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## **INFLUENCE OF GREEN PRACTICES ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS**

### **ABSTRACT**

The implementation of green practices has been prevalent worldwide in the restaurant industry. Sadly, the Indian restaurant industry has not completely taken into account the importance of green practices in restaurants, and whatever the procedures are, they are still in their infancy. The fundamental goal of this research is to look at the impact of Indian restaurants' green practices on customer satisfaction and how it impacts their behavioral intentions to come back again/recommend it/positive word-of-mouth. The study applied the structural equation modeling approach to find out the inter-relationship between green practices in a restaurant, Customer Satisfaction, and Behavioral Intentions. The study's results revealed a strong correlation between consumer satisfaction and their behavioral intentions and the effects of green food, green services, and green energy-efficient activities. Furthermore, consumer loyalty constructively affected behavioral intentions.

*Keywords: green practices, customer satisfaction, behavioral intentions, restaurant industry, structural equation modeling (SEM), green food*

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## INTRODUCTION

The word green is related to all those eco-friendly activities that minimize any detrimental effect on the environment. Many green practices are popular nowadays, such as recycling, eco-buying, and reusing the product or services. Green or environmentally friendly practices were once considered corporate social responsibility, but they are now equally important for the restaurant industry (Wolfe and Shanklin, 2001). Green products, Green services, and Green consumption are the latest trend in the marketing world. Customer loyalty and re-purchase intention are greatly affected by the green marketing practices adopted by a business firm (Marin, Ruiz, and Rubio, 2009; Wang, Krishna, and McFerran, 2017). Every business or service organization is now more focused on offering green products and services to its customers, enhancing the chances of revisiting or re-purchase. Green products and services play an essential role in the hospitality industry. The restaurant industry is the most prominent patron of energy consumption. They exploit both natural and human-made resources to carry on their operations and are the largest suppliers towards waste generation. The restaurant industry's environmental and conservation responsibilities must not be overlooked. (Chou, Chen, and Wang, 2012). Organizations that follow green practices follow standards that address environmental and social issues rather than causing harm to them. These companies apply values, strategies, and procedures that enhance the quality of life for their consumers, staff, and community members (TM, Kaur, Ferraris, and Dhir, 2021). These practices are implemented to minimize greenhouse gas emissions, protect natural resources, and reduce costs for business owners.

It has become a benchmark for restaurants to follow green practices on their own to meet the high expectations of patrons in the form of green food and services and maintain its existence in the restaurant business. An additional effort and an initiative are needed by both customers and restaurant staff to fulfil their responsibility toward the environment (Choi and Parsa, 2006). A lot is happening in environmental studies, and the specialists in environmental readings have suggested certain green practices, such as performing environmentally friendly actions while carrying out restaurant operations. Reduction of depletion in every restaurant business be it the production, ingestion, or amenities is the call of the environment worldwide.

The environmentally defensible restaurant industry is the need of the hour. Since the year 1990, the restaurant industry's ecological criteria have been in force, and the developing countries very much welcome them. Environment-safe products and services, energy-efficient appliances, water conservation and recycling, environmentally friendly cleaning supplies, and sustainability of the menus are some of the main green practices which are in use in restaurants (Schubert, Kandampully, Solnet, and Kralj, 2010). Apart from this, restaurants' functioning is based on taking part in an environmental protection program and taking preventive measures to avoid wastage of food. From the viewpoint of customers, green products, green service, and energy-efficient devices are the most looked at factors that affect their satisfaction level. Due to the increasing trend of going green in the restaurant industry, many studies have been done to investigate the green practices being followed in restaurants. Most of the studies focused their attention on examining the role of green practices in a restaurant on consumer attitude and perception. Few studies have examined the influence of green practices directly on customer satisfaction and further their

behavioural intentions, specifically in Indian restaurants. The present study will examine the influence of the use of green practices in Indian restaurants customers' satisfaction and behavioral intentions. It will provide an insight to all the stakeholders (customers, employees, and restaurateurs) to increase happiness, profitability, loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth for the restaurant and the staff.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### History of green practices of restaurants

Earlier green restaurant attributes were described as tangible and intangible such as green menu options, biodegradable take-out dishes. Although, there was no single description or term which could be acknowledged as green practices. Conversely, food waste management, using local ingredients and vegetables, disposable crockery or earthen dishes, open-air sitting, fulfilling corporate environmental responsibility, less water consumption, and conserving it played a vital role in changing consumer perception of the restaurant business (Jeong and Jang, 2010). Keeping in view the increasing sentiments of customers towards healthy food and service environment, providing green food and service has become an essential element for successfully running a restaurant. But it firmly depends on the restaurant manager's willingness to offer green service to its customers, and for doing this, a restaurant charges a bit higher price (Dutta, Umashankar, Choi and Parsa, 2008). According to a recent study, when restaurants attempt to engage in green practices, the style of a restaurant should be examined (Namkung and Jang, 2013). Green initiatives centred on food (e.g., healthful, locally grown, or organic foods on the menu) are beneficial in boosting a restaurant's green image. To develop a restaurant's green image, casual dining restaurant managers should pay attention to green practices with environmental issues (e.g., to-go containers made of compostable materials or installing motion sensors in the bathrooms) (Bhargava, 2021). There are some major reasons why restaurants are resistant to implementing restaurant sustainable practices. For starters, most small independent restaurant owners are frustrated by the day-to-day demands of running a company. To them, an unpaid produce bill, a sudden drop in brunch business, or a sump pump seizing up and dying are all issues that seem far more real and immediate. The majority of operators think in terms of short-term solutions to short-term problems. Cash flow is invariably a regular problem that affects what an operator thinks about when they go about their business.

There is a widespread misconception that restaurant sustainable practices are more expensive. This is frequently attributable to a lack of comprehension. Again, the understanding takes time, which most operators don't seem to have, and the visible effects of that understanding aren't as immediate as the other problems they face. The majority of operators prefer to think in terms of short-term solutions to short-term problems. Third, sustainable practices do not seem to be part of their core restaurant market, which for many of them is simply serving good consistent food in a fun and friendly atmosphere. So, considering the preceding scenario, how can green organizations seeking to make substantial inroads into restaurant sustainable practices overcome these obstacles? These difficulties are much easier to comprehend than the effect of purchasing energy-efficient

equipment and having savings over time or seeing the impact of non-toxic cleaning chemicals or good waste management practices over time.

Moreover, consumer willingness to pay more for getting green service attributes is different in most countries of the world. U.S customers are ready to pay more up to 10% of the regular price for menu items than their Indian counterparts (Dutta et al., 2008). Customers choose a restaurant based on their order of preference (Dewald, 2008). The use of fresh ingredients, healthy food, good value for the price paid, and convenient availability are the basis of restaurant selection. Green practices followed by a restaurant lead to perceived quality, service, satisfaction, and future behavioural intention. Green food practices influence customer perception and satisfaction. The perceived quality of a product or service is dependent on customer judgment and opinion (Namkung and Jang, 2013; Choi and Parsa, 2007). Recycling waste food is an essential component of the green attributes of a restaurant. It involves using vegetable waste as a fertilizer to improve soil quality (Jeong and Jang, 2010). When it comes to cleaning in a restaurant, there are several factors to remember. This method is more complicated than buying toxic and caustic cleaners due to concerns about safety, convenience, cost, and availability. Companies such as Ecolab are making the move and seeing new prospects in their Apex line of eco-friendly cleaning items. This substance is not only non-toxic but is also packaged in solid form, which lowers shipping costs since it is not in dense liquid form. Ecolab boasts that, while the product is more costly when priced by the pound, it costs less when the company considers utility savings, including packaging, and training on how to use the new product. Another factor that qualifies this product as eco-friendly is its packaging. The Apex line is typically sold in 5-gallon pails and is covered in cellophane that, once used, can be balled up to the size of a baseball. This packaging approach is both waste-reducing and recyclable. Overall, eco-friendly goods meet this pattern in terms of reduced packaging, as well as reduced refuse and recycling requirements.

Demand for non-toxic organic food is growing every day. Health-conscious people generally ask for green food. Organic food is made up of locally available ingredients that are fresh and grown using chemical fertilizers. The food served is free from harmful chemicals and pollutants (Jeong and Jang, 2010). Energy and water-saving practices form an integral part of green attributes. Due to mounting pressure from environmentalists and increased global warming, hotels and restaurants have become significant contributors to dealing with this situation in an energy-efficient manner. Choi and Parsa (2007), in their study, determined specific environment-focused green attributes. The response towards green restaurant practices can vary according to restaurants like casual, upscale casual, and fast-food restaurants (Noone et al., 2007). Healthy and fresh food, like organic, grown locally, are some of the green food practices which are liked by diners (Namkung and Jang, 2013). In an Upscale restaurant, green food practices are very much in the way, and this is why they are liked more by the customers than a quick-service restaurant.

The safety and security of customers and their belongings should be the priority of hotels and restaurants. Customers should feel comfortable and secure in that environment. Front desk executives play an essential role in increasing customers' overall satisfaction when entering the place. Welcome notes and body language create a lasting impression in the customer's mind (Slevitch et al., 2013). Nowadays, a customer has better knowledge about environmental issues, so hotels and restaurant owners follow the novel idea of using

energy-efficient devices to provide an eco-friendly atmosphere to their customers (Robinot and Giannelloni, 2010). Leftover food is a regular eating feature for a restaurant. But the best part is to allow customers to take away the leftover food in containers that are recyclable (Namkung and Jang, 2013). There are different stakeholders in the restaurant business, like owners, customers, and managers. They all vary in terms of their preference and adoption of green products and services. The owners and managers of a green restaurant prefer to offer green products and services like organic food, green food certification to customers because customers are willing to pay a higher price for availing these services (Kwok and Huang, 2019).

Given such high consumption rates, it is obvious that unrestricted restaurant activities will lead to the depletion of natural resources. Such activities include the building of restaurant facilities that devastate the natural environment; the wasteful use of resources such as water, electricity, and gas; the use of non-recyclable materials and inadequate recycling procedures; the use of hazardous chemicals products; and the reckless handling of resources and products in general; and exposure to carbon emissions from regular supply deliveries as well as employee and guest transportation to and from the restaurant site. Restaurants and commercial kitchens, on the whole, use a lot of energy. It shows the significant effect the restaurant industry has on the climate, emphasizing the need for restaurants to embrace the "green" movement and adopt environmentally friendly practices.

DiPietro, Robin, Yang, and Charles (2013) also examined customers' perception and their behavioral intention towards green practices followed by green-certified, Up-scale restaurants. Female diners were more conscious regarding green practices as compared to men. Highly educated customers were more concerned with green products and services. It was also found that those who used to follow certain green practices at their respective home were more inclined towards coming back to a green restaurant.

Some study, on the other hand, indicates that adopting green or environmentally friendly practices has a positive impact on consumer buying behavior and loyalty in the hospitality industry. According to a new survey, 70% of customers were willing to pay more for a "green" restaurant experience (Dewald et al., 2014). Jeong et al. (2014) investigated the effect of environmentally sustainable practices on green image and consumer attitudes. Customers' perceptions of green practices were found to positively influence a restaurant's green image, which in turn positively influences customers' attitudes toward the restaurants. According to a recent study conducted in Taiwan by Hu et al. (2010), more than half of the respondents (53.7 per cent) were willing to pay an extra 2-6 per cent of the price to eat at a green restaurant, and 33.1 per cent were willing to pay an extra 8-12 per cent. According to the report, more than 67 per cent of respondents' value restaurants that use local produce on their menus. Since, as compared to imported or foreign food, the transport energy used and carbon emissions generated during the production and marketing phase of local food is comparatively lower, which benefits the reduction of the carbon footprint and alleviation of the global greenhouse effect (Jones, 2010; Chen et al., 2013).

**Green practices, customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions in restaurants**

Understanding which factors influence consumer return intention is critical to comprehending the customer's wants and needs. Although overall quality is critical in determining whether or not a consumer will return, satisfaction is the most important factor. The ability to assess and apply customer satisfaction standards is a critical first step in ensuring long-term customer retention. Word-of-mouth is another important factor in generating return intention. Positive word-of-mouth has been shown to raise sales by attracting new customers, which increases the percentage of repeat customers; while negative word-of-mouth has been shown to do the reverse in greater quantity. Soderlund and Ohman (2005) discovered that intentions as wants (IW) had a greater effect on return actions than intentions as desires (IE) when they examined the consumer in terms of choosing to return and expecting to return. Essentially, the customer's satisfaction with the restaurant influenced the customer's desire to return. Second, in addition to having to return, the customer's satisfaction influenced the customer's anticipation of returning. That is, if a customer was pleased with their experience at a restaurant, they expressed a greater desire or yearning to return, while they may hope to return if the satisfaction rating was lower. Overall, there are similarities between purpose and actions, but what the consumer does and wants to do is difficult to quantify. This is not to say that research demonstrating behavior is more reliable than research demonstrating intention, but few studies following up on return behavior based on return intention have been conducted.

Previous research studies have shown that customers' perception of green practices or attributes of restaurants is different from each other. Customers may be food-focused or health-conscious. Natural and organic food emerged as the most crucial attribute for health-conscious customers, which might affect their re-patronage decision. Food-focused customers, taste, and food variety emerged as the most critical factors that affect their satisfaction and future behavioral intentions. Lien, Huang, and Chang (2012) found that the consumers who were conscious of green practices at restaurants showed their willingness to pay more and come back to the same restaurant again and again. Jang et al. (2013) has also found that a restaurant that highlights using natural resources for food preparation and conservation, locally grown ingredients, and nutritional information on menu card affect customers' satisfaction and choice of restaurants.

To enhance customer satisfaction, it is more important to be focused on the food-related aspect, such as healthy and fresh menu choices, use of organic and seasonal fruits and vegetables, than concentrating on environmental-related attributes (Namkung and Jang, 2013). Green practices in a restaurant satisfy customers' humane and social dispositions by creating a sense of social contribution towards a safe and green environment. Customers differ from one another in terms of their personal needs. Still, customers' inherent requirements are fulfilled by following or making a contribution towards green practices, which eventually leads to customer satisfaction. The findings have shown that the green food practices could gratify customers' peculiar needs and ultimately lead to a positive response. Apart from the studies that found that customer prefers green food over any other restaurant attribute, some studies concluded that environmentally safe or energy-efficient equipment and practices are equally important. Decomposable products, reducing energy consumption and checking its wastage, and serving nearby grown food are the primary green practices followed in restaurants.

Customer satisfaction and their behavioral intentions are greatly influenced by their acceptance of green practices followed by a restaurant. If customers perceive green practices favourably, it leads to happiness; otherwise, the restaurant manager and staff's failure to offer appropriate green services may lead to customer dissatisfaction (Robinot and Giannelloni, 2010). Sustainable development concerning the hospitality industry aims to least harm the flora and fauna of a place as an outcome of services and products offered. There can be several antecedents of customer satisfaction depending upon different demographic profiles. How do customers manage waste, use natural resources of consumption at their home to determine their choice for a hotel or restaurant (Home and Raymond, 2013)? Waste management is critical since waste is noticeable and takes up a lot of space, and waste collection may be an expensive proposition for restaurants. This finding is also in line with the 2015 NRA prognosis, which indicated that reducing food waste would be a critical cost-cutting technique in the future (Baloglu, Raab, and Malek, 2020). In various studies, customer satisfaction results in a recommendation to friends, relatives, and colleagues. It also results in customers' re-patronage intentions (Anderson et al. 1994; Reichheld, 1996; Brady et al. 2002; Soderlund, and Ohman, 2005). The perception of youth towards attributes of the green restaurant was studied by Baltescu (2017). It was found that green food items on the menu attracted the most. Child revealed their intention to visit again to those restaurants which offer healthy menu items.

## **THEORETICAL MODEL AND HYPOTHESES**

The majority of the research on green practices in restaurants had been conducted out of India. Very little is known about how green practices in restaurants contribute to enhancing the overall satisfaction of customers and their behavioral intentions. Based on the discussion mentioned above, there is a strong need to study this relationship in the Indian restaurants' context. The following research questions will be addressed in this study:

Q1. Do green practices in a restaurant affect customer satisfaction?

Q2 Do customer satisfaction from green practices in a restaurant affect their behavioral intentions?

Q3. Do green practices directly have any influence on the behavioral intentions of customers in a restaurant?

The following hypothesis is suggested based on the above research questions.

*H1: There is a significant impact of green practices of a restaurant on customer satisfaction.*

*H1a: There is a significant impact of green food practices of a restaurant on customer satisfaction.*

*H1b: There is a significant impact of the green services of a restaurant on customer satisfaction.*

*H1c: There is a significant impact of green energy efficient practices of a restaurant on customer satisfaction.*

*H2: Customer satisfaction from green practices has a significant impact on the behavioral intentions of customers.*

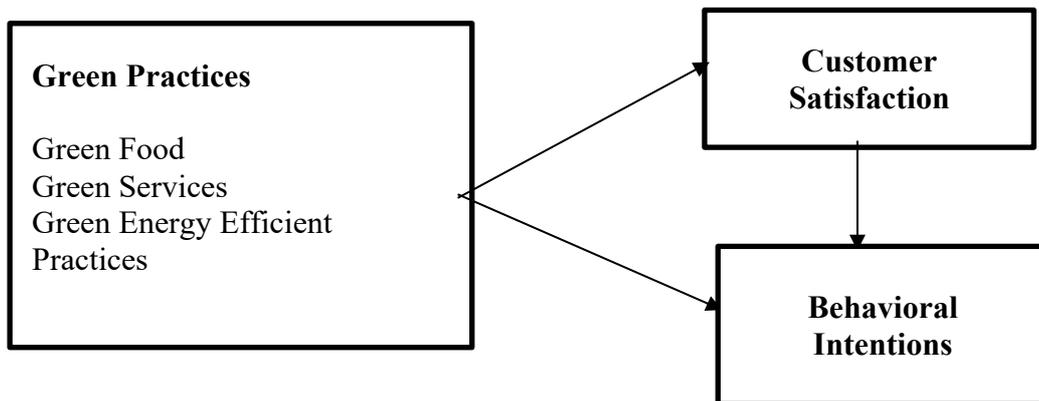
*H3: There is a significant impact of the green practices of a restaurant on customers' behavioral intentions.*

*H3a: There is a significant impact of the green food practices of a restaurant on customers' behavioral intentions.*

*H3b: There is a significant impact of the green services of a restaurant on customers' behavioral intentions.*

*H3c: There is a significant impact of green energy efficient practices of a restaurant on customers' behavioral intentions.*

**Figure 1. Research Model**



## METHODOLOGY

### Research methodology

The study explores the influence of green practices in a restaurant on customer satisfaction, and their behavioral intentions. This segment of the study describes and justifies the methods and measures that have been used in the study. The study is descriptive, and the non-probability convenience sampling method was used to collect data from customers.

### Population and sample size

Data were collected from the customers who visited Full-service restaurants in Haryana, India. For this purpose, five top districts were chosen based on the number of restaurants and the district's per-capita income. The selected districts are--Gurugram, Faridabad, Panchkula, Karnal, and Ambala. In the present study, structural equation modeling was employed to understand the relationship between the green practices of restaurants, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions. Various researchers had given their recommendations regarding the minimum sample size required to perform Structural Equation Modeling. According to Williams and Holahan (1994), on a minimum sample size of 100, SEM can be achieved. Kelloway (1998) and Marsh, Balla, and McDonald (1988) suggested that 200 should be the sample size to get valid goodness-of-fit measures. Data was collected from 500 customers in total, out of which 41 respondents did not fill the questionnaire correctly, and 23 questionnaires were found to be incomplete. They were not considered while tabulating the data. Finally, data from 436 customers were collected.

**Table 1. Description of the respondents (N=436)**

<b>Demographics</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Age</b>		
Below 20	88	20.3
21-30	128	29.4
31-40	142	30.6
41-50	37	7.3
51-60	27	6.1
61 and above	14	3.3
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	207	47.6
Female	229	52.4
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Married	304	69.8
Unmarried	132	30.2
<b>Education</b>		
10th	72	16.5
12th	106	24.3
Graduation	149	34.3
Post-Graduation	58	13.3
Doctorate	51	11.6
<b>Occupation</b>		
Students	54	12.4
Self-Employed	85	19.5
Private Sector	155	35.6
Public Sector	13	3.0
Professionals	129	29.5

Data were taken from male and female respondents. 47.6 per cent of males and 52.4 % of females were contacted to gather data. The maximum number of respondents were from the age group 31-40 (30.6%). 29.4% belonged to the age group 21-30. 20.3% of customers belonged to the age group below 20. The least number of respondents were reported from the age group 61 and above (3.3%), which was followed by the age group 41-50 (7.3%) and at last from the age group 51-60 (6.1). 69.8% of the respondents were married, and 30.2% were unmarried. As far their educational qualification is concerned, 34.3% possess a graduation degree, 24.3% had passed the secondary examination, and 16.5% passed 10<sup>th</sup>. However, 13.3% have done post-graduation, and merely 11.6% of respondents possess a Doctorate. As far as respondents' occupation is concerned, 35.6% of respondents were found to be in the private sector, 29.5% were professionals, 12.4% were students and 19.5 % were self-employed, and 3% were employed in the public sector.

## Questionnaire and measures

To fulfil the research objectives, the survey method was opted to collect data from the customer. A structured questionnaire was prepared. The questionnaire was divided into four parts. The first part focused on knowing the opinion of respondents towards the green practices in a restaurant. Green attributes were adopted from the studies of Mishra and Gupta, 2018, Schubert et al., 2010, Yu et al., 2018, Bitner, 1992, Chen, Cheng, and Hsu (2015), Jalil et al., 2018, Muksat et al., 2019, Kwok et al. 2016, and were developed into statements for the study. The sub-constructs studied under green atmospheric dimensions were: Green Food practices (GF1-GF4), Green Energy Efficient Devices (GEE1-GEE4), Green Services (GS1-GS3). These sub-constructs were developed into 11 statements. The second section comprised statements measuring customer satisfaction about green practices. Customer satisfaction was measured through 3 statements developed by (Oliver, 1980; Oliver and Swan, 1989; Choi and Kandampully, 2018). Finally, the behavioral intentions of customers were analyzed through 3 statements which were taken from the studies of Maxham and Netemeyer (2002), Zeithaml et al. (1996), Kim and Lee (2011), Ryu et al. (2012). Table 2 lists the descriptions of measurement items for the constructs of the current study. To check the validity of the questionnaire pilot testing was done. Data were collected from 30 customers. Their response was recorded, and necessary modifications were done. IBM SPSS (version 12.0) using AMOS (version 18.0) was used for analyzing the data. Correlation analysis, confirmative factor analysis (CFA), and structural equation modeling (SEM) were used for the statistical analysis of data. The conceptual research model was analyzed by employing Confirmatory Factor Analysis. To check the overall fitness of the model, the Chi-square technique was applied. The comparative fit index (CFI), the goodness of fit index (GFI); the Tucker-lewis index (TLI); the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) were performed to analyze the complete fit of the model.

**Table 2. Means and standard deviations of measurement items**

Construct	Label Items	M	SD
<b>Green Food Practices</b>	GF1: The restaurant serves fresh seasonal food.	3.92	1.25
	GF2: The restaurant prefers to serve locally grown food.	3.85	1.35
	GF3: The restaurant offers a variety of organic food	3.87	1.05
	GF4: Energy saving lighting and equipment are used in the restaurant.		
<b>Green Energy Efficient</b>	GEE1 The temperature inside the restaurant is comfortable.	3.37	1.28
	GEE2 The washrooms have less flow water taps to save water.	3.91	0.99
<b>practices</b>	GEE3 The restaurant has star-rated energy efficient appliances.	3.25	3.78
	GEE4 The restaurant uses solar energy to heat water.		

INFLUENCE OF GREEN PRACTICES ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND BEHAVIORAL INTENTIONS

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<b>Green Services</b>	GS1: The staff behaved in a professional and courteous manner.	3.62	1.11
	GS2: The staff has complete knowledge of the food items mentioned in the menu card.	3.49	1.28
	GS3: The food is served at a appropriate temperature.	3.42	1.25
<b>Customer Satisfaction</b>	F1: The meal and service offered by the restaurant ultimately met your needs.	3.56	1.34
	F2: Your decision to dine at this restaurant was a wise one.	3.42	1.31
	F3: As a whole, you enjoyed this restaurant.	3.27	1.18
<b>Behavioral Intentions</b>	G1: You will recommend this restaurant to your friends, family, or others.	3.67	1.35
	G2: You will say positive things about this restaurant.	3.45	1.46
	G3: You would dine at this restaurant in the future.	3.31	1.65

## Results

To check the research model's overall fit, confirmatory factor analysis was done, and SEM followed it. As suggested by Marsh and Hocevar (1988), the value of chi-square/df= 3.159 was found to be within the acceptable class interval of 2-5. Comparative Fit Index was found to be 0.967, Goodness of Fit Index shows the calculated population covariance accounts for a part of the variance in GFI. AGFI encourages parsimony in the same way as R2 does. It was 0.918, Tucker -Lewis -Index is a parsimony-adjusted index. Values closer to 0 represent a good fit. It was 0.960. All of these were found to be above 0.90. The root means square error (RMSEA) was 0.07, which was less than 0.10 (Steiger, 1990). The average variance extracted (AVE) refers to the R2s for items within a factor. All the AVE values from all the dimensions were above 0.5 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Convergent validity was confirmed as the AVE of all the variables was more significant than the minimum level of 0.5 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). AVE and squared correlation among the constructs were compared to analyze the discriminant validity. Discriminant validity was found between the constructs and sub-constructs. Composite reliabilities (C.R.) of all variables were more significant than 0.8. Table 2 shows the constructs' reality through AVEs, and C.R. Cronbach's alpha and fit indices have also been established. The Table shows that Cronbach's alpha values of all attributes were more significant than the minimum value of 0.7, which indicates an acceptable level of reliability (Nunnally, 1978). The findings showed a high degree of internal consistency among variables.

**Table 3. Construct Validity, Cronbach's alpha, and Fit indices**

Constructs	Items	Loadings	Alpha	CR	AVE
Green Food Practices	GF1	0.71	0.876	1.357	1.293
	GF2	0.84			
	GF3	0.91			
	GF4	0.92			
Green Energy Efficient Practices	GEE1	0.91	0.798	1.235	1.167
	GEE2	0.94			
	GEE3	0.74			
	GEE4	0.72			
Green Services	GS1	0.89	0.876	1.481	1.536
	GS2	0.90			
	GS3	0.87			
Customer Satisfaction	F2	0.50	0.874	1.169	1.061
	F3	0.87			
	F4	0.83			
Behavioral Intentions	G1	0.86	0.904	0.892	0.650
	G2	0.88			
	G3	0.86			

**Fit indices: Chi Square=350.625; df=111; Chi Square/df=3.159; CFI=0.96; GFI=0.91; TLI=0.96; RMSEA=0.07**

By the application of SEM, the inter-relationship among variables was analyzed.

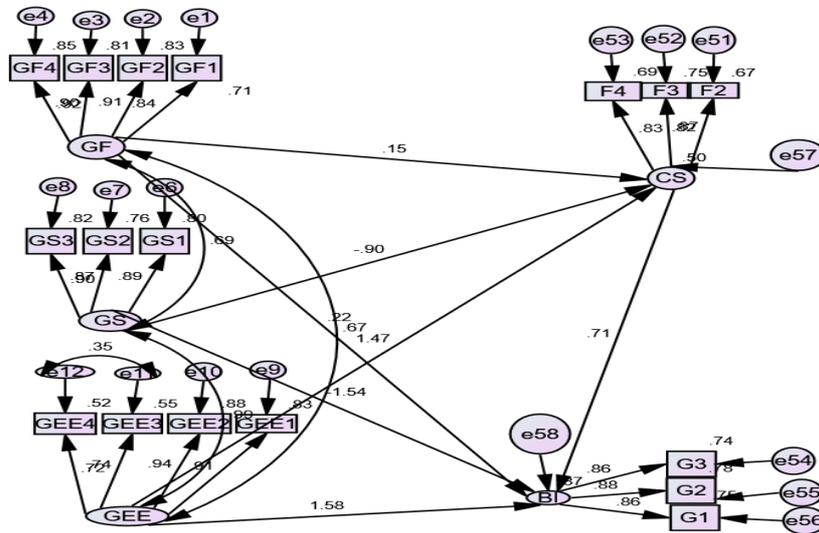
### **Structural equation model**

Structural equation modelling is a catch-all phrase for a variety of statistical models that are used to test the validity of substantive hypotheses using empirical data. In terms of statistics, it's a progression of general linear modelling (GLM) procedures like ANOVA and multiple regression analysis. One of the key benefits of SEM (in comparison to other GLM applications) is that it may be used to investigate correlations between latent components

that are represented by numerous measures. It also works with cross-sectional and longitudinal data, as well as experimental and non-experimental data. SEM uses a confirmatory (hypothesis testing) technique for multivariate analysis of a structural theory, which specifies causal relationships between many variables.

Figure 2 and Table 4. shows the result of the structural equation modeling. In the structural equation model the influence of green practices followed in a restaurant ---- Green Food Practices (GF), Green Energy Efficient practices (GEE) and Green Services (GS) on Customer Satisfaction (CS) and their Behavioral Intentions (BI) has been presented. It is evident from the Table that green food practices and green energy efficient services are significantly associated with both customer satisfaction and their behavioral intention. As per the findings reported in the Table, green food practices positively predicted customer satisfaction and behavioral purposes, valued at .150 and .670, respectively, thus accepting H1a and H3a. Similarly, green energy efficient methods positively predicted customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions, valued at 2.290 and 1.58, respectively, thus acknowledging H1c and H3c. It is interesting to note that green food practices negatively predicted customer satisfaction and behavioral intentions, valued at -.940 and -1.54. The p-value is more significant than .233; thus, H1b is rejected. Customer satisfaction arising out of the green practices followed in a restaurant came out as a strong predictor of behavioral intentions of customers with respect to all the three statements and are found to be significantly correlated with value .941 and therefore supported H2. All the hypotheses were supported considerably except for green food practices and customer satisfaction. The p-value for this relationship is less than the 0.05 level of significance, with a value of -.940.

**Figure 2. Structural Equation Model**



**GF=Green Food Practices, GS= Green Energy Efficient practices, GS=Green Services, CS=Customer satisfaction, BI=Behavioral Intentions**

**Table 4. Results of hypothesis**

Hypothesis	Relationships	Beta	S.E	t-value	P value	Decision
H1a	CS <--- GF	.150	.221	2.864	.004	Supported
H1b	CS <--- GS	-.940	1.368	-1.193	.233	Not Supported
H1c	CS<--- GEE	2.290	1.922	1.706	.048	Supported
H2	BI <--- CS	.941	.915	19.848	***	Supported
H3a	BI <--- GF	.670	.467	12.564	***	Supported
H3b	BI <--- GS	-1.54	1.643	1.571	.0467	Supported
H3c	BI <--- GEE	1.58	1.649	1.575	.0479	Supported

**(P-value is significant at 0.001 level)**

## Discussion and conclusion

The present study is descriptive and has explored the influence of green practices on customer satisfaction and their behavioral intentions. Specifically, the impact of green food, green procedures, and green energy-efficient practices on customer satisfaction and their behavioral purposes was analyzed. The study results revealed that out of all the three sub-constructs of green practices, green food and green energy-efficient practices emerged as the most critical variables responsible for customer satisfaction in a restaurant, thus accepting the hypothesis H1a and H1c. The results showed that the availability of fresh, seasonal, and organic food was preferred by the maximum number of customers, ultimately leading to customer satisfaction. Green energy-efficient practices also influenced customer satisfaction levels; moreover, customer satisfaction from green energy-efficient practices emerged as a significant determinant of customers' future behavioral intentions, thus confirming H1c. Customers liked the use of energy-efficient devices like solar water heaters and less power-consuming lights such as CFL, LEDs etc. These findings are consistent with a previous study conducted by Mishra and Gupta (2019), which revealed that green food and green energy-efficient practices are liked by customers, which further developed their behavioral intention to revisit to have positive word of mouth. Customers' behavioral preferences suggested that as a result of satisfaction, which they had got from green practices, they would dine at the same restaurant in the future, spread positive word-of-mouth, and recommend it to their friends, family, and colleagues. All the green food practices, i.e., green food, energy-efficient practices, and green service practices, emerged as the most important triggers of behavioral intentions; however, the results did not support H1b concerning customer satisfaction. The conceptual model defined the inter-relationship

among the three variables described above. The results of the study are found to be consistent with the previous studies (Mishra and Gupta, 2018; Schubert et al., 2010; Bitner, 1992; Edwards and Gustafsson, 2008; Heung and Gu, 2012; Wu and Liang, 2009; Park et al. 2016; Milliman, 1982, Harrington, Ottenbachen, and Way, 2013; Sobol and Barry, 1980; Shahzadi et al., 2018; Thusyanthy and Tharanikaran, 2017; Chu and Choi 2011; Ryu and Jang, 2008; DiPietro et al., 2013).

The findings of the study will prove beneficial to Indian restaurateurs. A lot of literature is available on identifying the influence of green practices in a restaurant on customer satisfaction and behavioral intention in a foreign context. Still, there has been limited research when it comes to the Indian restaurant industry. The sub-constructs taken up for the study like green food practices, services, energy-efficient practices could suggest improved ways to satisfy customers in an eco-friendly manner. These attributes are essential for restaurant operators to design better strategies that would increase customer traffic and be ahead of others. Because green measures are a "value-added business strategy," restaurateurs should continue to use organic, biodegradable, or recycled materials to reduce energy consumption and waste. This method should help to attract customers' attention and encourage them to come back for more. Previous researchers have emphasised that understanding the long-term effects on the natural environment is also an important factor to consider (Sukia and Sukib, 2020).

The results proved that green practices positively influence the satisfaction level of customers and their willingness to recommend, revisit, and have positive word-of-mouth for the restaurant and the staff. The outcomes follow prior research conclusions that established a positive relationship between consumers' perceptions of green practices in a restaurant and their willingness to say positive word of mouth (Han and Kim, 2009). The findings of the research have given a new insight into the increasing preference and liking of customers toward green practices of Full-service restaurants. Restaurants could serve organic cuisine and employ recycled-content packaging or biodegradable take-away containers, which were more convenient, healthy, and environmentally beneficial. Furthermore, restaurants must warn consumers about environmental issues by including information on menus or through restaurant displays (Tan et al., 2018).

### **Managerial implications**

The transition of the restaurant business model to include green technology has not been and will not be easy. Over the last decade, progress has been building, but it is obvious that much more needs to happen. It is up to dedicated green organizations and forward-thinking restaurant operators to lead the way and show that adopting a more sustainable way of running a food company is both feasible and highly beneficial to the restaurant and society. The study's findings showed a positive connotation between green practices followed in a restaurant, customer satisfaction, and further behavioral intentions. Keeping these findings in mind, Indian restaurateurs should emphasize green techniques as a part of their marketing plan. The restaurateurs should change their perception regarding providing delicious food only. Now the customer is environmentally conscious and wants to have organic, fresh, and seasonal food, green services. Serving food at the right temperature, comfortable

temperature inside the restaurant, and energy-efficient devices for cooking, cleaning, waste management, and manufacturing activities are also of paramount importance. In terms of water conservation, respondents believed that restaurants regularly inspected for leaks and repaired them. According to the respondents, restaurants frequently employed tiny portions of food supplies to reduce food waste (Loeuring, 2021). The study's findings might help increase customer footfall in the restaurant by providing green services to them. It will make their experience memorable in terms of consuming green food and services. For the restaurant industry, the study's findings may be used to help restaurants decide which green practices to adopt to project a green image to their customers. According to the results of this report, when it comes to dining, consumers are searching for unique green attributes. These characteristics may have a positive effect on their decision to return. This research could also be used by restaurants to assess green practices that are both economical to adopt and would increase the likelihood of patrons returning by capitalizing on the green trend. So, Indian restaurants need to realize the importance of indulging in green restaurant practices.

### **Limitations and future research**

The limited sample size is the main limitation of this study, so the findings may not be generalized beyond the population. Future researchers may take up a large sample to get representative results. The following significant limitation is that the present study has not identified the moderating effect of demographic variables on a restaurant's preference. This could be a part of future studies. The present study took a limited number of constructs. Future researchers can undertake some more constructs better to understand the influence of green practices in a restaurant. There is a lot of research scope to be done in the Indian restaurant industry, which could guide restaurant operators to do their restaurant business profitably and ecologically safe. The study applies to other establishments like hotels and other restaurants such as Quick service restaurants and Fine-dining restaurants.

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