

GREEN Marketing Practices of Homegrown Restaurants: Basis of Enhancement of Implementation PROGRAM

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the green marketing practices of homegrown restaurants in Monkayo, Davao de Oro, focusing on product, price, place, and promotion indicators. The research assesses green marketing adoption levels and their relationship with restaurant characteristics like operational duration, registration status, business form, owner education, and business size. Key findings indicate that the product received the highest green marketing practice rating (mean = 4.31), followed by price (4.13), place (4.11), and promotion (3.46), suggesting strong sustainability integration, with promotion needing enhancement. Statistical analysis showed no significant association between business size or owner education and green marketing adoption, implying that owner commitment and consumer demand are stronger drivers than these factors. These results align with studies that emphasize experience-based learning and market-driven sustainability strategies. The study's framework, incorporating Sustainability Marketing Theory and the Triple Bottom Line, highlights the importance of balancing social, environmental, and financial factors for sustainable business success. Based on these findings, an Enhanced Green Marketing Implementation Program is proposed, featuring policy development, capacity building, financial support, consumer engagement, and monitoring, with collaboration between the Local Government Unit (LGU) and the Municipal Environmental and Natural Resources Office (MENRO) to achieve effective local restaurant sustainability.

KEYWORDS: *Green marketing, homegrown restaurants, Monkayo, Davao de Oro, Philippines.*

INTRODUCTION

There are several obstacles that can make green marketing strategies in the restaurant business less successful (Alam, 2021). A common problem is that consumers are often unaware of the advantages of green marketing, viewing eco-friendly initiatives as nothing more than advertising tricks (Madanaguli et al., 2022). Restaurants also face significant financial pressure due to the high costs of adopting environmentally friendly practices, which often discourage them from pursuing such initiatives (Kumar & Ghodeswar, 2015; Shokri et al., 2014). In the context of Monkayo, these costs commonly involve the procurement of organic ingredients, biodegradable packaging materials, energy-efficient equipment, and investments in waste segregation facilities. Small homegrown restaurants often operate with limited financial resources, making these initial expenditures a considerable barrier to the adoption of green marketing practices.

The lack of a proper understanding of green marketing among restaurant owners worsens the situation and leads to uneven adoption of environmentally friendly practices (Madanaguli et al., 2022). Additionally, according to Agustini et al. (2021), the unorganized sector complicates it to establish laws favoring sustainable activities in nations such as the Philippines and Indonesia.

Promoting environmental sustainability in the restaurant industry requires understanding and commitment to advancing green marketing practices (Wakasala, & Miricho, 2024). Restaurants that fail to adapt lose business and image as customers opt for greener alternatives (Bacig & Young, 2019). An energetic push to integrate green initiatives into business goals is essential, as food waste and excessive resource use harm the environment. (Madanaguli et al., 2022). On the other hand, Kasim and Ismail (2012) and Jang and Kim (2025) both stated that stakeholders can boost business performance by improving customer satisfaction and loyalty while simultaneously supporting environmental sustainability.

Green marketing strategies vary significantly across restaurant types and regions due to differing customer expectations, resource availability, and levels of environmental awareness (Suttikun & Mahasuweerachai, 2023). Fine restaurants are more likely than casual food businesses to promote overt green initiatives, as identified in studies. High-end restaurants may prioritize organic, locally sourced ingredients, while casual dining establishments may focus more

on effective waste management practices (Tan et al., 2019). Green marketing strategies tend to be limited in countries such as the Philippines and Indonesia due to insufficient customer awareness and regulatory support (Agustini et al., 2021; Phookan et al., 2020). Despite the varied strategies employed across establishments, the overarching goal remains consistent: to foster environmentally conscious customer behavior while simultaneously strengthening the restaurant's image as a green, sustainable entity (Madanaguli et al., 2022).

Notwithstanding a growing body of studies on green marketing approaches, much remains unknown, particularly in emerging nations (Kadam, 2024). Most Philippine studies on green marketing have concentrated on large restaurant chains and establishments in highly urbanized areas such as Metro Manila. Consequently, their findings may not fully reflect the realities of homegrown restaurants operating in small-town contexts where resources, customer preferences, and institutional support differ substantially. This study addresses this gap by examining green marketing practices within the unique socio-economic environment of Monkayo, Davao de Oro, and by generating an implementation framework tailored to local conditions. There is limited understanding of how cultural, economic, and regulatory factors affect green marketing in developing economies, as most existing research focuses on developed countries (Kumar & Ghodeswar, 2015; Agustini et al., 2021). Moreover, there is a lack of information on the specific challenges restaurants in the unorganized sector face when implementing green practices, as well as on effective strategies to overcome these obstacles (Shokri et al., 2014; Phookan et al., 2020). According to Madanaguli et al. (2022), future research should focus on filling in these gaps and offering specific strategies to strengthen green marketing in various settings. The limited awareness of consumers regarding environmentally responsible dining practices underscores the necessity of developing an Enhanced Green Marketing Implementation Program. By educating both businesses and consumers, the proposed program seeks to strengthen public appreciation of sustainable practices and encourage market demand for environmentally responsible restaurants.

The proposed dissemination plan employs a multi-modal approach to maximize research impact across diverse stakeholder groups relevant to environmental sustainability in Monkayo, Davao de Oro. Scholarly engagement will be facilitated through presentations at academic conferences and publications in peer-reviewed journals, ensuring contributions to the scientific

discourse and broad dissemination within the research community. Practical application will be pursued through direct collaboration and knowledge transfer to the Local Government Unit's Environment and Natural Resources Office (LGU-MENRO) via targeted capacity-building initiatives, including enhanced program implementation, seminars, workshops, and training. Policy influence will be sought through the dissemination of key findings to relevant policymakers. Furthermore, direct engagement with local food industry stakeholders, including restaurant owners and employees, aims to foster the adoption of sustainable practices within the provincial economic context. This integrated strategy ensures both scholarly precision and practical relevance, facilitating evidence-based environmental sustainability within Monkayo, Davao de Oro.

Statement of the Problem

1. What are the characteristics of homegrown restaurants in terms of Years in Operation, Registration Status, Form of Business, Level of Education and Business Size
2. What is the level of Green Marketing practices of homegrown restaurants, as rated by employees in terms of Product, Price, Promotion and Place?
3. Does the level of marketing practices differ when respondents are grouped according to their characteristics?
4. Based on the findings of the study, what enhanced implementation program can be proposed?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design. Descriptive-comparative research systematically compares variables to identify significant differences and highlight key characteristics without manipulating independent variables (Ayanwale et al., 2023; Cantrell, 2011). In this study, a quantitative, descriptive-comparative approach was employed to understand green marketing practices in homegrown restaurants in Monkayo, Davao de Oro. The descriptive aspect allowed for an investigation into the current state of these practices. Furthermore, the comparative element enabled the researchers to examine relevant aspects of these practices using data gathered through questionnaires administered to both restaurant owners and consumers. This quantitative method is used to summarize, average, find patterns, make predictions, and test causal

associations, as well as to generalize results to wider populations (Rana et al., 2021). Ultimately, this design aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of existing green marketing practices in our local restaurant sector, with the goal of informing strategies to enhance sustainability and eco-friendliness.

Research Locale. This study was conducted in Monkayo, a first-class municipality in Davao de Oro. Compared with more rural municipalities, first-class municipalities such as Monkayo generally have greater access to local government support, tourism opportunities, and environmental programs that may encourage sustainability initiatives. However, compared with highly urbanized cities, homegrown restaurants in Monkayo continue to experience limitations in supplier networks, green certification access, and consumer awareness, creating a unique context for green marketing implementation. This location was appropriate due to Monkayo's developmental potential, especially in green entrepreneurship, and its attractiveness to tourists, creating opportunities for sustainability practices in local restaurants.

In line with this, the Local Government Unit (LGU) and the Municipal Environmental and Natural Resources Office (MENRO) are actively implementing sustainability practices to protect the natural environment and address community challenges. Given this context, this research aimed to develop a systematic and holistic framework for enhanced implementation programs grounded in sustainability goals. The study's findings are intended to assist policymakers in designing initiatives such as training, seminars, and workshops to increase the knowledge, awareness, and literacy of restaurant stakeholders. Ultimately, these programs are expected to encourage participation in, support for, and advocacy of the LGU and MENRO's objectives, contributing to a more productive and socially responsible Davao de Oro municipality.

Respondents of the Study. This study involved 114 employees from 57 homegrown restaurants in Monkayo, Davao de Oro, who were selected based on their roles and experience to provide insights into green marketing practices. The participating establishments represented various restaurant categories, including casual dining restaurants, eateries, snack houses, and family-operated food establishments. This categorization provided a broader understanding of green marketing practices across different service models characterized by varying operational demands and waste-generation patterns.

The participants in this study were employees of the 57 homegrown restaurants currently operating within the Municipality of Monkayo. Specifically, a minimum of two employees were selected from each establishment, totaling 114 individuals. The two employees selected from each restaurant typically occupied frontline and operational roles, such as service staff and kitchen personnel. These employees were directly involved in the implementation and observation of daily green practices, making them suitable informants regarding actual sustainability initiatives within their establishments. These participants were chosen based on having between 6 months and 1 year of work experience in their respective roles at the restaurants. This criterion ensured that the selected staff members had sufficient practical knowledge to offer valuable perspectives on the implementation and impact of green marketing practices.

In terms of vulnerability, the participants could be considered potentially vulnerable in several ways. Some may have limited prior knowledge or awareness of green marketing concepts and their benefits, which could affect their ability to fully comprehend the survey questions or articulate their experiences. Financial constraints might also make them hesitant to express opinions that could be perceived negatively by their employers. Furthermore, understanding and adapting to the nuances of green marketing practices can be challenging for some individuals. These potential vulnerabilities could manifest as limited responses or a lack of full engagement during data collection, potentially impacting the richness and accuracy of the information gathered. However, it is important to note that these are potential vulnerabilities that were mitigated through several ethical considerations. The research adhered strictly to ethical standards, was guided by a structured methodology, and received support from an academic adviser and field experts.

To ensure transparency and protect the rights and justice of participants, several measures were implemented. Firstly, the researcher fully complied with the Data Privacy Act of 2012. Participants' identities were protected by using codes instead of their real names, ensuring confidentiality throughout the research process. Secondly, participation in the study was explicitly stated as entirely voluntary. Potential respondents were clearly informed of their right to refuse participation without any negative consequences or loss of benefits. They were also assured of their right to withdraw their consent and discontinue their participation at any point without penalty. Furthermore, participants were informed that their involvement in the study would not compromise any legal

claims, rights, or remedies they may have. To enhance comprehension and ensure equitable participation, the survey questionnaire statements were translated into Cebuano, the local language. Selecting employees based on their relevant work experience ensured that those with the most pertinent insights were included, thereby promoting the collection of valuable, representative data. These measures collectively aimed to treat participants fairly, respect their autonomy, and ensure the integrity of the research process.

Research Instrument. An adapted survey questionnaire of Buenaventura, and Gutierrez (2023) was used in the study. It was validated by experts in questionnaire construction. The adapted standardized questionnaire, was contextualized for reliability and validity, underwent a series of review by the researcher and expert validators, providing respondents with ease and comfort in answering questions.

The survey questionnaire consisted of two sections: Part I the characteristics of homegrown restaurants, and Part II focused on green marketing practices. This instrument was intended to measure the level of green marketing practices in association to the characteristics of homegrown restaurants with subscales of Product (5 items), Price, (5 items), Place (5 items), Promotion (5 items). In addition, the 20-item survey utilized a 5-point likert scale from (Very Low to Very High).

Data Gathering Procedure. Data collection for this study was conducted over 2 to 3 weeks, following a systematic, ethically sound approach. The timeline commenced with obtaining approval from the UIC Research Ethics Committee (REC) and the Dean of the Graduate School. Subsequently, the researcher contacted owners of the 57 homegrown restaurants in Monkayo, Davao Region, via letters of intent to request their permission for employee participation. Upon receiving their approval, informed consent was obtained from the selected employees prior to distributing the survey questionnaires.

The face-to-face data collection process was carefully managed to minimize disruption to the employees' routines. While acknowledging potential minor inconveniences due to their work responsibilities, employees were respectfully asked to complete the surveys at their convenience, with at least two days provided for completion. The researcher ensured participants understood their roles and encouraged open, willing, honest, and sincere participation.

Throughout the data collection and handling, strict adherence to the Data Privacy Act of 2012 was maintained to ensure confidentiality. Participants' identities were protected by using codes instead of real names. Hard copies of the coded data were securely stored for 3 years and will be destroyed 3 years after publication. Data were analyzed collectively to guarantee the anonymity of individual respondents. To enhance understanding and flexibility, Cebuano translations of the survey questions were provided. Upon completion, the researcher collected the questionnaires, tallied the data, and submitted them to the graduate school's statistician for analysis and interpretation, concluding the data collection phase within the projected two-to-three-week time frame.

Statistical Tools. The study utilized frequency counts and percentages to describe restaurant characteristics, weighted means and standard deviations to determine the level of green marketing practices, and independent samples t-tests to examine differences in green marketing practices according to owner educational attainment and business size.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Respondents

The data in Table 1 provide valuable insights into the characteristics of homegrown restaurants in Monkayo, Davao De Oro, which contextualize the findings. In terms of years of operation, the majority have been running for over a year, reflecting an experienced group of entrepreneurs. Regarding educational attainment, more than half of the owners hold a degree (57.5%), while a significant portion do not (42.5%), suggesting that formal education contributes to business knowledge but is not a prerequisite for ownership.

Table 1
Profile of the Respondents

Characteristics		Frequency	Percentage
Years of Operation	1 year	3	2.7
	>1 year	110	97.3
Total		113	100.0
Educational attainment	With degree	65	57.5
	Without degree	48	42.5

Total		113	100.0
Form of business	Sole	113	100.0
	proprietorship		
Business size	Small	62	54.9
	Medium	51	45.1
Total		113	100.0

All establishments operate under sole proprietorship (100%), indicating a preference for individual ownership over partnerships or corporations, likely due to management convenience, lower regulatory requirements, or personal choice. Additionally, the study presents a nearly balanced distribution of small (54.9%) and medium-sized (45.1%) businesses, demonstrating the diversity of operational scales among homegrown restaurants. Notably, business qualification is determined more by the number of employees rather than capitalization, reaffirming the varied nature of restaurant enterprises in the area.

The Level of Green Marketing Practices as Rated by the employees of Homegrown Restaurants

Presented in Table 2 indicates that the level of green marketing practices among homegrown restaurants, as rated by employees, yielded an overall mean of 4.00, described as high and evident. Further, standard deviations below 1.00 denote uniform responses, whereas those exceeding 1.00 reflect varying perspectives among respondents. Which means that, generally, the level of green marketing practices of restaurants is often evident. This result implies proactive integration of eco-conscious practices into daily operations, suggesting widespread adoption of these sustainable approaches. These findings support the claims of Cayetano et al. (2025), where the integration of sustainability into the dining experience in homegrown restaurants plays a vital role in shaping consumer preferences and fostering stronger customer engagement.

Product. The consistently high ratings for product-related practices suggest that homegrown restaurants prioritize environmentally responsible sourcing and healthy food preparation as integral components of their sustainability initiatives which resulted to 4.31 overall mean, described as very high and very evident. Which means that the level of green marketing practices of restaurants is always evident. This result implies a commitment to practices emphasizing sustainability, health, and ethical responsibility through the

prioritization of organic, non-GMO, and preservative-free ingredients.

Table 2
The Level of Green Marketing Practices as Rated by the employees of Homegrown Restaurants

Indicators/Statements	Mean	SD	Description
1.1 Product	4.31		Very high
1.2 Price	4.13	0.62	High
1.3 Promotion	3.46	0.69	High
1.4 Place	4.11		High
Overall Mean	4.00		High

Price. Gained a categorical mean of 4.13, rated as high which means that the level of green marketing practices of restaurants are often evident. This result implies that Establishments strategically recognize long-term benefits of eco-investments (recycling, conservation, renewables) for cost optimization and greener operations. This very high result supports Abichuela (2022), who emphasizes that pricing eco-friendly meals competitively while showcasing their environmental advantages fosters customer loyalty and strengthens brand credibility.

Promotion. Data reveal a categorical mean of 3.46, described as high. Which means that the level of green marketing practices of restaurants is often evident. This result implies constant implementation of reusable packaging, utilizing recycled promotional materials, and engaging in strategic advertising to shape consumer preferences. Showcasing green certification reinforces brand trust, while participation in health and wellness initiatives highlights their commitment to responsible dining. The low rating for green certification suggests that while restaurants demonstrate environmentally responsible behaviors, formal recognition mechanisms remain underutilized. This finding highlights an opportunity for local authorities to simplify certification processes and encourage broader participation.

Place. Acquired a categorical mean of 4.11, described as high. Which means that the level of green marketing practices of restaurants is often evident. This result implies that restaurants are integrating energy-efficient LED lighting to reduce costs and demonstrate environmental commitment. Transparent product information at purchase builds consumer trust and guides decisions.

Accountability measures encourage conscientious consumer behavior. On the other hand, the item *the restaurant is setting up waste-specific containers, using colors, labels, and symbols to refine sorting and disposal*, acquired a mean of 4.65, described as very high. Which means that the level of green marketing practices of restaurants is always evident, demonstrating a strong commitment to organized waste management. This result implies the restaurant practiced proper waste disposal management in its premises. This very high-level result supports the study of Namkung and Jang (2017), which found that environmentally responsible practices in restaurants, such as resource conservation, sustainable operations, and eco-friendly initiatives, positively influence customers' perceptions and behavioral intentions toward the establishment.

Comparison of the Level of Green Marketing Practices

The data in Table 3 shows that there is no significant difference in the green marketing practices of the homegrown restaurants when compared based on the educational attainment of the owner ($P>.05$). It means that the level of green marketing practices of a degree holder is comparable with that of an owner without a degree. This implies that both degree holders' and non-degree holders' levels of green marketing practices are the same regardless of their educational attainment. This result aligns with the study by Hossan et al. (2024), which found no significant difference in green marketing practices among homegrown restaurants based on owner education. While few owners precisely defined green practices, many implemented them consciously or unconsciously, with adoption driven more by personal values and awareness than formal education.

Table 3
Comparison of the Level of Green Marketing Practices

Characteristics	n	Mean	p	Remarks
Educational attainment	65	4.02	.584	Not significant
	48	3.97		
Business size	62	3.98	.710	Not significant

Similarly, there is no significant difference in the green marketing practices of homegrown restaurants across business sizes ($P >0.05$). It means that the level of green marketing practices of medium-sized restaurants is comparable to small-sized restaurants. This implies that both medium-sized and

small-sized levels of green marketing practices is the same regardless of their business size. This result aligns with the study of Costales (2024), which found no significant difference in green marketing practices between small and medium-sized restaurants, indicating similar active engagement in green initiatives and business sustainability regardless of size. The absence of differences based on business size may reflect the shared environmental expectations and operational realities experienced by homegrown restaurants in Monkayo. Regardless of scale, establishments often rely on similar supplier networks, local government initiatives, and customer preferences, leading to comparable levels of green marketing adoption.

Proposed Enhanced Implementation Program

To strengthen the integration of green marketing practices in homegrown restaurants, this program aims to enhance sustainability initiatives, improve consumer trust, and reinforce responsible business operations through targeted strategies. By addressing key environmental concerns, restaurants can align with industry best practices while fostering long-term economic and ecological benefits. This enhanced implementation program ensures systematic action plans tailored to sustainability objectives while reinforcing responsible business practices.

Table 4
Implementation Program

Issues	Objectives	Strategies/Actions	Persons Involved	Resources
Cannot Avoid the use of genetically modified food.	Ensure the use of natural, organic, and chemical-free ingredients to promote sustainable consumption.	- Establish supplier agreements for certified organic produce.	- Homegrown Restaurant	- Organic food initiative:
		- Educate consumers on the benefits of non-GMO food through menu labeling and promotions.	- Owners, - Procurement Teams, - Local Farmers	- Accredited organic farmers - DA- certified suppliers - Organic certification guidelines - Educational Brochures
Relatively lower frequency of using renewable and recyclable	Reduce environmental footprint by adopting sustainable packaging and resource-efficient	- Implement biodegradable food packaging and compostable utensils.	- Homegrown Restaurant Management, - Procurement Teams,	- local biodegradable packaging suppliers
		- Partner with	- Suppliers	-compostable utensil distributors -recycling

materials.	materials.	suppliers offering reusable and recyclable materials.	collection partners
			-waste segregation bins
Absence of green certification.	Build credibility and enhance consumer trust through environmental accreditation.	- Apply for official green certification from recognized environmental agencies. - Display certification in dining areas and marketing materials.	- Homegrown Restaurant Owners, - Environmental Agencies (LGU-MENRO) , - Marketing Teams - MENRO accreditation guidelines -DENR environmental compliance references -certification application funds -promotional displays
Lack of thorough Product assessment	Improve consumer awareness and promote ethical purchasing decisions.	- Provide detailed product information, including sourcing and sustainability credentials. - Train staff to effectively communicate product transparency to customers.	- Homegrown Restaurant Owners, - Employees, - Marketing Teams - Digital menu platforms - Product information templates -Sustainability training materials -Consumer education materials

The proposed Enhanced Implementation Program directly addresses the weakest dimensions identified in the study, particularly the limited adoption of green certification and the inconsistent use of renewable materials. By aligning interventions with empirical findings, the framework provides practical guidance for strengthening sustainability practices among homegrown restaurants.

The study results confirm the Sustainability Marketing Theory by Ahmad et al. (2024), suggesting that these homegrown restaurants are incorporating sustainable practices into their marketing strategies. Moreover, the emphasis on balancing environmental impact and economic viability reflects the principles of the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) Theory by Trojanowski (2022), indicating a move towards considering people, planet, and profit in operations. Through the integration of these theories, homegrown restaurants can potentially achieve long-term success by implementing sustainable marketing strategies that balance social, environmental, and economic benefits. The findings extend Sustainability Marketing Theory by demonstrating that small-town restaurants can operationalize sustainability principles despite resource constraints. Similarly, the results reinforce the Triple Bottom Line perspective by illustrating

how environmental responsibility can coexist with economic viability and community-oriented practices.

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