

The Importance of Green Service Practices in Travel Agent Services: A Conceptual Framework

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to describe in general the importance of Green Service Practices in travel agent services. This research is qualitative research. The research method used is the library research method. The research population is journal articles that contain green services. The sampling technique used was purposive and accidental sampling. Data analysis was carried out descriptively qualitatively. This study found that Green Service Practices have a very important role in travel agent services. Besides being beneficial internally for the company itself, it is also beneficial externally for its environment.

Keywords: environment, green Service Practices, travel agents.

Introduction

Green services are services that meet the elements of three aspects, namely environmental, social and economic aspects. Services can be said to be green services if they support the preservation of the natural, socio-cultural environment and are economically profitable and sustainable. Green service can be applied to various fields or areas such as tourism (including travel agencies (BPW) or generally known as travel agents, hotels, restaurants, tourist attractions and other supporting components), trade, transportation, logistics, energy, information and communication technology and industry.

From the point of view of service providers, tourism is actually a service provided to people or groups of people who travel from their place of origin to another place with the aim of having fun and using tourist facilities such as transportation, accommodation, tourist attractions and ancillaries (services). other tourism supporters such as banks, money changers, pharmacies, etc.).

Tourism is considered one of the main contributors to greenhouse gases emissions and environmental degradation (Pang et al., 2013; Merli et al., 2019), tourism activities can destroy the natural resources because of overuse and poor green management practices (Tambovceva, 2010). However, tourism activities depend on the availability and accessibility of natural resources, so they must be in a good condition and not polluted (Luo & Deng, 2008; Phillips & House, 2009). Therefore, there's a great need to conserve the environment, and the need for businesses to take supportive actions to lessen the negative impacts on the environment and keep it clean (McGuire, 2010). In most developing countries, the concept of green practices is little, few tourism organizations have launched green strategies to ensure their green practices and be committed to environmental matters (Chigora, 2015). The application of green practices has become vital to tourism operations and activities (Erdogan & Baris, 2007). A clean and pure environment is the main component of tourism quality service and is considered one of the most important factors for tourism and travel development (Tambovceva, 2010). According to Kim et al. (2017: 229), green practices can be defined as "a profitable business strategy that adds value to tourism operations that involve environmental conservation initiatives". Green management practices will provide opportunities for sustainability and long-term recreation activities (Merli et al., 2019). Travel agents organize packages that allow tourists to interact with the physical environment (natural – man-made), such visits can be gotten worse by tourists' irresponsible activities (Mustapha et al., 2018). To achieve the continuity of the tourism industry, travel agents should 'go green' and encourage tourists to behave friendly with the environment

(Merli et al., 2019).

One type of tourism service business that operates in the service sector is a travel agency (BPW) or generally known as a travel agent. BPW is a service business that plans, sells and implements or handles tourist trips. Planning in the sense of designing/arranging tourism products in the form of tour packages consisting of transportation rental including driver and tour guide, accommodation room rental, entrance tickets to tourist attractions and meal costs at restaurants. Selling the tour packages created through travel agents and organizing trips or handling tourists who buy the tour packages. Law no. 9 of 1990 concerning Tourism, the second part of article 12 states that a Tourist Travel Bureau (BPW) is a business providing planning services and/or tourism services and implementation.

The types of BPW can also be differentiated based on the focus of the services they provide. Several types of BPW that are commonly known are travel agents, tour operators, online travel agents, and destination management companies. Each type of BPW has a different focus and services, depending on tourists' needs.

Travel agents are BPWs who focus more on selling plane tickets and hotel accommodation. Meanwhile, tour operators focus more on arranging tour packages which include plane tickets, accommodation, transportation and tourist activities. Online travel agent is a BPW that uses an online platform to make it easier for tourists to order tickets or hotel reservations. Meanwhile, the destination management company is BPW which is responsible for managing all tourism activities in a destination, starting from transportation, accommodation, to tourist activities.

Research on green service practices was conducted by Wong et.al (2013). The concept of green service practice is divided into two, namely green service delivery or main service (core service) and green service support or after sales service. Study results indicate that green service delivery and support contributed to cost reduction and environmental performance. However, performance impact was strengthened by the adoption of uncertified environment management system (EMS) instead of certified EMS. This study contributes to the conceptual development of green service practices, the understanding of their impact on cost and environmental performance, and the role of EMS in supporting service-oriented firms to achieve such performance. Cocca dan Ganz (2015) juga meneliti tentang green service. The article aimed at providing a contribution to service engineering and related disciplines in the recently discussed concept of ecological sustainability. Besides the theoretical contribution of the article, the survey has provided new findings for business practice. For the technical service providers surveyed, an integration of green services in the portfolio offers the opportunity to create an additional customer benefit and to increase customer satisfaction. At the same time is also clear that green services already represent an important economic factor for some companies. The prerequisites for this are a detailed analysis of the customers'needs, the systematic development of green offerings and the consistent implementation within the organisation. Another important aspect is to maintain and improve competitiveness. As the trend of sustainability is gaining ground in more and more areas, it is just a matter of time before it will penetrate the service sector further. It is assumed that sustainability is increasingly regarded as a prerequisite in many offerings and that accordingly standards for green services are emerging. However, deficits often exist in the operational implementation. The study shows that companies that choose a holistic approach in offering green services are the successful ones. As well as combining ecological, economic and social aspects, successful companies take organisational and staff issues into account to a much greater extent during the implementation. Accompanying measures are necessary to raise awareness and to develop competence in all stakeholders, with the aim of creating a corporate culture that brings economy in line with ecology and thus ensures the long-term competitiveness of the company.

The aim of this research is to describe in general the importance of Green Service Practices in travel agents.

Methodology

This research is qualitative research. The research method used is the library research method. The research population is journal articles containing about green service. The sampling technique used was purposive and accidental sampling. Data analysis was carried out descriptively qualitatively. Content Analysis is a research technique used to determine certain sentences and concepts in the form of a collection of text (Tasya & Cheisviyanny, 2019; Priyo dan Haryanto. 2022).

Results and discussions

Results

To ensure that a travel agent can provide environmentally friendly services, there are three aspects that must be considered, namely environmental aspects, socio-cultural aspects and economic aspects as in Figure 1.

1. Environmental aspects:

Maintaining the sustainability of the natural environment by reducing/saving, reusing, reusing natural resources such as energy and water by utilizing environmentally friendly equipment and technology.

Avoid using equipment that is not environmentally friendly such as plastic bottles or items made from plastic. Processing waste to make it useful, reducing gas emissions by using environmentally friendly equipment and technology (green IT).

Digitizing and avoiding the use of paper in order to save trees from exploitation due to paper making in green administration (green office).

Designing tour packages with eco-friendly components such as green transportation, green hotels / accommodations, green restaurants, green attractions.

2. Social aspects:

Developing environmentally friendly behavior or green behavior in travel agent services. Developing green behavior in travel agents will, over time, form a sustainable social culture or green culture. This is not only beneficial for the travel agent itself, but also has a positive influence on the interests of tourism stakeholders.

3. Economic aspects:

Implementing green marketing (price, product, production and distribution) which benefits travel agents. Green online marketing is more than just communicating the resource-friendly actions of a company to the public. It is also about the responsible handling of data and the interests of users, as well as more transparency in communication and its mechanisms. Within this context, the critical observation of the big-name multipliers plays an important role as well. These are the global players Google, Apple, Facebook and Amazon, or GAFA for short.

Green service practices contribute to stability and continuity of economics of potential travelers to support green travel agents.

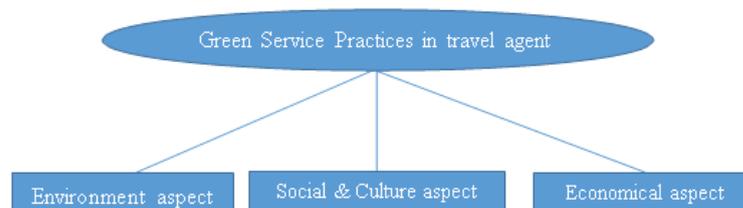


Figure 1. A conceptual model

Discussions

The importance of green service practices for internal management can save travel agents' costs, such as minimizing energy consumption, for example using fluorescents bulbs which save energy to save up to 75% of energy, turn off unused electronic compliances, control the temperature of the air-conditioning to lower the carbon emission, and save energy; reduction of water consumption; printing only the important documents, in addition to printing on both sides of the paper, and digitalizing their business (Fadhil, 2015).

The importance of green service practices for external travel agent or stakeholders. Tourism stake holders according to UNWTO (2005) are: national governments; local governments with specific competence in tourism matters; tourism establishments and tourism enterprises, including their associations; institutions engaged in financing tourism projects; tourism employees, tourism professionals and tourism consultants; trade unions of tourism employees; tourism education and training centers; travelers, including business travelers, and visitors to tourism destinations, sites and attractions; local populations and host communities at tourism destinations through their representatives; other juridical and natural persons having stakes in tourism development including non-governmental organizations specializing in tourism and directly involved in tourism projects and the supply of tourism services." The importance of green service practices

When organizations incorporate green concepts, organizations want to interpret the wants and needs to operate in a green way (Sharma et al., 2021) and have beliefs about the importance of balancing economic efficiency, social justice, and environmental accountability (Rizvi and Garg, 2021). When an organization engages in the green practices, it not only carries out its social responsibility but also prepares the best investment in developing the new resources and capabilities, that resulting in a sustainable competitive advantage (Mohezar et al., 2016).

Empirical evidence reveals that organizational involvement in pro-environmental practices can affect future business prospects, such as superior business performance (Molenaar and Kessler, 2017), strengthened brand reputation, fulfilled legal compliance (Hasan et al., 2019), and cost savings (Makower, 2021).

Conclusions

This research found that Green Service Practices have a very important role for travel agents themselves because they can provide economic benefits, in addition to the natural and social environment. Apart from that, it is also externally beneficial for tourism stakeholders which also covers the three aspects, namely the natural environment, socio-cultural and economic.

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