten (10) selected restaurants in Tagum City. It means that they are all primary involved as respondents who were given a set of questionnaires to answer the enumerated questions related to the green practices of restaurants in Tagum City. Respondents were attained using a purposive sample to select sample from a large population of ten (10) selected restaurants in Tagum City.



### 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### **Green Practices among Restaurants in Tagum City**

Table 1 shows the results of the study. It is revealed that that the overall mean is 3.81 with a descriptive equivalent of high and a standard deviation of 0.516. Almost all indicators have a descriptive equivalent of high. Among all indicators, Green buildings and construction got the highest mean score ( $x=4.19$ ), followed by water efficiency and conversation ( $x=4.01$ ), recycling and composting ( $x=3.92$ ), sustainable food ( $x=3.79$ ), nontoxic cleaning and chemical products ( $x=3.66$ ), and Energy efficiency and conservation ( $x=3.32$ )

Table 1. Level of Green Practices among Restaurants in Tagum City

<b>Indicators</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Descriptive Level</b>
Energy Efficiency and Conservation	3.32	0.830	Moderate
Water Efficiency and Conservation	4.01	0.830	High
Recycling and Composing	3.92	0.674	High
Sustainable Food	3.79	0.625	High
Non-Toxic Cleaning and Chemical Products	3.66	0.873	High
Green buildings and construction	4.19	0.712	High
Overall	3.81	0.516	High

The data shows that green practices of restaurants in the Tagum City is much observed. This further implies that this high descriptive level can be attributed to high ratings given by the respondents in the indicators. This means that employee response to green practices of restaurants in Tagum City is positive. As such, resulting to the appropriate implementation of restaurants in terms of green practices [11]. This positive response is in majority of the case in the items of non-toxic cleaning and chemical products, sustainable food, recycling & composting, water efficiency and conservation and the green building and construction. Interestingly, the energy and conservation got a mean of 3.32 which is moderate among indicators. This means that it is rarely observed in the selected restaurants as maintaining the restaurants good ambience through extravagant lighting and other electric-graphical designs for promotions and information's [12].

#### **Proposed Enhancement Program on Correct Green Practices**

Presented in table 2 is the proposed enhancement program on the green practices among restaurants in Tagum City. This enhancement program equips employees more knowledge about green practices for them to be more aware of the impacts of this matter. They should be able to exercise these practices in their premises to help reduce the environmental impacts of the establishment and it would improve the sustainability of the restaurant [13].

#### **The Enhancement Program**

An enhancement program was formulated to address the results of the study. The program was designed for select restaurants to contribute in upholding corporate social responsibility. For the realization of the enhancement program the researcher suggested to the restaurant management to conduct a one-day seminar wherein all key result areas are being discussed semiannually per restaurants for the awareness and continuous learning experience in



providing quality and excellent services to the customers as well as valuing corporate social responsibility [14].

**Table 2. Proposed Enhancement Program on Correct Green Practices**  
**Key Result Area (KRA): Energy efficiency and conservation, Non-toxic cleaning and chemical products, Sustainable food, and Recycling and composting**

<b>KRA</b>	<b>Specific Objectives</b>	<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Persons Involved</b>	<b>Time Frame &amp; Budgetary Requirement</b>	<b>Expected Output</b>
1. Energy efficiency and conservation	To Improve the energy efficiency and conservation of the restaurants.	Use energy saving bulbs and solar energy.	*Restaurant Manager *Restaurant Employees	*1 <sup>st</sup> quarter and 3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter of the year * P 5,000.00 per restaurant which covers the following: -Honorarium of the speaker -Certificates of the participant -Workshop kit.	It is expected that the employees and managers can conserve energy.
2. Non-toxic cleaning and chemical products	To bear up the use of non-toxic cleaning and chemical products.	Use eco-friendly chemical cleaners.			Employees and managers can use eco-friendly products.
3. Sustainable Food	To encourage restaurant establishments to use sustainable/local food.	Utilize environmentally friendly and local product.			Employees and managers can provide sustainable food.
4. Recycling and Composting	To enhance the recycling and composting practices of the restaurants.	Implement proper segregation.			Employees and managers can implement proper recycling and composting.



**\*Conduct one day seminar wherein all KRA's are discussed semiannually per restaurants.**

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Given that the overall mean score for green practices is high, it is evident that there is an implementation for green practice in restaurants of Tagum City. This is in terms of the following: green building and construction, water efficiency and conservation, recycling and composting, sustainable food, non-toxic cleaning and chemical products and energy efficiency and conservation. This also coincides with previous studies on green practices [15-16]. Results show that the environment is a very important part of the tourism and hospitality industry thus environmental awareness has become vital to the consumers and it makes them sensitive to what the establishment uses to promote green practices. Establishments nowadays are trying to adapt the sustainable development practices. Using ecofriendly practices and mitigating measures to ease the impact of humanity's influence to nature, we may find a way to prolong the life of the planet before it's totally exhausted and perhaps a complete solution for the problem [17].

#### Recommendations

In line with the results, the following recommendations were made. The highlights of the recommendations can be summed up into the following key words: Sustain, Innovate and Explore.

1. **Sustain** green practices in local Tagum city restaurants. Green practices are sustainable and cost effective. This becomes a competitive edge on the end of restaurants who adhere to such practice. As such, by implementing superior green practices, restaurants can obtain a better image and reputation leading to greater success in the future.
2. Local Tagum city restaurants can **innovate** existing green practices. Seeking out constant development can result to emerging competitive advantages. This also applies to environmental practices. Restaurant Managers must be concerned in realizing superior environmental practices. Superior green practices are recognized by potential customers ultimately leading to a distinct advantage that strengthens competitive power.
3. The COVID 19 pandemic has brought a lot of damages. This study was conducted during a difficult economic situation which might affect the employee's evaluation. Thus, future research may **explore** topics associated with green practices of restaurants. Furthermore, future studies may also explore other methods involving a larger scale of participants.



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