

# Green Marketing Strategies of Restaurants in Zamboanga City, Philippines

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## ABSTRACT

As a growing awareness on the repercussion of global warming, non-biodegradable solid waste, harmful impact of the pollutants and the like, both marketers and consumers are shifting into green products and services (Eriksson, 2004). In this light, the objectives of this study are to (1) identify the green strategies of restaurants in Zamboanga City; (2) examine the reasons and benefits of adopting green strategies; and (3) investigate the challenges faced by the restaurant owners/managers in implementing green strategies. Descriptive research design was employed in the study. A survey questionnaire and an interview guide were utilized to gather data. Among the highlights of the results, the study found out that as to the green strategies, restaurant managers/owners make use of cleansers or soaps that do not harm the environment in the food establishment. Corporate social responsibility is the chief reason for adopting green strategies. Restaurant managers or owners believed that they have managerial obligation to take action to protect and improve the welfare of the society and the interest of the organization. Regarding the benefits, green strategies helps the restaurant obtain a green reputation and brand image. Lastly, pertaining to the challenges, restaurant managers/owners hold that green strategies require technology, which requires investment in research and development.

## INTRODUCTION

Environmental problems such as climate change and pollutions have become global issues and have made both individuals and organizations take measures for the preservation of the environment. In the recent years, there is a growing interest among people all over the world regarding protection of the environment. Worldwide evidence indicates that people are concerned about the environment and are changing their behaviour. Industries in particular have begun to change their various operations to address to society's current environmental issues. As a result of this, green marketing has emerged which speaks for growing market for sustainable and socially responsible products and services.

Green marketing is the process of developing products and services and promoting them to satisfy the customers who prefer products of good quality, performance and convenience at affordable cost, which at the same time do not have a detrimental impact on the environment. It includes a broad range of activities like product modification, changing the production process, modified advertising, change in packaging etc., aimed at reducing the detrimental impact of products and their consumption and disposal on the environment. (Nadaf and Nadaf, 2014).

The food service industry is one of those who must revolutionize its operation to address the environmental problems. Based on a review of literature on the subject, Parpal (2012) found out that restaurants pollute the earth's atmosphere and water resources every time they open their doors for business. Her study moreover shows that commercial kitchens use over twice the energy per square foot than other commercial buildings.

Record from the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) – Zamboanga shows the restaurants and/or food service industry is one of the fastest growing industries in the city. Therefore, consumes enormous amounts of energy, water, and other resources. It also produces large amounts of waste and generates different types of pollution in its daily operations (Lee, 2013).

As a continuously growing sector, it has a social responsibility to deal with environmental issues and climate change. The question now is: Are restaurants in Zamboanga City taking earth friendly changes in their operations to help protect the environment? Another related question is: What percentage of restaurants in Zamboanga City implements proactive environmental strategies? These questions and the above situation prompted the researcher to find out the green marketing strategies of restaurants in Zamboanga City.

## **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

The study determined the green marketing strategies of restaurants in Zamboanga City. Specifically, it aimed to: 1) Describe the profile of restaurant managers in Zamboanga City; 2) Describe the profile of the restaurants involved in the study be described with regards to type of restaurant, length of existence, and distance from the city proper; 3) Determine the green marketing strategies used by the selected restaurants in Zamboanga City; 4) Identify the reasons of restaurants in Zamboanga City for adopting green marketing strategies; and, 5) Determine the significant relationship between the restaurant's green marketing strategies and reasons for adopting green marketing.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The study employed the Descriptive-Quantitative and Qualitative type of research applying the concept of triangulation in which multiple methods were utilized such as survey, interview and direct observation in describing the green marketing strategies of restaurants in Zamboanga City.

In obtaining the desired data, the researcher constructed a Likert-type questionnaire in determining the green marketing strategies of restaurants, challenges and reasons for adopting the strategies. The instrument then was tested for reliability and internal validity. The results show that the Cronbach alpha is 0.907. This indicates a strong internal consistency. From the item-total statistics table, no item needs to be omitted since alpha values are within the rating of 0.901 to 0.9015, therefore the instrument is reliable.

The population of the restaurant/food establishments is represented by 136 marketing managers. The survey was conducted mostly in the evening where restaurants predominantly open and the manager is mostly in the establishment. Data collection was done from March to May 2016 using the drop-off, pick-up method, a method that is commonly used in Egypt and the Arab world (Mostafa, 2007; Parnell & Hatem, 1999; Rice, 2006). In this method, the researcher visits every marketing manager to explain the purpose of the survey and later to collect the response. Difficulties were encountered by the researcher in gathering data due to the elite nature and the general negative attitude of the managers towards the importance of academic research. Only 58 of the 136 marketing managers answered the questionnaires, providing a valid sample of restaurant/food establishments. All statistical computations were computed through the use of the Statistical Product and Service Solutions (SPSS).

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The discussion follows the order of the specific questions in the statement of the problem.

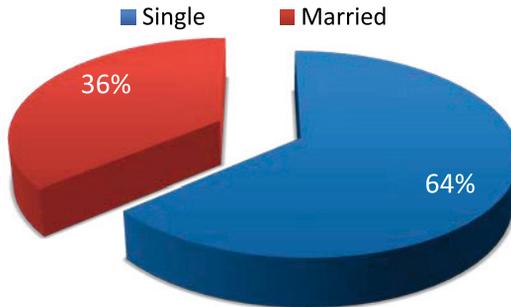


Figure 1. Civil Status of Respondents

Figure 1 shows that 64% of the total respondents are single and 36% are married. This implies that majority of the restaurant managers/ owners did not contract marriage.

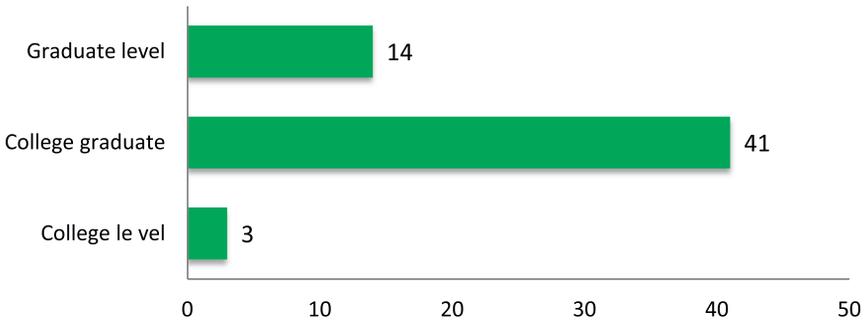


Figure 2. Highest Educational Attainment

As to the educational attainment, figure 2 depicts that 71 % of the total respondents are college graduate, 24% are graduate level whereas 5% are college undergraduate. This implies that restaurant managers/owners are educated.

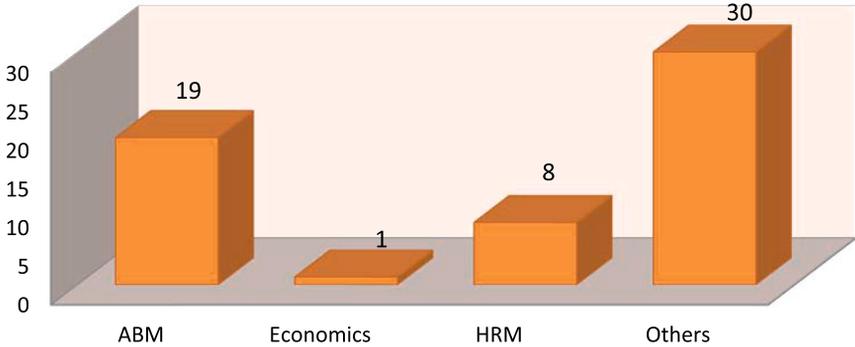


Figure 3. Area of specialization

Figure 3 reveals 52% of the total respondents specialized on other courses, 33% are Accounting and Business Management major , 14% are specialized in Hotel and Restaurant Management while the remaining 2% are Economics major . This means that a great number of restaurant managers/owners are not specialized in trade and commerce.

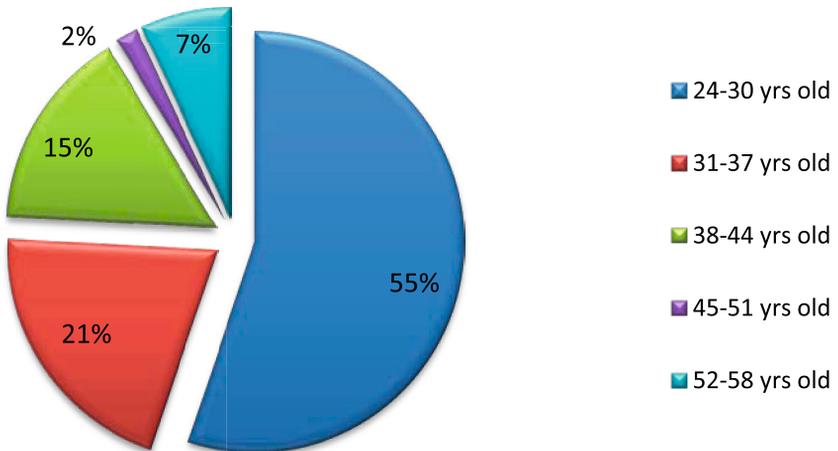


Figure 4. Age of Respondents

Regarding the age of respondents, figure 4 illustrates that 55% of the respondents are 24-30 years old, 21% are 31-37 years old, 16% are 38-44 years

old, 7% are 52-58 years old and 2% are 45-51 years of age. This implies that majority of the restaurant managers/ owners are young.

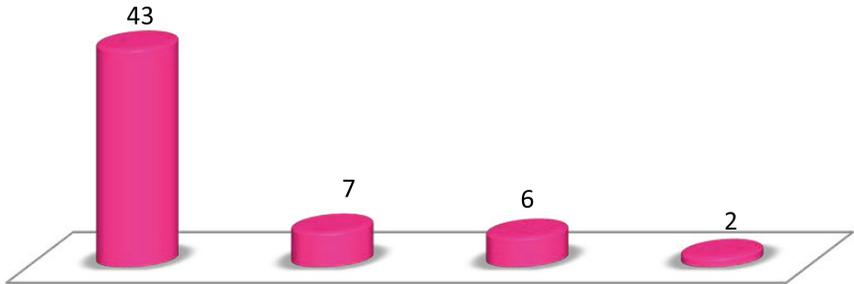


Figure 5. Years of Managerial Experience

Figure 5 shows that 74% of the respondents had 1-6 years of managerial experience, 12% with 7-12 years, 10% with 13-18 years whereas 3% with 25-30 years. This implies that a great number of the respondents are novice in the supervision of a food establishment. Considering that most of the restaurant managers/owners are between 24-30 years old.

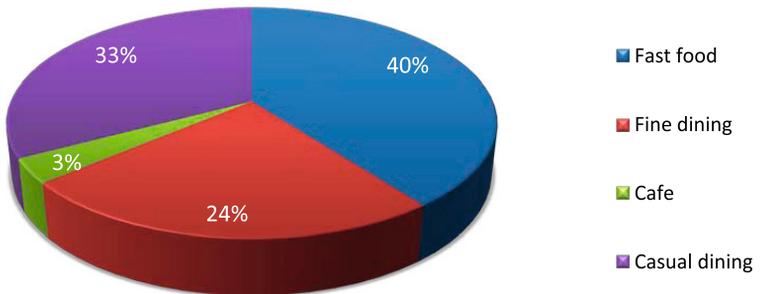


Figure 6. Type of Restaurant

Figure 6 points up that 40% of the respondents manages/own a fast food, 33% manages/own a casual dining establishment, 24% manages/own fine dining restaurants while 3% manages/own a cafe. This implies that majority of the respondents are supervising food corporation. Moreover, the data confirms that there is a variety of food establishments in Zamboanga City.

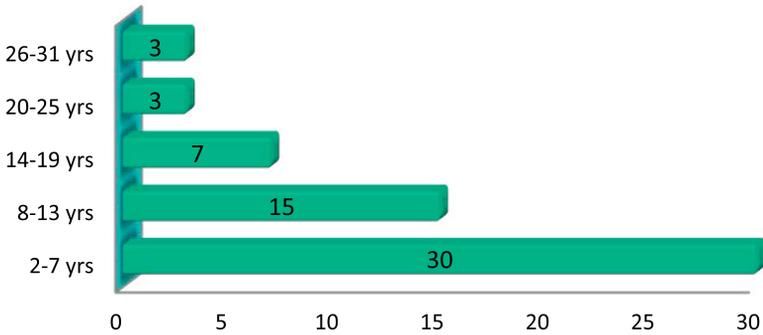


Figure 7. Number of Years Restaurant Existed

Pertaining to the number of years the restaurant existed, figure 7 shows 52% of the total restaurants have been established 2-7 years ago, 26% started 8-13 years ago, 12% opened 14-19 years ago while 10% of the restaurants have been established 20-31 years ago. This means that majority of the restaurants are new in the food business



Figure 8. Distance from city hall

Figure 8 illustrates that 78% of the restaurants are located within 2-5 kilometres from the city hall, 18% within 6-13 kilometres, 3% within 14-17 kilometres whereas 2% within 18-21 kilometres from the city hall. This suggests that a great number of restaurants are located in the heart of the city

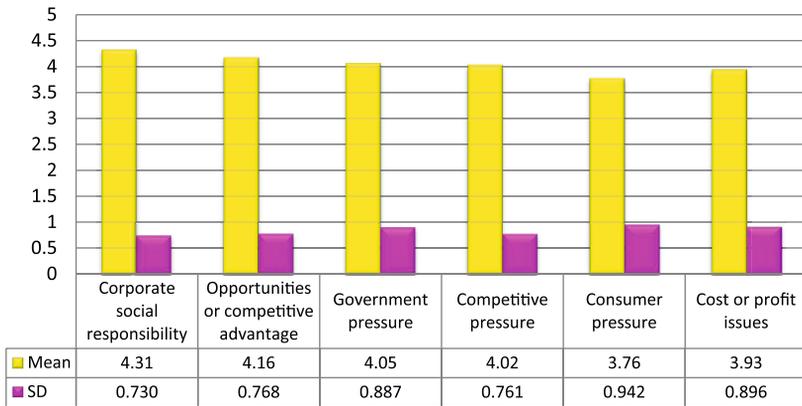


Figure 9. Reasons for adopting green marketing strategies

Figure 9 shows that corporate social responsibility; opportunities or competitive advantage, government pressure and competitive pressure were the restaurant managers/owners main motives for adopting green marketing. This implies that numerous restaurants are going green for the reason that they assume that they have a moral obligation to maximize its positive impact and minimize its negative impact on society. Since they are part of the community therefore they must behave in an environmentally manner. The assumption that pressure from government regulation is required to compel food establishments to make environmental improvements (Newton and Harte, 1997; orter and van der Linde, 1995 : in Buyse and Verbeke, 2003) does not hold. Moreover, they also believe that marketing goods with environmental characteristics will have a competitive advantage over restaurants marketing non-environmentally responsible alternatives. On the other hand, restaurant managers/owners too adopt green marketing strategies due to government regulations. Another major force to adopt green marketing strategies is the restaurants' desire to maintain their competitive position.

Table 1. Green Marketing Strategies of Restaurants in Zamboanga City

<i>Particulars</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>VI</i>	<i>SD</i>
Issuing restaurant's napkins that are from recycled papers (brown tissue)	3.50	Most of the time	1.688
Giving freebies/items to promote the conservation of environment	2.76	Sometimes	1.418
Giving eco bags for free	2.67	Sometimes	1.572

Using recyclable utensils rather than disposable ones	3.60	Most of the time	1.555
Using creel with fresh plant leaf as a serving dish or plate	2.95	Sometimes	1.648
Using of plastic coated paper instead of clam shell	2.43	Rarely	1.613
Implementing non-smoking policy (no-smoking within property) for indoor air quality	4.28	Always	1.361
Placing green live plants for the quality of indoor air	3.62	Most of the time	1.694
Using paper boxes/paper bags/biodegradable plastics/microwavable containers for take-out orders	4.48	Always	0.941
Minimizing the use of straw and plastic cups	3.57	Most of the time	1.272
Serving proper portion of food to reduce food waste	4.69	Always	0.777
Serving service water per customer's request to conserve water	4.62	Always	0.834
Using energy saving/energy efficient appliance in the production of goods and in the aesthetics of the restaurant	4.47	Always	0.977
Utilizing biogas and solar radiation as sources of energy	2.33	Rarely	1.572
Installing electrostatic filters in the smokestacks to reduce dust and harmful gas emissions	3.40	Sometimes	1.685
Treating waste water before flushing it to the drainage	3.62	Most of the time	1.531
Using cleansers/soaps not harmful to the environment	4.64	Always	0.765
Encouraging customers to use their soft drink glass to refill water	3.29	Sometimes	1.654
Employing rain water harvesting for toilet flush	2.36	Rarely	1.662
Using environmentally friendly raw materials in the production stage	3.67	Most of the time	1.381
Overall	3.547	Most of the time	1.38

*Legend: 4.24-5.0=Always; 3.43-4.23=Most of the time; 2.62-3.42=Sometimes; 1.81-2.62=Rarely; 1.0-1.80=Never*

It can be gleaned from table 1 that the restaurants always practice the following green marketing strategies: serving proper portion of food to reduce food waste; using cleansers/soaps not harmful to the environment; serving service water per customers' request to conserve water; using per boxes/bags/biodegradable plastics/microwaveable containers to take-out orders and implementing non-smoking policy for indoor air quality. While, they rarely use plastic coated paper instead of clam shell and employ rain water harvesting for toilet flush and utilize biogas and solar radiation as sources of energy with mean frequency levels of 4.62 to 4.69 and 2.33 to 2.43, respectively.

Also with a standard error of 0.181, approximately 68% of the restaurants have frequency level of 3.36 to 3.73 or used Green Marketing strategies more than sometimes but not always.

Table 2. Relationship between the reasons for adopting Green Marketing and the restaurants' Green Marketing Strategies

	<i>Sig T</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>Interpretation</i>
Reasons for adopting Green Marketing	0.001	.417	Significant

To the question which says as follows: Is there a significant relationship between the reasons for adopting green marketing and the green marketing strategies?

The SPSS program for linear regression was used. Table 4 displays the result. According to table 4, the Green Marketing strategies are significantly related to the reasons for adopting Green Marketing, since the T-value is 0.001 at  $\rho = 0.01$ . Given that the R-value is 0.417, which is considered moderate positive correlation, then one can infer that the practice of Green Marketing strategies are significantly related to the reasons for adopting Green Marketing. This implies that as the frequency of use of Green Marketing strategies increases, reasons for adoption likewise increases. Therefore the use of Green Marketing strategies strengthens the reasons behind adopting these strategies.

## CONCLUSION

Marketing like other functional areas of a business contribute to environmental concerns facing the world today. Therefore, it has a role to play in looking for solutions to these environmental problems. Thus, green marketing, specifically green marketing strategies is addressing with positive outcomes of improved organizational performance, better physical environment which will lead to sustainable development.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Restaurant managers should target more specific marketing strategies and employee training related to green practices.
2. Promote green practices in the establishment, especially in areas that are visible to the guest or customers.

3. Further study on green image determinants and its relationship between those determinants and customers perception of green image of the restaurants is recommended.

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