

EXTENT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF GREEN PRACTICES OF DELUXE HOTELS IN CEBU PROVINCE PHILIPPINES

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Abstract

Hotel businesses consume significant amounts of natural resources, expel large amounts of raw and solid wastes and affect the sustainability of the natural environment in which they operate (Ustad,2010).To reduce the negative impact on the environment, the hotel sector worldwide has embarked on a course of implementing environmental management practices (Green Hotel Association, 2009). The study was conducted to identify the green practices in the deluxe hotels of Cebu and its level of implementation. It employed the descriptive design. A researcher made questionnaire was used to collect the needed data and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data. Findings revealed that the existing green practices in the deluxe hotels of Cebu are the use of key card, low energy saving bulbs, purchase of food items and cleaning chemicals in bulk containers and reuse of linen and towel. Furthermore, the Deluxe Hotels in Cebu were only partially implementing green practices. Hence, the study recommended an operational plan to improve the implementation of green practices.

Keywords: Environmental science, implementation, green practices, deluxe hotels, descriptive correlational design, Philippines

I. INTRODUCTION

Hotel businesses consume significant amounts of natural resources like water and energy expel large amounts of raw and solid waste and affect the sustainability of the natural environment in which they operate (Ustad, 2010). To reduce the negative impact on the environment, the hotel sector worldwide has embarked on a course of implementing environmental management practices which has profoundly promoted to offer additional benefits to its adopters. In

order to extract benefits from this situation, some hotels started the implementation of various green practices and their promotion in order to differentiate its offering and, consequently, outperform the competition (Green Hotel Association, 2009).

In the Philippines, the earliest policy statement on sustainability was formulated by the Philippine Strategy for Sustainable Development (PSSD) which was approved by the Cabinet in October 1989. As a result, the country officially adopted the Philippine

Agenda 21 which serves as the nation's blueprint for sustainable development. Further, Agenda 21 highlighted the fact that the tourism industry relies on the quality of the environment for its survival, and so, need to play a role in environmental preservation (Tzschentke, et al. 2008).

Chain affiliated hotels are the leaders in the implementation of green practices. This is because they have the financial capacity to invest in equipment related to green practices. In Cebu, chain affiliated hotels are already adopting green practices as seen in their marketing campaigns. However, the implementation of this green practices is not investigated. Given the importance of green practices in mitigating climate change, this study was therefore conducted. The research aimed to know the existing green practices and its extent of implementation in the Deluxe Hotels of Cebu as a basis of a proposed operational plan.

II. METHODOLOGY

The researcher adopted descriptive research method, a scientific method to measure the extent of implementation of green practices in the deluxe hotels of Cebu which involved administering survey questionnaires. Data gathered were then analyzed through quantitative analysis.

A total of 62 participants composed of 34 managers and 28 supervisors from 5 deluxe hotels in Cebu responded to be a part of this study. Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents in this study.

The research used purposive sampling in conducting this study. The deluxe hotels were chosen because according to the Department of Tourism, most economy, standard and first class hotels in Cebu are not adopting green practices. Further, the managers and the supervisors from 5 deluxe hotels in Cebu were chosen as respondents because they

are key personnel responsible in the implementation of green practices. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used to make a meaningful quantitative analysis of the data gathered.

Table 1
Distribution of Respondents

Hotel	Manager	Supervisor	Total
A	10	5	15
B	9	4	13
C	6	8	14
D	5	6	11
E	4	5	9
Total	34	28	62

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The result of the study focused on the existing green practices of deluxe hotels and its extent of implementation. Reasons for not implementing some of the green practices were also identified.

3.1. Profile of the Respondents

Table 2 indicates the demographic profile of the participants. In terms of educational attainment, majority of the participants were college graduate at 71% while in terms of employment status, majority of the participants were regular at 90%. In terms of years of service, majority of the participants were working for 6-10 years at 36%. The results revealed that deluxe hotels had professional staffs who serve the company with dedication and loyalty as proven in their years of service and regular status.

3.2. Existing Green Practices

Table 3 shows the existing green practices of 5 deluxe hotels in Cebu who participated in this study. Specifically, under energy efficiency, the key card power system with a percentage of 100% is being

Table 2
Profile of the Respondents

1.Educational Attainment	f	%
Post graduate	11	18
College graduate	44	71
College Level	7	11
Total	62	100
2.Employment Status	f	%
Regular	56	90
Contractual	4	7
Probationary	2	3
Total	62	100
3.Years of Service	f	%
20 years and above	5	8
16-20 years	7	11
11-15 years	18	29
6-10 years	22	36
1-5 years	10	16
Total	62	100

used by the hotel-participants. This is followed by low-energy saving bulbs 98%, digital thermostats 87%, and dual flush toilet system 85%.Occupancy sensors or a key-card control system to save in-room energy is the most widely adopted energy saving practice, and more than 80 percent of hotels installed the measures. Energy saving has been considered one of the most significant areas of environmental management in the hotel industry because hotels in general consume considerable amount of electricity and fossil fuel energy in various operational areas.

For water conservation, linen and towel reuse Program 95% is the top existing green practice. This is followed by the use of water-efficient laundry equipment and dishwashers 85%, treated waste water management 74%, and the use of flow regulators on shower/tap 68%.Previous literature also reported that linen and towel reuse programs are well-established practices in hotels in most countries, with more than two-thirds of the respondents in

studies conducted in different countries using such programs (Bohdanowicz, 2006; Erdogan and Baris, 2007; Mensah, 2006). This program saves not only hot water and energy, but also reduces the use of detergents, and thereby reduces wastewater (Brodsky, 2005).

Under waste management practices of the deluxe hotel-participants, the use of refillable amenity dispensers 84% ranked first, followed by paperless policy by using electronic system 74%, donation program 68), and recycling of plastics, bottles and glasses 55%.Waste management has been designed and implemented to reduce the volume and toxicity of garbage in the hotel industry (Iwanowski& Rushmore, 1994).

For Green Procurement, the purchase of food items and cleaning chemicals in bulk containers (97%) is the number one practice of the deluxe hotel- participants. This is followed by the purchase of locally produced ingredients (95%) giving priority

Table 3
Existing Green Practices of Hotels

Existing Green Practices	Yes		No	
	f	%	f	%
Energy Efficiency				
Key card power system	62	100	0	0
Low energy-saving bulbs (LED lightings)	61	98	1	2
Digital thermostats	54	87	8	13
Dual flush toilet system	53	85	9	15
Water Conservation				
Linen and Towel Reuse Program	59	95	3	5
Water-efficient laundry equipment and dishwashers	53	85	9	15
Treated wastewater management	46	74	16	26
Flow regulators on shower/tap	42	68	20	32
Waste Management				
Refillable amenity dispensers	52	84	10	16
Paperless Policy by using electronic system	46	74	16	26
Donation Program	42	68	20	32
Recycling of plastics, bottles and glasses	34	55	28	45
Green Procurement				
Purchase of food items and cleaning chemicals in bulk containers.	60	97	2	3
Purchase of locally produced ingredients.	59	95	3	5
Giving priority to containers and packaging made of 100% recyclable glass and packaging made of biodegradable paper or cardboard.	55	89	7	11
Purchase of materials from environmentally responsible suppliers	44	71	18	29

Table 3 (continuation)
Existing Green Practices of Hotels

Existing Green Practices	Yes		No	
	f	%	f	%
External Relationships				
Promotion of environmental activities in order to encourage the involvement of clients and suppliers to participate in environmental management practices.	56	90	6	10
Community education program	56	90	6	10
Existence of activities for the local community to enhance the local environment.	47	76	15	42
Establishment of a formal channel to cooperate NGO'S	36	58	26	24
Organizational Commitment				
Environmental Policy in the Organization	42	68	20	32
Environmental Management Team in the Organization	40	64	22	35
Environmental training and seminars for employees	39	63	23	37
Pursuing Green Certification	37	60	25	40

to containers and packaging made of recyclable and biodegradable materials 89%, and purchase of materials from environmentally responsible suppliers 71%.

For external relationship, the community education program and the promotion of environmental activities in order to encourage the involvement of clients and suppliers to participate in environmental management practices were a percentage of 90%. Existence of activities for the local community to enhance the local environment comes next with a percentage of 76%. Establishment of a formal channel to cooperate NGO'S has percentage of 58. According to Arimura, Hibiki and Katayama (2008), voluntary environmental actions are meant to improve the impact of

business operations on the environment but this also provides other benefits to the participating firm by improving cost effectiveness, improving flexibility and promoting technology innovation

Under organizational commitment, having environmental policy in the organization was marked yes most by the respondents as used in their respective hotels with a percentage of 68. This is followed by the environmental management team in the organization of 64%. According to Goodman, (2000), companies need to develop and implement environmental policies and strategies to improve employees' well-being, which is likely to result in employees to consider the hospitality work as a long-term career

Table 4
Reasons for not Implementing Green Practices

Reasons for not Implementing	f	%	Rank
High Implementation Cost	46	74	1st
Lack of human resources and skills	29	47	3rd
Lack of Information	22	35	4th
Uncertainty about performance impacts	33	53	2nd
Lack of government support	18	29	5th

Table 5
Extent of Implementation of Green Practices

Green Practices	Hotels (% Implementation)				
	A	B	C	D	E
Energy Efficiency	50	50	75	100	100
Water Conservation	50	25	25	50	50
Waste Management	0	0	25	25	50
Green Procurement	50	50	25	75	75
External Relationships	50	25	0	75	50
Organizational Commitment	25	0	0	25	25

instead of a temporary job. The environmental policy will also serve as guide for the employees in implementing green practices in the operation.

Specifically, under energy efficiency, the key card power system with a percentage of 100% is being used by the hotel-participants. This is followed by low-energy saving bulbs 98%, digital thermostats 87%, and dual flush toilet system 85%.Occupancy sensors or a key-card control system to save in-room energy is the most widely adopted energy saving practice, and more than 80 percent of hotels installed the measures. Energy saving has been considered one of the most significant areas of environmental management in the hotel industry because hotels in general consume considerable amount of electricity and fossil fuel energy in various operational areas.

3.3. Reasons for not Implementing Green Practices

Despite the enthusiasm from a number of business owners in Cebu, green practices implementation continuously faced a number of barriers. The first reason identified was all about high implementation costs. According to Chan, (2008), successful environmental management system requires time, money and people. Special positions within hotels need to be created in the area of environmental management in order for a property to be a true champion in this field, which in essence has implications with regard to additional labor costs for any property. Additionally, there are some doubts in terms of the financial impact of green practices among practitioners. Bohdanowicz (2006) points out in the study of managers'

perceptions in European hotels that doubts have been raised regarding financial effectiveness of green practices because the functional attributes of green practices are highly related to installation of new technologies or systems that increase costs.

There was a resistance by managers and supervisors to undertake formal environmental management programs. This is due to lack of knowledge and training and also the investment in time, money and resources that is required in order to comply with standards and procedures.

3.4 Extent of Implementation of Green Practices

Areas of green practices are implemented in different levels per hotel based on the percentage of full implementation. Table 4 shows the summary of the level of implementation of green practices in the deluxe hotels of Cebu.

Finding shows that only Hotel D and E fully implemented energy efficiency. Energy efficiency has been considered one of the most significant areas of green practices yet implementation requires huge amount of capital for installation of new technology or system. This may be the reason why only established and big hotels like Hotel D and E were able to fully implement energy efficiency.

For water conservation, none of the 5 deluxe hotels covered in this study fully implemented it in the establishment. This can be explained by the concerns of the hotel industry regarding decreased service standard because of green practices. For example, the towel and linen re use program under water conservation maybe contrary to the guest expectations of indulgence and comfort.

For waste management, Hotel A and B did not implement it in the establishment. Hotel C and D implemented waste management at 25 % and Hotel E at 50%.

Waste management is a serious issue in Cebu, however it can observed in the result that majority of the hotels are still standing at the crossroads in adopting green practices. Maasoud,et.al. (2009) believe that the lack of government support and stakeholder demand constitutes the most salient factors hindering the adoption standard.

For green procurement, Hotel A and B implemented green practices at 50 %, Hotel C at 25% and Hotel D and E at 75%. The result reveals that although the deluxe hotels in Cebu did not fully implement green procurement yet they are already on its way of fully implementing it based on the percentage shown in the table. Nowadays, hotels are considering green procurement because it enhances company's reputation and increase customer loyalty.

Meanwhile, external relationships are implemented in Hotel D at 75%, Hotel A and E at 50%. This shows that most of the five deluxe hotels in Cebu are doing ways to reach out the community as a way of showing corporate responsibility and publicity. However, it can be observed that Hotel C did not implement external relationship. These maybes because Hotel C is into practices that would directly impact the hotel's operation.

Lastly, the result reveals that majority of the hotels are not committed to the implementation of green practices at 0-25% only. This implies that deluxe hotels are interested to implement green practices but not that serious of including it in their company mission. This result can best explain why there are differences of implementation among the five hotels covered in this study in the different category of green practices.

IV. CONCLUSION

The green practices adopted by the major chain hotels in Cebu are energy efficiency, water conservation, waste

management, green procurement, external relationships and organizational commitment. Then, among all other green practices, only the energy efficiency practices were fully implemented by most deluxe hotels in Cebu who participated in this study because of its direct impact in reducing costs and in minimizing environmental destruction. Next, the barriers to the full implementation of the green practices in the deluxe hotels are the high costs associated in its implementation, uncertainty of its impact to the organization when it comes to attracting customers and lack of resources and skills. Lastly, there is lacking operational plan in hotels that promote energy, water and waste management and green procurement, external relationship and organizational commitment.

It is therefore to proposed operational plan on "Green Practices" of hotels is recommended for endorsement to all departments to provide a good concept of green practices which could be helpful in improving their green activities and to address issues such as energy efficiency, water conservation, waste management, green procurement, external relationship and organizational commitment. The Green Practices maybe be integrated in the curriculum of the hospitality management and tourism students. Future researches may be undertaken focused on the socio-economic impact of the "green practices" on the hotels.

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