Research Article

Restaurant Employees' Organizational Citizenship Behavior and Environmental Sustainability of Locally-owned Restaurants in the Province of Batangas

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ABSTRACT

This study explores how restaurant managers' Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment (OCBE) influences sustainability in Batangas' locally-owned restaurants. It will present demographic (age, sex, education, service length, position) and firmographic (years in operation, employee count) profiles. The research evaluates managers' OCBE aspects, such as organizational identification and Green HRM, and assesses restaurant sustainability practices like food sourcing, waste reduction, and eco-friendly participation. It will identify significant differences in OCBE based on demographics and sustainability practices based on firmographics, and propose an action plan based on these findings. The researcher used quantitative method and descriptive research design. The respondents of the study were 365 employees in different locally-owned restaurant. The instrument was adapted from two different studies. Further, the Statistical test used for the study was based on the Shapiro Wilk test, Kruskal Wallis Test, Mann Whitney U-test to test the significant differences while, Spearman Rho for the test of relationship. The study focuses on young Generation Z employees with high school or bachelor's degrees working in small, newer restaurants committed to sustainability. These employees support local food sourcing, waste reduction, and eco-friendly practices, though the link between their Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment (OCBE) and actual sustainability practices is weak to moderate. Larger and newer restaurants show a stronger commitment to environmental initiatives, and Generation Z is more engaged in sustainability than Generation X. To improve OCBE in Batangas' locally-owned restaurants, the study suggests implementing regular training on sustainable practices, fostering staff engagement through discussions and hands-on experiences, integrating green goals into performance reviews, and linking sustainability to job satisfaction.

Keywords: Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Environmental Sustainability, Sustainable Practices, Locally-owned Restaurants

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the global discourse surrounding environmental sustainability has reached unprecedented heights. With increasing awareness of climate change and resource depletion, stakeholders across various industries are reevaluating their practices to minimize their ecological footprint. According to Cuevas (2020), the restaurant industry, as a significant contributor to environmental degradation through food waste, energy consumption, and packaging, is under growing pressure to adopt sustainable practices. In Batangas province, Valdez et al. (2020), this trend is evident as consumers become more environmentally conscious and demand eco-friendly dining options. Consequently, restaurants are exploring innovative strategies to align their operations with sustainability goals, ranging from sourcing local and organic ingredients to implementing energy-efficient technologies. However, despite these efforts, challenges such as cost implications and resistance to change persist, underscoring the need for further research to understand the dynamics at play and identify effective solutions.

To comprehensively investigate the impact of restaurant employees' organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) on environmental sustainability, it is essential to define and operationalize key variables. Verlinden (2023) defines organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) as encompassing all positive and constructive actions and behaviors performed by employees that go beyond their formal job duties. These behaviors are voluntary and aim to support colleagues and benefit the organization as a whole. On the other hand, Patterson (2024) defines environmental sustainability as the responsible management of natural resources to meet current needs without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It encompasses a balance of ecological, economic, and social objectives, including efforts to reduce carbon emissions, promote renewable energy, and ensure equitable access to resources. By clearly delineating these variables, researchers can develop robust methodologies to

measure and analyze their interrelationships effectively.

The significance of exploring the relationship between restaurant employees' organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and environmental sustainability finds resonance within the framework of social exchange theory. According to this theoretical perspective, individuals engage in voluntary actions, such as OCB, when they perceive a favorable exchange relationship with their organization. In the context of environmental sustainability, restaurant employees may exhibit OCB by advocating for eco-friendly practices, participating in sustainability initiatives, and fostering a culture of environmental responsibility among staff members. In return, they may expect tangible and intangible rewards, such as recognition, career advancement opportunities, and enhanced job satisfaction. Kim et al. (2020) investigated why hospitality employees engage in organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) related to sustainability efforts, expanding on existing literature linking employee motivation to environmental practices. Their study found that employees' environmental beliefs partially mediated the influence of environmental-transformational leadership and environmental policies on OCBs toward the environment. Additionally, environmental training fully mediated the association between environmental belief and OCBs. Moreover, employees' perception of organizational support moderated the relationship between environmental belief and OCBs, indicating that hospitality workers were more likely to engage in environmentally friendly OCBs as their environmental beliefs increased, with organizational support moderating this association.

By understanding the social exchange dynamics underlying OCB, researchers can elucidate the motivations driving employees' engagement in sustainable behaviors and identify strategies for enhancing organizational support and incentivizing eco-conscious actions. This theoretical lens provides a valuable framework for analyzing the reciprocal relationship between organizational behavior and environmental sustainability, offering insights into how businesses can foster a culture of environmental stewardship that benefits both employees and the broader ecosystem.

Despite the growing interest in sustainability within the restaurant industry, a noticeable research gap persists in understanding the specific role of restaurant employees' OCB in driving environmental sustainability initiatives, particularly within the context of Batangas province. While existing literature has explored various aspects of sustainable practices in hospitality settings, such as green marketing and consumer behavior, few studies have delved into the organizational dynamics that influence the adoption and implementation of sustainability initiatives among employees. (Mele et al., 2019; N. Khan et al., 2024) This gap presents an opportunity for researchers to contribute new knowledge and insights that can inform organizational practices and policy interventions aimed at promoting environmental sustainability within the restaurant sector in Batangas and beyond.

Batangas province, with its rich culinary heritage and diverse natural landscapes, provides an intriguing setting for examining the intersection of organizational behavior and environmental sustainability within the restaurant industry. As a popular tourist destination known for its vibrant food culture and picturesque scenery, Batangas attracts a diverse clientele, ranging from local residents to international visitors. Consequently, restaurants in Batangas face unique challenges and opportunities in balancing the demands of the market with the imperatives of environmental stewardship. Factors such as seasonal fluctuations in tourism, availability of local produce, and regulatory frameworks governing waste management and environmental protection shape the landscape within which restaurant managers operate. By profiling the topic in the study locale, researchers can gain insights into the contextual factors that influence managerial decision-making and organizational behavior, informing targeted interventions tailored to the needs of local stakeholders.

The rationale for conducting this study lies in the pressing need to align organizational behavior with environmental imperatives in the restaurant industry. As concerns about climate change, resource depletion, and environmental degradation continue to escalate, businesses are under increasing pressure to adopt sustainable practices that minimize their ecological footprint and contribute to broader sustainability goals. By investigating the role of restaurant employees' OCB in driving environmental sustainability initiatives, this research aims to fill a critical gap in the literature and provide actionable insights for promoting eco-conscious behavior within the industry. By elucidating the mechanisms through which OCB influences environmental outcomes, researchers can inform organizational practices and policy interventions that foster a culture of environmental stewardship and contribute to the long-term viability of the restaurant sector in Batangas and beyond.

This study focuses on the impact of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) on environmental sustainability within the restaurant industry in Batangas Province. The research will primarily investigate locally-owned restaurants and examine how employees' pro-environmental actions, driven by OCB, contribute to the implementation of sustainable practices such as waste reduction, energy conservation, and resource management. Data will be collected from restaurant employees, managers, and potentially customers through surveys and interviews. However, this study is limited to restaurants in Batangas and may not be fully generalizable to larger restaurant chains or international establishments with different organizational structures. The research will also be constrained by the available sample size and participants' willingness to engage in the study. External factors, such as economic conditions or government regulations that may also influence sustainability efforts, are beyond the scope of this research.

The output of this study will provide empirical evidence on how OCB contributes to environmental sustainability within the restaurant sector. The findings will bridge the gap between organizational behavior and sustainability practices, offering actionable recommendations for restaurant managers to foster a culture of environmental consciousness. The research will also highlight specific OCB behaviors that are most effective in promoting sustainability initiatives, contributing to the broader literature on green HRM (Human Resource Management) and environmental leadership.

The benefactors of this study include a diverse group of stakeholders. Restaurant owners stand to gain valuable insights into how to encourage employees to voluntarily adopt eco-conscious behaviors that support sustainability initiatives. This can result in operational improvements, reduced costs, and more efficient resource management. Employees will also benefit, as the study provides a clearer understanding of how their actions contribute to environmental goals, which may lead to enhanced job satisfaction and a greater sense of purpose. For policymakers, the study offers a foundation for developing guidelines and incentives that promote sustainable practices in the restaurant industry, helping shape policies that align with environmental imperatives. Researchers and academics can use the findings to further explore the link between Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) and environmental sustainability, fostering new research directions in both organizational behavior and the hospitality sector. Finally, the community and the environment will benefit as more restaurants adopt sustainable practices, reducing environmental degradation and conserving resources, thus contributing to long-term ecological well-being.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study used a quantitative-descriptive method to assess how restaurant employees' Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) affects environmental sustainability in Batangas. Surveys measured OCB and sustainable practices, with descriptive statistics providing insights into patterns and trends. Structured surveys were used to assess OCB and its effect on sustainability practices.

Descriptive and correlation analyses revealed patterns and predictors, offering practical insights into how employee behavior impacts sustainability in local restaurants. Participants included restaurant employees in Batangas in roles such as managers, chefs, and waiters with at least 6 months to 1 year of experience. Consent and language proficiency were required to ensure relevant, ethical, and reliable responses. All 49 participating restaurant managers were included. A total of 365 dining and kitchen employees were selected using the Raosoft calculator to ensure statistical representation of the broader employee population.

The questionnaire was adapted from studies by Manuel et al. (2024) and Kim & Hall (2020), focusing on OCB and sustainable practices in restaurants. Experts in business and hospitality validated the questionnaire. Pilot testing with 34 employees confirmed its clarity and cultural suitability. Cronbach's alpha values for both OCB and sustainability practices showed excellent reliability. Restaurants were selected using purposive sampling. Surveys were distributed in person with a 100% retrieval rate. Data focused on employee perceptions of OCB and sustainability, and confidentiality was assured.

Frequency and percentage were used for Objective 1; weighted mean and ranking for Objectives 2 and 3. Due to Shapiro-Wilk Test, non-parametric tests like Mann-Whitney U, Kruskal-Wallis, and Spearman rho were used, with SPSS 28 for analysis.

Ethical standards were followed by securing informed consent, maintaining confidentiality, respecting participant dignity, and addressing cultural and language barriers. Risks were minimized, and transparency with stakeholders was emphasized to ensure integrity and community trust.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The survey reveals several key trends in the hospitality sector workforce, including a large representation of Generation Z and Millennials, highlighting the need for digital skills and innovation to manage turnover and intergenerational dynamics. Women make up 60.5% of employees, indicating a gender imbalance with women in lower-level positions and underrepresented in senior roles. Employees have varying educational backgrounds, suggesting a workforce with mixed skill levels. The majority of employees have short to mid-range tenures, signaling the need for improved retention strategies. Most respondents work in operational roles, especially as Kitchen and Dining Staff, emphasizing the importance of adequate staffing and a supportive work environment to improve performance and morale.

The survey also highlights the age of businesses within the hospitality sector. Most respondents work for organizations with 5 to 9 years of operation, indicating that many businesses are still in their early stages. Smaller portions of respondents come from older businesses, suggesting newer companies need to focus on factors like location, pricing, and cost control for success. The dominance of small organizations with fewer than 10 employees requires efficient operations and effective management.

Environmental awareness among employees is evident, with high ratings for behaviors that minimize harm to the environment, and co-worker encouragement for eco-friendly practices. However, participation in events like tree planting ranked lower, indicating that time constraints and limited incentives may hinder engagement. This suggests the need for stronger strategies

to increase employee involvement in sustainability efforts.

Employees show strong organizational identification, taking pride in their work and aligning personal goals with company values, including sustainability. However, a lower score for public representation suggests that better internal communication and empowerment are needed to reinforce organizational identity and accountability.

Sustainability practices are embedded in the organizational culture, with employees supporting waste reduction, energy conservation, and local sourcing. These practices align with employee values, indicating a genuine commitment to sustainability. However, organizations should integrate sustainability more into their core mission to enhance its centrality to their identity.

Green Human Resources Management (GHRM) practices are well-established in many organizations, with employees receiving training, participating in goal-setting, and having sustainability included in performance appraisals. These practices foster a culture of shared responsibility. However, the link between green behavior and rewards is weaker, suggesting that strengthening this connection could further motivate employees.

The restaurant sector demonstrates strong support for sustainability, with a focus on local sourcing, waste reduction, and water conservation. However, there is less emphasis on organic and plant-based foods, indicating an opportunity to educate employees and customers on the environmental benefits of these options. Customers are generally supportive of sustainability initiatives, but further efforts are needed to encourage broader engagement in pro-environmental behaviors.

Waste reduction is recognized as contributing to customer value by lowering costs and enhancing competitive pricing. However, while customers appreciate sustainability, they may not fully recognize the economic benefits, suggesting a need for better communication. Sustainability efforts positively influence customer loyalty, especially when customers identify with the restaurant's environmental values.

Despite efforts to reduce food waste, the reliance on unsustainable food supplies and meat-heavy dishes remains a challenge. While plant-based options are desired, respondents recognize that this alone may not fully address environmental concerns. The restaurant could benefit from integrating plant-based options with other sustainable practices to create a more comprehensive strategy.

Finally, the survey shows significant differences in sustainability responses based on organizational size, age, and years in operation. Larger organizations typically have more resources to implement comprehensive sustainability initiatives, leading to higher assessments of Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment (OCBE). Smaller organizations face challenges due to limited resources. Additionally, generational differences show that younger employees are more engaged in sustainability efforts than older generations, suggesting that sustainability strategies should be tailored to the characteristics of different organizations and employee demographics.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Profile Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
Baby Boomers: Born between 1946 and 1964	10	2.7
Generation X: Born between 1965 and 1980	47	12.9
Milennials: Born between 1981 and 1996	147	40.3
Generation Z: Born between 1997 and 2012	161	44.1
Sex		
Male	144	39.5
Female	221	60.5
Educational Attainment		
High School Diploma	104	28.5
Junior High School	7	1.9
Senior High School	63	17.3
Vocational or Technical Training Certificate/Diploma	83	22.7
Bachelor's Degree	104	28.5
Post Graduate (Master's or Doctorate Degree)	4	1.1
Length of Service		
6 months - 11 months	140	38.4
1 - 5 years	163	44.7

6 - 10 years	42	11.5
11 years and above	20	5.5
Position		
Supervisor/Manager	49	13.4
Kitchen/Dining Staff	316	86.6

Table 2. Firmographic Profile of the Locally-owned Restaurant

4.

Profile Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Number of years in operation		
5 - 9 years	264	72.3
10 - 14 years	55	15.1
15 years and above	46	12.6
Number of employees		
Less than 10 employees	208	57.0
10 - 20 employees	112	30.7
21 employees and above	45	12.3

Table 3. Difference of Responses on Organizational Citizenship Behavior on Environmental Sustainability When Grouped According to Profile

Profile Variables	U/H	p-value	Interpretation
Demographic Profile			
Age			
Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment	4.025	0.259	Not Significant
Organizational Identification	2.554	0.466	Not Significant
Environmental Responsibility	6.277	0.099	Not Significant
Green Human Resources Management	0.072	0.995	Not Significant
Sex			
Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment	14893.000	0.232	Not Significant
Organizational Identification	15506.000	0.672	Not Significant
Environmental Responsibility	15614.000	0.723	Not Significant
Green Human Resources Management	15873.000	0.964	Not Significant
Educational Attainment			
Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment	6.812	0.235	Not Significant
Organizational Identification	9.713	0.084	Not Significant
Environmental Responsibility	2.087	0.837	Not Significant
Green Human Resources Management	4.298	0.507	Not Significant
Length of Service			
Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment	3.111	0.375	Not Significant
Organizational Identification	5.219	0.156	Not Significant
Environmental Responsibility	0.657	0.883	Not Significant
Green Human Resources Management	1.084	0.781	Not Significant
Position			
Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment	7571.500	0.774	Not Significant
Organizational Identification	6719.000	0.126	Not Significant
Environmental Responsibility	6938.500	0.170	Not Significant
Green Human Resources Management	7479.000	0.659	Not Significant
Firmographic Profile			

Number of years in operation			
Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment	0.010	0.995	Not Significant
Organizational Identification	0.495	0.781	Not Significant
Environmental Responsibility	0.914	0.633	Not Significant
Green Human Resources Management	3.641	0.162	Not Significant
Number of employees			
Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment	11.277	0.004	Significant
Organizational Identification	1.786	0.409	Not Significant
Environmental Responsibility	3.491	0.175	Not Significant
Green Human Resources Management	2.692	0.260	Not Significant

Significant at p-value<0.05

Table 4. Difference of Responses on Environmental Sustainability Practices When Grouped According to Profile

Profile Variables	U/H	p-value	Interpretation
Demographic Profile			
Age			
Food Sustainability Practices	1.474	0.688	Not Significant
Waste Reduction Practices	2.367	0.500	Not Significant
Hedonic Value on Waste Reduction	3.369	0.338	Not Significant
Utilitarian Value on Waste Reduction	0.978	0.807	Not Significant
Participation in Sustainable Practices	1.628	0.653	Not Significant
Loyalty to Sustainable Restaurants	8.614	0.035	Significant
Environmental Concern	11.285	0.010	Significant
Sex			
Food Sustainability Practices	15552.500	0.682	Not Significant
Waste Reduction Practices	15759.500	0.873	Not Significant
Hedonic Value on Waste Reduction	15436.000	0.563	Not Significant
Utilitarian Value on Waste Reduction	15649.500	0.753	Not Significant
Participation in Sustainable Practices	15742.500	0.844	Not Significant
Loyalty to Sustainable Restaurants	14469.000	0.081	Not Significant
Environmental Concern	14913.500	0.298	Not Significant
Educational Attainment			
Food Sustainability Practices	1.391	0.925	Not Significant
Waste Reduction Practices	3.148	0.677	Not Significant
Hedonic Value on Waste Reduction	6.218	0.286	Not Significant
Utilitarian Value on Waste Reduction	2.802	0.730	Not Significant
Participation in Sustainable Practices	3.781	0.581	Not Significant
Loyalty to Sustainable Restaurants	5.500	0.358	Not Significant
Environmental Concern	2.008	0.848	Not Significant
Length of Service			
Food Sustainability Practices	2.297	0.513	Not Significant
Waste Reduction Practices	0.545	0.909	Not Significant
Hedonic Value on Waste Reduction	1.630	0.653	Not Significant
Utilitarian Value on Waste Reduction	6.267	0.099	Not Significant
Participation in Sustainable Practices	3.296	0.348	Not Significant
Loyalty to Sustainable Restaurants	7.147	0.067	Not Significant
Environmental Concern	3.625	0.305	Not Significant
Position			

Food Sustainability Practices	6736.500	0.100	Not Significant
Waste Reduction Practices	7230.500	0.442	Not Significant
Hedonic Value on Waste Reduction	7272.000	0.413	Not Significant
Utilitarian Value on Waste Reduction	7599.000	0.806	Not Significant
Participation in Sustainable Practices	7532.000	0.726	Not Significant
Loyalty to Sustainable Restaurants	7598.000	0.803	Not Significant
Environmental Concern	7596.500	0.828	Not Significant
Firmographic Profile			
Number of years in operation			
Food Sustainability Practices	1.703	0.427	Not Significant
Waste Reduction Practices	4.810	0.090	Not Significant
Hedonic Value on Waste Reduction	6.346	0.042	Significant
Utilitarian Value on Waste Reduction	8.478	0.014	Significant
Participation in Sustainable Practices	6.040	0.049	Significant
Loyalty to Sustainable Restaurants	10.864	0.004	Significant
Environmental Concern	5.344	0.069	Not Significant
Number of employees			
Food Sustainability Practices	7.631	0.022	Significant
Waste Reduction Practices	4.295	0.117	Not Significant
Hedonic Value on Waste Reduction	2.851	0.240	Not Significant
Utilitarian Value on Waste Reduction	5.685	0.058	Not Significant
Participation in Sustainable Practices	5.675	0.059	Not Significant
Loyalty to Sustainable Restaurants	3.561	0.169	Not Significant
Environmental Concern	5.370	0.068	Not Significant

Significant at p-value<0.05

Table 5. Relationship Between Organizational Citizenship Behavior on the Environment Sustainability and Environmental Sustainability Practices

Variables	rho	p-value	Interpretation
Organizational Citizenship Behavior for the Environment			
Food Sustainability Practices	0.378**	<.001	Highly Significant
Waste Reduction Practices	0.392**	<.001	Highly Significant
Hedonic Value on Waste Reduction	0.388**	<.001	Highly Significant
Utilitarian Value on Waste Reduction	0.470**	<.001	Highly Significant
Participation in Sustainable Practices	0.416**	<.001	Highly Significant
Loyalty to Sustainable Restaurants	0.353**	<.001	Highly Significant
Environmental Concern	0.419**	<.001	Highly Significant
Organizational Identification			
Food Sustainability Practices	0.332**	<.001	Highly Significant
Waste Reduction Practices	0.468**	<.001	Highly Significant
Hedonic Value on Waste Reduction	0.508**	<.001	Highly Significant
Utilitarian Value on Waste Reduction	0.475**	<.001	Highly Significant
Participation in Sustainable Practices	0.434**	<.001	Highly Significant
Loyalty to Sustainable Restaurants	0.399**	<.001	Highly Significant
Environmental Concern	0.434**	<.001	Highly Significant
Environmental Responsibility			
Food Sustainability Practices	0.341**	<.001	Highly Significant
Waste Reduction Practices	0.446**	<.001	Highly Significant
Hedonic Value on Waste Reduction	0.472**	<.001	Highly Significant

Utilitarian Value on Waste Reduction	0.457**	<.001	Highly Significant
Participation in Sustainable Practices	0.378**	<.001	Highly Significant
Loyalty to Sustainable Restaurants	0.433**	<.001	Highly Significant
Environmental Concern	0.496**	<.001	Highly Significant
Green Human Resources Management			
Food Sustainability Practices	0.377**	<.001	Highly Significant
Waste Reduction Practices	0.383**	<.001	Highly Significant
Hedonic Value on Waste Reduction	0.383**	<.001	Highly Significant
Utilitarian Value on Waste Reduction	0.347**	<.001	Highly Significant
Participation in Sustainable Practices	0.401**	<.001	Highly Significant
Loyalty to Sustainable Restaurants	0.245**	<.001	Highly Significant
Environmental Concern	0.388**	<.001	Highly Significant

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

5. CONCLUSION

The study highlighted the significant role of restaurant employees' Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB) in promoting environmental sustainability in locally-owned restaurants in Batangas. Most respondents were young Generation Z employees, predominantly female, with high school or college education, working in kitchen and dining roles. These employees demonstrated strong environmental awareness and a sense of pride in their organizations, supported by training and performance evaluations focused on sustainability. The restaurants were mostly small to medium-sized and had been operating for 5 to 9 years, creating collaborative environments ideal for implementing green practices. Employees actively engaged in sustainable actions such as sourcing local food and minimizing waste through the use of durable items, which also enhanced customer satisfaction.

Larger restaurants showed higher OCB for the environment, while older establishments exhibited lower commitment to waste reduction. Younger generations were more eco-conscious compared to Generation X. Although the relationship between OCBE and sustainability practices was only moderately strong, it was still meaningful. To strengthen this connection, an action plan was proposed to improve employee engagement and commitment to sustainability. The study recommended integrating environmental practices into employee training, evaluations, and communication to achieve long-term sustainability goals.

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