

Impact of Attitude towards Eco-Friendly Products on Dining Intention and Willing to Pay Premium in order to Improve Dining Behavior among Consumers in Russia Far-East

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Abstract

Restaurant industry causes lots of environmental problems. Green attributes implementation addresses these problems in order to illuminate or lessen restaurant environmental impact. Restaurants and dining industry is an important sector in Far East Russia especially with the dining habits of citizens. If emerged with the fact that restaurants are one the highest sectors in harming the environment, the eco-friendly dining behaviour of customers and food providers become essential to protect the environment. Identifying the effect of attitude, practices, and personal traits on the intention and behaviour of dining can contribute to the local and international efforts to save environment. The study aims to measure the antecedents of consumers' intention and actual behaviour in choosing restaurants and foods based on eco-friendly consideration in Russia Far East. The proposed model for this study includes attitude towards eco-friendly products, intention to eco-friendly dining, willing to pay premium, and dining behavior. The research design considered for this study is classified under exploratory study and hypothesis testing; therefore, the research is mainly belongs to the quantitative approach. The population for this research is all the residents who live in a Russia Far East. According to the official Russian statistics, there are around 8.4 million people living in the Russia Far East, distributed among different age groups. The targeted sample size is 385 subjects that respect the G*Power effective sample size (153) and the minimum sample size for PLS analysis (40). While the target sample is 385, but the plan is to collect 150% of the sample to secure enough proper sample after data screening. Data obtained from the survey is analyzed by utilizing the software Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 25) and SmartPLS 2.0.

Keywords: Attitude towards Eco-Friendly Products, Intention to Eco-Friendly Dining, Willing to Pay Premium, and Dining Behavior

1. Introduction

Sustainable attributes gained the popularity in most of the countries, developed and developing, but for the emerging economies, it is still a new concept. For instance, in Far East Russia the green attributes in food retail sector are not part of the food industry culture (Jaffee et al., 2018). The consumers' views on greening possibilities are neglected by business owners and policy makers, thus the study aims to find out the consumers' attitude towards green attributes and dining intentions at full-service restaurants in emerging economies (Ottman, 2017). The increased awareness of ecological problems and natural disasters, the environmental protection is gaining relevance (Epstein, 2018). These practices are considered not only as part of social responsibility, but also a way to occupy a new niche for environmentally cautious consumers. Environmental concern is essential for the hospitality industry due to the fact that the whole business is often associated with the availability of a clean natural environment. Restaurants however, are often less dependent on environmental factors, therefore care less for ecological issues (Zaitseva et al., 2019). Nevertheless, the food service sector is exposed to challenges of food consumption on the health of consumers. With more and more consumers becoming overweight or obese as the results of changing habits in food consumption, healthier food is an important issue in the restaurant sector (Carson, 2018). Health consciousness promotes the

changes in the restaurant industry. Business owners increasingly change their attitudes towards environmental and nutritional issues and try to implement certain improvements in order to promote a healthier environment and healthier foods (Escaron et al., 2016).

In recent years world population has become more aware of the environmental problems, especially in developed countries where greening is incorporated in every business aspect (Oates, 2017). As more customers recognize the dangerousness of environmental problems, they give their preferences to eco-friendly products or services, paying great attention to food safety (Han et al., 2010). Greening has become a popular way to promote a business, solve some eco problems and minimize the environmental impact. As a part of hospitality industry, restaurants play an important role enhancing environmental problems. A food establishment greatly contributes to air pollution, soil erosion, water pollution, wastes production etc. that leads to worsening of the existing ecological issues (Kim et al., 2017). Therefore, sustainable attributes are essential to address the industry environmental impact and business development. Some of the benefits include wastes reduction, decrease of energy and water consumption, consumers' loyalty, stronger brand image and so on. It goes without saying that greening is not only beneficial for the environment but also can be used as a powerful business tool, thus employing green attributes in a restaurant sector is extremely important for the present and future of the whole industry (Escaron et al., 2016).

For food service providers, the framework of environmental implication has been divided into upstream, direct, and downstream (Jaffee, Henson, Unnevehr, Grace, & Cassou, 2018; Tan et al., 2017). In the local context, some research works have been initiated in investigating the direct environmental impact of food service sector which focuses on the drivers for restaurant operators to adopt green practices (Tan & Yeap, 2012). Restaurant operators have early and significant insights on consumer preferences and buying habits, which should be passed to the upstream food service value chain and the policy makers in developing strategies to realize sustainable consumption in society, but such information has not been captured and disseminated. In emerging economies, consumers across regions are not familiar with green restaurant attributes, they believe that any sustainable attributes require lots of efforts and funds; which might reflect the food quality and pricing in particular. Consumer attitudes are a composite of a consumer's (1) beliefs about, (2) feelings about, (3) and behavioral intentions toward some object--within the context of marketing, usually a brand or retail store. These components are viewed together since they are highly interdependent and together represent forces that influence how the consumer will react to the object (Andaç&Güzel, 2017). Consumer attitudes vary greatly by country and are dependent on development status, the extent to which irradiated foods are available and media exposure (Andaç&Güzel, 2017). Surveys in some studies of consumer attitudes have shown that most members of the public are unaware or have little knowledge of food irradiation. When surveyed for an initial reaction, most consumers are either unwilling to purchase irradiated foods or express strong reservations. Individual opposition may decrease when the process is explained more fully. General opposition tends to increase when conflicting pro- and antiradiation views are publicized (Naz, 2019). For that reason, attitudes predict behavior in a more consistent manner when both attitude and behavior refer to the same 'evaluative dispositions' (Kumar, 2017).

2.Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Framework

The research framework of this particular study has determinates of attitude towards eco-friendly products, intention to eco-friendly dining, willing to pay premium, and dining behavior (As seen in Figure 1).

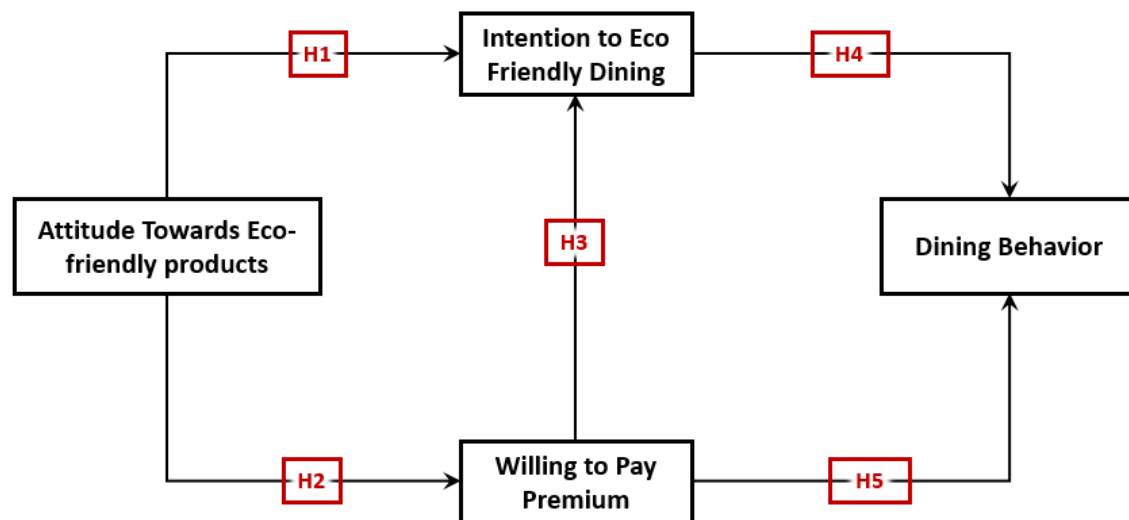


Figure 1: Research Framework

2.2 Relationship between Attitude towards eco-friendly products and intention to eco-friendly dining

Attitude is a psychological construct, a mental and emotional entity that inheres in, or characterizes a person. Attitudes toward eco-friendly products is the behavior of people that tend to support and encourage, and buy the friendly to environment products, products that do not harm the environment whether in their production, use or disposal (Marques-Quinteiro et al., 2019). So, the researcher hypothesizes that the more positive consumer attitude towards eco-friendly (green) product is, the higher the consumer's intention to dining eco-friendly (green) product. This hypothesis is compatible with other hypothesis in other studies such as (Marques-Quinteiro et al., 2019; Wakasala, Miricho, & Wandolo, 2020).

- H1: Positive attitudes toward eco-friendly products would positively influence consumers' intentions toward eco-friendly products.

2.3 Relationship between Attitude towards eco-friendly products and willing to pay premium, and dining behaviour

Willingness to pay (WTP) is the maximum price at or below which a consumer will definitely buy one unit of a product. and as an increasing in positive attitude toward eco-friendly products lead to increase the intention to dining green products, the researcher is assuming and expecting same positive relationship between positive attitudes toward eco-friendly products and customers willingness to pay the premium as they are looking for the best for their health, kids and environment (Joo, Hwang, & Yoon, 2018) This hypothesis is compatible with other hypothesis in other studies such as (Shahsavar, Kubeš, & Baran, 2020).

- H2: Positive attitudes toward eco-friendly products would positively influence the consumers' willingness to pay premium toward eco-friendly products

2.4 Relationship between willing to pay premium, and dining behaviour and intention to eco-friendly dining

Willingness to pay premium is the maximum price at or below which a consumer will definitely buy one unit of a product. Our ideas, thoughts, beliefs, behavior, knowledge that is reflected to an attitude will increase or decrease our intention willingness to buy things (Shahsavari, Kubeš, & Baran, 2020). On the other hand, the more the consumer has the willingness and ability to pay premium price of a certain product that he is already convenient about, this will affect his intention to buy this product, and in this case is the intention to buy eco-friendly dining products (Namkung & Jang, 2017). This hypothesis is compatible with other hypothesis in other studies such as (Sarmiento & El Hanandeh, 2018).

- H3: Consumers' willingness to pay premium toward eco-friendly products would positively influence the intention towards eco-friendly products.

2.5 Relationship between intention to eco-friendly dining and dining behaviour

As has been explained, the intention to buy eco-friendly dining will be driven by many factors that have turned to attitude, and as many researchers argued, an increasing in the intention to consume eco-friendly dining will definitely lead to a change in dining behavior to be totally green (Joo, Hwang, & Yoon, 2018). Starting from choosing type of food and restaurants to the small details like the disposal way of the food (Youn et al., 2019). So that the researcher hypothesizes a strong positive impact of intention to eco-friendly dining on dining behavior to be green. This hypothesis is compatible with other hypothesis in other studies such as (Liao & Fang, 2019; Shin et al., 2018).

- H4: Consumers' intentions toward eco-friendly products would positively influence Consumers dining behavior towards eco-friendly products.

2.6 Relationship between willing to pay premium and dining behaviour

In general, eating behavior is a broad term that encompasses food choice and motives, feeding practices, dieting, choosing restaurants and eating-related problems such as obesity, eating disorders, and feeding disorders (Kiatkawsin & Han, 2019). Consumer attitudes and behavioral intentions towards environmentally sustainable practices in restaurants is an under-explored area in the hospitality literature, despite the growing green trend (Shin et al., 2017). But some researchers found out that there is high impact of high willingness to pay on choosing green trends (green food and green restaurants). This hypothesis is compatible with other hypothesis in other studies such as (Jeong & Jang, 2019; Henson et al., 2018).

- H5: Consumers' willingness to pay premium toward eco-friendly products would positively influence Consumers dining behavior towards eco-friendly products.

3 Methodology

The research objectives will be examined by using quantitative approach to numerically prove the desired hypothesis. Most of the deductive academic studies are using the approach for

achieving a solid results of the examined hypothesis (Hair et al., 2014). This research are following the scientific approach as a systematic steps starts with identifying and defining a problem and formulating a tentative hypothesis, and ends up with prove or disapprove the hypothesis beside the results interpretation and conclusion. And it is common to have some specific steps in this approach (Jackson, 2015). Deductive reasoning approach is the one used for the standard scientific method, where the researcher starts up with a theory followed by a testable hypothesis then design a proper tools and environment for observation and collecting data, and end up with discussing the findings for prove or disprove the theory (Trochim, 2006). A sample normally is a reprehensive members characterize the whole group and assessing the perception of this sample can judge the population perception. Actually, phenomena can be investigated for the population through assessing the sample features and perceptions. What is the fraction of the population that enough for sampling is important, therefore the following conditions must be followed (Hair et al., 2016).

In this research, the population sample size based on Morgan is 385. In this study, data of this study will be analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS SEM) technique using smart PLS 2.0 M3 software. Researchers are using the PLS SEM method in order to measure the estimation that relates to the relationship in the field of path models involving latent constructs. There are two steps in PLS SEM analysis, namely measurement model and structural model. In the structural model reliability and validity of the data are measured and the measurement model provides the findings for hypothesis testing. Likert scale is important to this type of studies because it is a bipolar scaling method, it means the measuring of respondent opinions either positive or negative response to the questions distributed for the study population. For scoring, it is found that the 5-point scale requires a smaller sample size for a given amount of reliability and power and leaves more room for improvement (Wittink& Bayer, 2003). The questions are adapted from different previous studies such as Attitude towards eco-friendly products (Loureiro & Araújo, 2014), price premium (N. Li, Robson, & Coates, 2013), intention to eco-friendly dining (Madden et al. 1992), dining behaviour (Schlegelmilch et al. 1996).

4 Findings

4.1 Validity and Reliability of Constructs

Outer loading and cross loading for every item is estimated to test it with its associated variable. Every item must have sufficient loading within its associated variable. Any loading above the threshold of 0.708 is sufficient and any loading below the threshold of 0.4 is inadequate. Any measure between 0.4 and 0.7 is suspected and can be deleted or kept based on the unique conditions for every study (Hair Jr et al., 2016). Cross Loading, scale is used to assure that for every item, its loading within the associated construct is higher than any other loading in the remaining constructs (Hair Jr et al., 2016; Hulland, 1999). The proposed design model with all the items have proper loading above 0.708the results of all the study variables which are (attitude towards eco-friendly products, intention, eco-friendly dining, willing to pay premium, and dining behavior)were accepted.Whereby the values of Composite Reliability of these variables are ranging between 0.885 and 0.937. Which indicated a very good and adequate internal consistency. For Cronbach's Alpha reliability, the valued are ranged from 0.848 to 0.922, which shows adequate level of internal consistency. As per table 1.

The Fornell & Larcker criterion matrix. The matrix is a refined matrix of the latent variable's correlations. The test is successful if the value in the diagonal is higher than any other value within the crossed column and row. Intention to Eco-Friendly Dining (ITED) has the value of 0.853, which is higher than all the other scores within the shared column and row. The rest of the study's variables have a good adequate level of the discriminant validity. In order to make a better discriminant validity, a cross loading which means that the constructs must have a proper and higher loading in its associated construct than any other loading in any foreign variable.

Table 1: Constructs Reliability and Validity

construct	Item	Loading	AVE	Cronbach's alpha
Attitude Towards Eco-Friendly Products (ATEP)	EB1	0.898	0.905	0.869
	EB2	0.873		
	EB3	0.857		
	EB4	0.761		
	EB5	0.895		
Intention To Eco-Friendly Dining (ITED)	OE1	0.877	0.914	0.874
	OE2	0.862		
	OE3	0.940		
Willing to Pay Premium (PP)	PP1	0.869	0.885	0.807
	PP2	0.912		
	PP3	0.759		
Dining Behavior (DP)	DB1	0.757	0.937	0.922
	DB2	0.760		
	DB3	0.751		
	DB4	0.807		
	DB5	0.829		
	DB6	0.830		
	DB7	0.861		
	DB8	0.844		

Table 2: Discriminant validity – Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	ATEP	DB	ITED	PP
Attitude Towards Eco-Friendly Products (ATEP)	0.810			
Dining Behavior (DB)	0.302	0.806		
Intention To Eco-Friendly Dining (ITED)	0.614	0.615	0.853	
Willing to Pay Premium (PP)	0.320	0.250	0.381	0.849

4.2 Relationships Examinations and Discussions

Predictive power is the variance explanation of the endogenous variable and known as R square (R²). On the other hand, predictive relevance is the variance relevance of the endogenous variable and known as Q square (Q²). As Hair (2014), the rule of thumbs for assessing the values is: R square (R²) can be strong (more than 0.75), moderate (between 0.5 and 0.75), or

satisfactory (between 0.2 and 0.5). Q square (Q2) can be large (more than 0.35), medium (between 0.15 and 0.25), or small (between 0.02 and 0.15). The predictive power and predictive relevance of the endogenous latent variables dining behaviour (DB) the related R square value is 0.378 (a power of 37.8%) and the related Q square is 0.241 (a relevance of 24.1%).

Table 3: Predictive Power and Predictive Relevance of Proposed Model

	Predictive Power		Predictive Relevance	
	R Square	Status	Q Square	Status
Dining Behaviour (DB)	0.378	satisfactory	0.241	medium

Testing the hypothesis of the study is essential and only can be acquired by estimating the path coefficient values of the different relation within the model. P-values and T-statistics is the common used techniques to tests the significance of a relation; T-statistics is the significance of path coefficient and P-value is significant level or probability estimate value. In addition, path coefficient is calculated to reveal the extent level of the relation. As Hair et al. (2016), the rule of thumbs for assessing the values is: For P-value (probability estimate value), the most common used threshold in psychological research is 0.05 (5%). The relationship between attitude towards eco-friendly products and intention to eco-friendly dining (H1). and after analysing all collected data after cleaning found out that the P- Value for this hypothesis is 0.000, the value of T-statistics is 12.820, and the effective size score is 0.043, as well as the Path Coefficient is 0.551, which is shows a positive relationship. So that we can state that the relationship between attitude towards eco-friendly products and iintention to eco-friendly dining. Considered as a significant relationship with a positive impact.

Following by the relationship between attitudes towards eco-friendly products and willing to pay premium. and after analyzing all collected data after cleaning found out that the P- Value for this hypothesis is 0.000, the value of T-statistics is 7.607, and the effective size score is 0.042, as well as the Path Coefficient is 0.322, which is shows a positive relationship. Than the relationship between willing to pay premium and intention to eco-friendly dining. and after analysing all collected data after cleaning found out that the P- Value for this hypothesis is 0.000, the value of T-statistics is 4.575, and the effective size score is 0.045, as well as the Path Coefficient is 0.206, which is shows a positive relationship. According to the relationship between intention to eco-friendly dining and dining behavior. and after analysing all collected data after cleaning found out that the P- Value for this hypothesis is 0.000, the value of T-statistics is 16.812, and the effective size score is 0.036, as well as the Path Coefficient is 0.607, which is shows a positive relationship. Moreover, the relationship between willing to Pay Premium and dining behaviour and after analysing all collected data after cleaning we found out that the P- Value for this hypothesis is 0.651, the value of T-statistics is 0.452, and the effective size score is 0.042, as well as the Path Coefficient is 0.019, which is shows a positive but no relationship.

Table 4: Path Coefficient Assessment of the Study Variables

		Path Coefficient	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Value (one tailed)	Status
H1	ATEP → ITED	0.551	0.043	12.820	0.000	Significant

H2	ATEP → PP	0.322	0.042	7.607	0.000	Significant
H3	PP → ITED	0.206	0.045	4.575	0.000	Significant
H4	ITED → DB	0.607	0.036	16.812	0.000	Significant
H5	PP → DB	0.019	0.042	0.452	0.651	Non-Significant

5 Contributions and Recommendations

The model relations were tested, and the re-specified model was proposed for testing by other researchers. In the dining behaviour in the southeast Russia, understanding the interaction of factors of attitude towards eco-friendly products on dining behaviour is a unique study with new findings. This research is uniquely different in coming out with results associated with eco-friendly products support, which have a significant impact on the environment. New construct and new definitions within the model need new instrument. A structured questionnaire is formulated for this research. Validity, reliability, and pilot test, beside the real implementation of the proposed questionnaire, prove the quality of the proposed instrument, which can be used by other scholars. For the specialists and managers, the results of the research have many useful information, which increases the quality of decision-making and planning at levels of employee's satisfaction and employee's loyalty: This research is limited to the dining behaviour in southeast Russia. That means, the results are limited and only represents a specific group of the specific area customers.

In addition, similar industries in other countries could have different contextual conditions, which may output different results. While online food industry is one of the main industries in Russia, but there are many other essential industries in industries such as oil, cement, energy, and many other industries that have a major impact on the environment. Recommendations are extended, to test the model and the instrument in other sectors or even to test whether this model can be suitable for other industrial sectors. Therefore, further studies must focus in exploring, and examining additional factors, other than websites qualities (attitude towards eco-friendly products, dining behaviour, intention to eco-friendly dining. Form the quantitative analysis, factors of attitude variable is not direct determinate of dining behaviour in food industry in Russia but it must go through the intention to eco-friendly dining and willing to pay premium. While, this finding is rational result considering that good disclosure must be carried out in accordance with some standards clarifying the methods and method of disclosure, but more qualitative research studies can be made using interviews to explain this result.

6 References

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