Driving Environmental Practices in the Egyptian Restaurant Sector: The Influence of Stakeholder Salience Attributes

The paper is extracted from a PhD thesis under the supervision of Dr. Adam Dennett[1]

prepared by

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Abstract

Environmental sustainability has become an urgent matter globally. Due to the vast amount of resource usage and high environmental impacts, the hospitality industry strives to adopt greener measures. Similar to most contexts, the hotel sector in Egypt surpasses restaurant businesses in terms of their environmental status. This includes the Green Star Hotel Program established by the Ministry of Tourism in 2015. Although the restaurant sector in Egypt is extensive, with 40,600 establishments (Euromonitor International, 2018), yet it currently lacks essential support structures for greening its operations. Only very few restaurants in Egypt make efforts to reduce plastic usage by procuring environmental-friendly materials. Stakeholder participation in sustainability adoption is recognized in academic literature, where it is proposed that stakeholder salience attributes can facilitate the application of green practices. Accordingly, a conceptual framework is developed and presented, advocating that stakeholder engagement can drive the adoption of environmental practices in Egyptian restaurants. In other words, the network of stakeholders, through exercising their salience attributes, can facilitate green application and thereby help restaurants become more sustainable.

Keywords: green management, hospitality, restaurants, Egypt, stakeholder theory, stakeholder salience.

الملخص العربي

أصبحت الاستدامة البيئية قضية عاجلة على مستوى العالم. نظرًا لكمية الاستهلاك الهائلة للموارد وتأثيراتها البيئية الكبيرة، تسعى صناعة الضيافة إلى اعتماد تدابير أكثر صديقة للبيئة. على غرار معظم السياقات، يفوق قطاع الفنادق في مصر قطاع المطاعم من حيث الوضع البيئي، ويشمل ذلك برنامج الفندق النجمي الأخضر الذي أنشئته وزارة السياحة في عام 2015. على الرغم من وجود قطاع المطاعم الواسع في مصر، مع 40,600 مؤسسة (من Euromonitor International ، 2018)، إلا أنه يفتقر حاليًا إلى هياكل دعم أساسية لجعل عملياته أكثر صديقة للبيئة. يقوم فقط عدد قليل جدًا من المطاعم في مصر ببذل جهود لتقليل استخدام البلاستيك من خلال تحصيل مواد صديقة للبيئة. يُعترف بمشاركة أصحاب المصلحة في اعتماد الاستدامة في الأدب الأكاديمي، حيث يُقترح أن تكون سمات جاذبية أصحاب المصلحة يمكن أن تسهم في تسهيل تطبيق الممارسات البيئية. ووفقًا لذلك، تم تطوير إطار مفهوم وتقديمه، يؤكد على أن مشاركة أصحاب المصلحة يمكن أن تدفع باتجاه اعتماد الممارسات البيئية في المطاعم المصرية. بمعنى آخر، يمكن لشبكة أصحاب المصلحة، من خلال ممارسة سمات جاذبيتهم، تسهيل تطبيق الأساليب البيئية وبالتالي مساعدة المطاعم على أن تصبح أكثر استدامة.

Introduction

Hospitality businesses are constantly scrutinized and questioned for their sustainability efforts due to the harm resulting from their operations i.e., products and services. Compared with the lodging sector, restaurants lag behind in adopting environmental measures, with the purpose of protecting and conserving the environment. Therefore, the aim of this research is to explore the barriers restaurants face while implementing green criteria and how the relevant stakeholder groups can help such businesses in becoming more environmental-friendly. Using stakeholder theory, with reference to stakeholder salience, this study highlights the influence of stakeholders on restaurants' realization of their environmental goals. Egypt, categorized by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) as a developing country, has started to take some steps towards environmental sustainability, including Egypt Vision 2030 and hosting of COP27 in 2022.

The hospitality and tourism sector, which contributes around 15% to GDP, prioritizes hotels in terms of green adoption with the establishment of the Green Star Hotel Program, where 29% of hotels are considered green (El Demerdash, 2019). On the contrary, restaurants, around 40,600 establishments, are neglected by the industry and therefore lack the required environmental frameworks to become greener businesses. Furthermore, to date the concept of environmental protection, through the adoption of green practices, is currently considered premature in Egypt. Sobaih et al. (2021) confirm that small tourism and hospitality firms in Egypt have important economic, social and environmental contributions, yet, they are neglected by the government and other regulators, from a sustainability perspective, which is even more apparent post COVID-19. Even though there have been some green initiatives, both by the government and a few private businesses, for example, such as plastic reduction (Aboshady, 2019), yet it still remains vaguely understood by many others, including business owners, society, consumers, etc. Green management, which focuses on environmental protection, through resource conservation and waste reduction, is still not widely prevalent hospitality businesses.

According to Chan and Hsu (2016), there is a lack of research focused on elucidating the connections between stakeholders of hospitality enterprises and environmental management. Empirical research on the impact of stakeholder participation on the formulation of environmental sustainability plans has been insufficiently investigated. Sharma et al. (2020) advocate for research aimed at comprehending the significance of key stakeholders, including governments, suppliers, and NGOs, in the adoption of eco-innovative measures. Meanwhile, Haleem et al. (2022) propose the need for research on how stakeholders can exert pressure on firms operating in the service industry to embrace environmental strategies. Kaur et al. (2022) propose additional investigation on the involvement of key stakeholders, such as the media and NGOs, who are considered significant in achieving a restaurant's environmental and social goals.

Hillman and Keim (2001) validate that establishing connections with stakeholders, including employees, customers, suppliers, and communities, enhances and maintains an organization's competitive edge. First and foremost, it is necessary to define the stakeholder groups. As stated by Damian et al. (2022, pg. 518), "In order to achieve effective stakeholder engagement, it is crucial to identify all relevant stakeholders at the early stages of the process." This necessitates the implementation of a methodical methodology to precisely define and identify stakeholders in various circumstances. Furthermore, Harrison et al. (2015) argue that the concept of value among stakeholders lacks clarity and requires additional research for a more comprehensive understanding. The writers explicitly inquire about the stakeholders' perception of value and its significance to them. Neville and Menguc (2006) propose examining how the interaction of distinct salience attributes, such as power and legitimacy, possessed by diverse stakeholders, can impact the organization.

Therefore, the objective of this study is to explore the barriers to green adoption in the Egyptian restaurant industry and how such businesses can overcome such challenges through stakeholder engagement. Accordingly, a conceptual framework is proposed at the end of this study. The model claims that stakeholders, through their assigned salience attributes, can have the ability to influence and direct restaurants in Egypt to become more

environmental-friendly. The network of stakeholders is seen as means to facilitate and promote the adoption of green management strategies.

Literature Review

Around the world, hospitality/tourism businesses are considered as building blocks to any economy, where Stringam and Partlow (2015, pg. 2) write "The hospitality industry has often been charged with helping to facilitate a global economy, often known as an ambassador to the community or country". This shows that the industry is a critical one, where it positively contributes to developing an economy. However, it is inevitable that the hospitality industry has a big impact on the environment through the high consumption of various resources and waste generation (Filimonau et al., 2019; Baloglu et al., 2020). Even the production of greenhouse gas emissions (Lee et al., 2020) have been cited, where it is presumed toxic particles are generated from hospitality operations, residing in the air, soil and water (Horng et al., 2017; Ashraf et al., 2019) confirming that environmental degradation is high (Baloglu et al., 2020).

In fact, Moosa and He (2021) claim that the hospitality industry needs to engage in environmental protection, in order to be able to sustain in the long run, where resources are extensively consumed, causing high environmental damage (Ozturk et al., 2016). In addition, the inclusion and participation of stakeholders i.e., stakeholder engagement, is common in environmentally sustainable research (Montiel and Delgado-Ceballos, 2014; Chan and Hsu, 2016; Vilchez et al., 2017) and in adopting sustainable practices (Haleem et al., 2022). It can also have positive effects on a firm's sustainable performance (Strand et al., 2015; Silva et al., 2019). Delivering value to firm stakeholders is one of the major outcomes when implementing sustainability objectives (Bocken et al., 2013; Schaltegger et al., 2017). Therefore, the next sections will discuss in greater detail green management, restaurants' environmental impact, hospitality in Egypt and stakeholder theory.

1. Green Management
Green is a word used to refer to environmental aspects, and is interchangeable with other terminology, such as sustainable, eco-friendly, environmental sustainability and environmental-friendly. All these

terminologies are used to refer to environmental preservation or green management which call for managing and maintaining environmental resources on the long-run. In other words, these concepts aim to optimize the consumption of certain resources and minimize the wastes that are generated. Engaging in such practices will greatly allow for the containment of environmental harm, resulting in better environmental preservation. Yucedag et al. (2018) explain that the misuse of natural resources has resulted in environmental damage leading to climate change, pollution and global warming, which in turn negatively affects human life.

Green management practices, tailored around environmental dimensions, can help in achieving sustainability goals (Raharjo, 2019). Wang et al. (2013, pg. 264) write that "Green industry is sustainable industry". This means that adopting green strategies leads the way to a more sustainable environment. Mensah (2019, pg. 10) puts forth that "environmental sustainability is about the natural environment and how it remains productive and resilient to support human life". In other words, it's mainly concerned with protecting the environment and its resources in order to endure future generations.

From a business perspective, Haden et al. (2009, pg. 1052) establish and provide a definition for green management:

> "Green management is the organization-wide process of applying innovation to achieve sustainability, waste reduction, social responsibility, and a competitive advantage via continuous learning and development and by embracing environmental goals and strategies that are fully integrated with the goals and strategies of the organization".

The above definition shows that a green approach to management contributes to sustainability, minimization of waste types, including plastic, paper, hazardous and organic, as well as social development through new and innovative tactics. Such innovations can lead to improved competitive advantage, which can for example, be achieved by means of improved resource efficiency, minimization of costs and satisfaction of the public.

Sustainability, as mentioned previously, is related to the pillars of green management. Svensson and Wagner (2012, pg. 544) describe sustainability as "a company's or an organization's efforts to manage (minimize and optimize) its impact on Earth's life and eco-systems (i.e., E-footprint) and its whole business network (i.e., Total E-Footprint)". In general, nations and businesses globally have started to make effort and work towards becoming more sustainable by trying to minimize the harmful impacts on the future and the depletion of resources (Mensah, 2019). These include the reduction of plastics, combating climate change, the use of clean energy, conserving water and purchasing greener products (Han et al., 2009; Jang et al., 2017; Jang and Zheng, 2020). Applying green practices can have positive effects, both environmental and economical. From an environmental perspective, it is expected that minimizing wastes for example will contribute to environmental protection. Economically, the business can reduce costs due to managing its resource usage (Juliao et al., 2018; Singjai et al., 2018).

1.1 Green management theories

In the academic world, there are multiple theories that have been used by scholars to study green and sustainable management. Of the most common are institutional theory (Gautheir, 2013; Glover et al., 2014; Raab et al., 2018; Gupta and Gupta, 2021), resource dependency theory (Foerstl et al., 2015; Al-Shaer and Zaman, 2018; Rossignoli and Lionzo, 2018), resource-based view (Darcy et al., 2014; Barrutia and Echebarria, 2015; Savino and Shafiq, 2018; Arda et al., 2021), stakeholder theory (Frynas and Yamahaki, 2013; Horisch et al., 2014; Montiel and Delgado-Ceballos, 2014; Vilchez et al., 2017; Schaltegger et al., 2017; Freudenreich et al., 2020) and the theory of planned behavior (Chou et al., 2012; Jang et al., 2015; Chung, 2016; Shen, 2017; Tommasetti et al., 2018; Salzbery, 2019), which are explained in Table 1.

Table 1

Major theories in green and sustainability management

Theory	Meaning
Institutional theory	How organizations choose to behave or respond to external/social pressures (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983).
Resource dependency theory	Explains how external resources, which contribute to organizational success, can influence organizational behaviors (Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978).
Resource-based view (RBV)	Competitive advantage and long-term success depend on a firm's acquisition of unique and valuable resources (Barney, 1991)
Stakeholder theory	A stakeholder is one that can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives. Firms should manage for stakeholders for ultimate value creation (Freeman, 1984)
Theory of planned behavior (TPB)	Intentions to carry out a behavior can be predicted by studying attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 1991).

Resource dependency and Resource-based theories claim that the acquisition of different resources, including financial, human or information, can facilitate the achievement of certain goals. Institutional and stakeholder theories mainly revolve around the concept of internal and external influence to promote organizational change. Lastly, the TPB studies the attitudes and behaviors of people and how such variables affect their perceptions and decision making. The studies in Table 1 have set out to further understand sustainability practices or implementation, examples of which include, how stakeholder pressures may influence the adoption of environmental practices (Vilchez et al., 2017). Others include sustainable supply chains (Foerstl et al., 2015) and sustainable productions (Savino and Shafiq, 2018). In addition, research also investigates managers' (Chou et al., 2012; Salzbery, 2019) and consumers' (Chung, 2016; Shen, 2017) attitudes towards green adoption and consumption, respectively. Another study considers whether the existence of resources leads to sustainability planning (Barrutia and Echebarria, 2015).

These studies confirm that green and sustainability management are topics of attention, there is room and opportunity to yet understand how

businesses can practically engage in sustainable development (Mensah and Enu-Kwesi, 2018; Mensah, 2019), which is considered a challenging task. In specific, research is required into which stakeholders are considered important and how each of these stakeholders can help in implementing and achieving environmental targets through stakeholder engagement. Other lens, from a theoretical perspective, such as resource theories or behavioral theory (TPB), will not allow for the further exploration and in-depth understanding of how the stakeholder approach and salience theory can be utilized for facilitating and achieving environmental sustainability in Egyptian restaurants. For this reason, this study chooses to adopt the stakeholder ideology.

The inclusion and participation of stakeholders i.e., stakeholder engagement, is common in environmentally sustainable research (Horisch et al., 2014; Montiel and Delgado-Ceballos, 2014; Chan and Hsu, 2016; Vilchez et al., 2017) and in adopting sustainable practices (Haleem et al., 2022). It can also have positive effects on a firm's sustainable performance (Strand et al., 2015; Silva et al., 2019). Delivering value to firm stakeholders is one of the major outcomes when implementing sustainability objectives (Upward and Jones 2016; Schaltegger et al., 2017; Ludeke-Freund and Dembek, 2017). Freudenreich et al. (2020) presume stakeholder co-operation contributes to the achievement of sustainability objectives by means of supplying important resources. Meixell and Luoma (2015) claim that stakeholders can highly direct firms to apply sustainable supply chain practices. In fact, the authors put forth that different stakeholder groups have varying influence on supply chain decisions, such as purchasing, product design, packaging, logistics, etc.

Concerning stakeholder groups, Byrd (2007) outlines present and future visitors, as well as host communities, as important stakeholders in sustainable tourism. Mbasera (2015) recommends hotels in Zimbabwe and South Africa to educate consumers and employees concerning environmental issues, while suppliers are provided with environmental knowledge in order to provide relevant products and services. Roxas et al. (2020) develop a framework of tourism stakeholders to include community, local & national government, businesses and international bodies (tourism organizations). From their case study, Fliaster and Kolloch (2017) claim that external stakeholders, including governments, communities and regulators

not only affect the adoption of a green innovation project, but actively engage with other stakeholders to further impact the focal organization. The authors confirm the importance of acknowledging the invisible relationships between stakeholders and their relative impact. This means that the focal organization should be wary of the network ties between stakeholders and how such relationships can affect it.

For example, Vilchez et al. (2017) advocate that stakeholders, including suppliers, employees, government and media, shape firm management in terms of the environmental practices to be adopted. Another study by Thomas et al. (2022) argues that in Italy, non-contractual stakeholders, including universities, community and competitors have higher effects, than contractual ones, on SMEs' decision to adopt green innovative strategies, although excluding employee influence. Seroka-Stolka and Fijorek (2020) specifically find that governments/regulators, top management and shareholders had the highest impact on a firm's proactive environmental strategy within the food industry and others, while Sanchez-Medina et al. (2016) state the community drives hotels to adopt environmental measures in Mexico. These studies show that stakeholders can drive a firm to adopt green measures, presumably through influence or pressure.

1.2 Green management in hospitality

Green hospitality includes products and services provided by green hotels and restaurants (Jang et al., 2011; Han, 2015; Line et al., 2016; Han, 2020), which are becoming common in the hospitality and tourism industries (Joshua et al., 2022). Green restaurant aim to provide consumers with greener foods while minimizing their harm to the environment, such as managing their waste and reducing the use of disposables (Line et al., 2016). Kim et al. (2017, pg. 236) explain that "a green practice is a value-added business strategy that benefits a hospitality operation that engages in environmental protection initiatives". The authors conclude that green measures are not only a means of merely environmental preservation, but also a way of gaining competitive advantage, which is also supported by Miles and Covin (2000) and Jones et al. (2014). Such studies are claiming that hospitality firms may be choosing to adopt sustainability criteria for specific business reasons, presumably such as cost savings, due to the efficient use of resources and being distinguished in the market by offering

greener products. Accordingly, some hospitality organizations integrate sustainable activities to achieve business success.

The benefits from adopting environmentally sustainable practices have been reported in prior hospitality industry studies including better customer satisfaction, company reputation, competitiveness and firm performance (Bagur-Femenías et al., 2013; Alonso-Almeida et al., 2018; Yi et al., 2018; Merli et al., 2019). Mbasera (2015) also states that hotels in Africa can reduce their costs by using resources efficiently and the ability to engage in mitigating environmental harm.

The hotel sector has been given much more attention in academic research where Sharma et al. (2020) state that eco-innovation research, including green certifications, green consumerism, environmental strategy, etc. concerning hotels, from 1998-2018, constitutes 56% of articles, while restaurants were found to be only 17%. Since this sector is already progressing in its environmental agenda, the next section will instead focus on the restaurant sector and its harm on the environment.

2. Restaurants' Environmental Impact

Although most restaurant businesses are considered SMEs, they are considered to have a high impact on the environment and therefore, should not neglect focusing on its protection (Wang et al., 2013). Park et al. (2021) argue that restaurant environmental impact is critically high. In fact, both the environment and people are affected negatively (Filimonau et al., 2017; Salzberg et al., 2019). Restaurant operations consume high levels of resources, both renewable and non-renewable, and contribute to the overall generation of waste (McAdams et al., 2019; Baloglu et al., 2020; Lang et al., 2020), thereby causing environmental degradation.

Energy consumption is one of the issues that causes environmental harm in the restaurant industry. Baloglu et al. (2020) claim that restaurants have to bear costly utility bills due to gas and power needed to carry out their operations. In fact, Ioannidis et al. (2021) find that hospitality firms focusing on reuse, reduce and recycling strategies can have financial advantages, where efficient use of water and energy will lead to a reduction in utility bills. In addition, restaurants use high levels of energy within their operations (Hu et al., 2013; Lee et al., 2020) which is needed for cooling,

heating, ventilating and air condition (HVAC), storage, cooking and required transportation (Jeong and Jang, 2010; Schubert et al., 2010). Dewald et al. (2014) argue that restaurants are high consumers of energy, claiming it to be 2.5 more times than other businesses, where Wang et al. (2013) find that the inefficient use of energy in equipment results in generating carbon dioxide emissions in Taiwan.

Food waste is another aspect posing concerns in the hospitality industry. Food waste generated from cooked meals is around 7-24% (Katajajuuri et al., 2014) and 45-65% during food preparation (Filimonau et al., 2019). Food waste and loss have negative environmental consequences, such as the generation of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (Lang et al., 2020), contribution to climate change (Chauhan et al., 2021), high use of water and energy for food production (Cuellar and Webber, 2010; Lang et al., 2020), as well as economic and social related issues (Principato et al., 2018; Baul et al., 2021; Chalak et al., 2021) such as increasing poverty rates. Sakaguchi et al. (2018) and Dhir et al. (2020) advocate that stakeholders including governments, communities, consumers and employees can be both attributed to the contribution of food waste and are able as well to minimize it.

In most cases however, restaurants deter any concern towards adopting environmental action, because they find their impact to be negligible or not worthy of tackling (Gössling, 2002; Legrand et al., 2010; Kasim and Ismail; 2012). Restaurants tend to disregard taking action towards preserving the environment for a few reasons. Firstly, some restaurants believe that since their overall size is comparatively smaller than other businesses in the hospitality industry, namely the lodging sector, then the harm resultant from their operations is somehow contained (Kasim and Ismail, 2012). This means restaurant management feel that their businesses are not harmful like other large-scale businesses, i.e., hotels, where it is likely that their contribution to environmental degradation isn't as high.

Secondly, restaurants may not prioritize environmental conservation due to required capital (Iaquinto, 2014; Perramon et al., 2014; Cantele and Cassia, 2020) needed for implementing environmental systems, investing in specific machinery, procuring green products and training for staff. Other reasons can be inadequate knowledge of to go green as well as low societal pressure to become more environmentally conscient

2.1 Green restaurants

A green restaurant is one that implements green measures such as a recycling process, engaging in waste management reduction, providing green foods or practicing efficient energy and water management (Jang et al., 2011). Lorenzini defines green restaurants as (1994, pg. 119) "new or renovated structures designed, constructed, operated, and demolished in an environmentally-friendly and energy-efficient manner". The author explains that a green restaurant is initially designed, built, functions and terminated (at end of its cycle) with environmental considerations. Also, the Green Restaurant Association (GRA) outlines green practices in various dimensions such as water, energy management, waste and recycling, sustainable foods, reusables and disposables, sustainable goods & building materials, chemical & pollution reduction, transparency & education (Green Restaurant Association, 2021).

To date, green restaurant studies have given attention to unfolding the dynamics of green consumers or on further understanding the variables affecting management decisions to adopt green measures. However, the majority of these studies are consumer-based and their aim is to understand consumer perceptions, attitudes, behaviors and intentions towards green restaurants. Such studies have explored several concepts including consumer preference towards green products/services, consumer's willingness to pay (WTP) a premium for green products/services and consumer intention to patronize green restaurants. Studies in this category, as well, have been conducted to profile the "green" consumer using factors such as gender, income, age, etc. For example, when it comes to gender, some studies have shown that females are more concerned about environmental issues and can engage in more ecological behaviors, than their male counterparts. Even though this claim was rejected by Hu et al. (2010), perhaps due to cultural differences i.e., Taiwan, it is however, supported by others including Szuchnicki (2009), Schubert et al. (2010), DiPietro et al. (2013a), Hu (2015), Kwok et al. (2016), Namkung and Jang (2017) and Sarmiento and Hanandeh (2018).

The other perspective taken in green restaurant studies, yet not as dominant as the consumer category, are managerially-based. These studies analyze management green attitudes, as well as what drives them to adopt such practices. For example, Jang et al. (2017) claim that managers'

environmental values and leadership have positive influence on a restaurant's environmental sustainability in the US. This means that social criteria, i.e., stakeholder considerations, are taken into account and are related to the adoption of environmental criteria. This is supported by Raab et al. (2018), where it is found that social pressures (i.e., subjective norms) from suppliers and customers, highly guide a manager's intension to adopt green criteria as well as external pressures by similar groups, including competitors and policy makers in Spain (Perramon et al., 2014). In terms of motivations, Baloglu et al. (2020) state that managers in the US implement green practices mainly to achieve cost reductions, improved image and enhance employee satisfaction. Similar findings were put forth by Saleh and Elsaied (2018), advocating that managers of international quick service restaurants in Egypt choose to adopt green practices (energy and waste management) to improve customer satisfaction and the restaurant's image.

2.2 Green restaurant attributes

There are certain characteristics which form a green restaurant and how it is likely to operate. A few studies have highlighted the attributes that constitute a green restaurant (Choi and Parsa, 2006; Legrand et al., 2010; Wang et al., 2013; Kwok et al., 2016; Park et al., 2021) such as the ones found in Table 2.

Table 2
Green Restaurant Indicators

Source	Category	Example of Indicators
(Choi and Parsa, 2006; Hu, 2015; Kwok et al., 2016; Teng and Wu, 2019; Park et al., 2021)	*Food-focused attributes*	• Organic foods (free from pesticides & fertilizers). • Locally grown.
	Environment-focused attributes (3Rs – reduce, reuse, recycle & two Es – energy & efficiency)	• Recycled materials (paper, plates, containers, etc.) • Use of renewable energy sources such as solar power. • Chemically-safe materials. • Energy-efficient bulbs,

Source	Category	Example of Indicators
		• equipment. • Low-flow toilets, sensor faucets.
	Administration-focused attributes	• Green certification. • Employee training. • Community activities.
Legrand et al., (2010)	*Sustainable Sitting, Design, and Construction*	• Environmental impact assessment carried out for site. • Building materials: certain percentage locally sourced, recyclable, non-toxic, environmentally certified. • Gardening of area.
	Energy and Waste	• Aim to use renewable energy sources. • Reduce, reuse & recycle approach for staff & suppliers. • Avoid plastics. • Organic waste composted or reused. • Paper, oil, etc. recycled.
	Corporate Social Responsibility	• Support given to local community by provision of resources. • Guests & employees are educated about the environment. • Engagement with industry associations related to sustainability.

Source	Category	Example of Indicators
	Sustainable Food and Beverage Model	• Percentage of organic, local, seasonal foods. • Special diet served for allergic people. • Menu labeling in terms of fat or 'gluten-free'. • The Menu is used to advertise sustainable activities.
Wang et al. (2013)	*Green Foods (material)*	Green food procurement: • Local, seasonal foods. • Organic certified foods. • Avoiding foods that have expired i.e., out of shelf life.
		Green menu planning and cooking: • Healthy meals prepared (less fat, sugar, salt, etc.) • Fried dishes don't exceed 20%. • Dishes are made up of more fruits & vegetables than meats. • Turning off cooking hoods when not needed and avoid wasting food items.
		Green package for takeout: • Safe packaging material for reheating. • Use of recyclable or biodegradable packaging. • Avoid polystyrene.
	Green environment and equipment (environment)	Green kitchen environment: • Regular maintenance of equipment. • Grease interceptors to avoid exhaust pollution. • Replacing equipment with energy-saving ones.

Source	Category	Example of Indicators
		Green dining environment: • Lighting bulbs are energy-efficient. • No smoking inside outlet. • Water-saving faucets. • Use of sunlight.
		Green cleaning and post-treatment: • Recycling & segregation of waste. • Compost kitchen waste • Eco-friendly detergents. • Recycling of hazardous waste.
	Green management and social responsibility (people)	Green management policy: • Avoid disposable tableware. • Training for employees. • Advertising energy-saving posters. • Market green concepts.
		Green customer education: • Encouraging customers to take away leftovers. • Poster to encourage customers to be green. • Rewarding policy for customers for green behaviors.
		Green corporation social responsibility: • Consumer education. • Participate in community, healthy, environmental activities.

In the practical world, there are examples of pioneer food establishments implementing green measures. Top global chains include McDonald's, Subway, Starbucks, Pizza Hut, Taco Bell and many more (Spyrou, 2021). For example, Starbucks is known for using energy efficient lighting bulbs, environmentally friendly packaging and

equipment which utilizes and optimizes water usage (Jeong and Jang, 2010; Jeong et al., 2014). Hu (2015) writes that Subway opened its first LEED certified green restaurant in 2007, aiming to lower carbon pollution, manage the use of energy and water, resulting in a 60% decrease in utility bills. Others have also made efforts to reduce their carbon footprint in their supply chains (Shaik, n.d.). For example, Chipotle Mexican Grill tries to use more plant-based ingredients and organic foods, with their slogan "Food with integrity" (Guest Author, 2021). Domino's uses packaging that is completely recyclable. In other countries such as the UK, Silo restaurant sources food from local suppliers and composts waste on site (Joyce, 2021). According to Joyce (2021), Haoma in Bangkok uses kitchen waste as food for fish or as fertilizers and collects rainwater to be used later, while Corrutela in Brazil also focuses on providing local foods and avoids the use of plastic by engaging in bulk purchases. In Egypt, there are some local restaurants that engage in sustainable and non-plastic packaging and materials, such as straws, take-away bags, cups, etc. The implementation of green practices in restaurants has certain advantages. In their discussion on the dynamics of green restaurant patrons, Hu et al. (2010) have concluded that green practices could help a restaurant gain competitive advantage, build consumers' loyalty, and improve brand image (Dipietro et al., 2013; Hu, 2015; Jang et al., 2015). It has even been determined that communicating the implementation of green practices to employees may result in increased employee satisfaction and commitment to the organization, which in turn, may lead to better service and increased customer satisfaction, especially in a service-oriented business (Schubert et al., 2010; Dipietro et al., 2013).

3. Hospitality in Egypt

Egypt, located in Northern Africa with a population of 104, 258, 000 people, is categorized by The International Monetary Fund (IMF) as a developing country because of its economic performance (WorldData, 2022). To be more specific, according to the World Bank for example, in 2021, Egypt's GDP is 404 billion, GDP per capita is around $3900, with annual GDP growth of 3.3%. The World Bank also writes that the Central Bank of Egypt (CBE) depreciated the exchange rate in 2022 around 16% to combat the net exports deficit while inflation in February 2022 has risen to 8.8%. Such figures show that nations such as Egypt are facing difficulty,

from an economic perspective, where the engagement and adoption of environmental practices is presumably of less importance.

Concerning local tourism in Egypt, it contributes on average around 15% to Egypt's GDP (Abu Zaid, 2021), with generated income of $13 billion in 2019, according to the Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS, 2020). Also, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) declares that the sector employs around 2.5 million people, which is represented by 9.5% of total employment (Zaineldine, 2020). Concerning the lodging sector in Egypt, there are 1,410 hotels (CEIC, n.d.), with an average of 205,000 hotel rooms (Abu Zaid, 2021). For the restaurant sector, in 2019, there were around 40, 605 outlets, with generated sales of $7.5 billion (United States Department of Agriculture, 2020), which has increased from $4.6 billion in 2017 (Elshaer, 2022).

Egypt has started to pave its way towards sustainability, including the embedment of green measures. In 2016, the Ministry of Planning and Economic Development in Egypt has developed the Egypt Vision 2030 Sustainable Development Plan. This initiative parallels the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs), incorporating the dimensions of economic, social and environmental sustainability. For the tourism industry, the Ministry of Tourism has established the Green Star Hotel Program in 2015 to guide local hotels all over Egypt on sustainable matters by offering green certification. Hotels are rated and therefore certified according to their environmental standpoint, where El Demerdash (2019) confirms that 29% of hotels in Egypt are certified as green hotels. Similar to other contexts, environmental management in restaurant businesses is poorly studied, unlike the hotel sector.
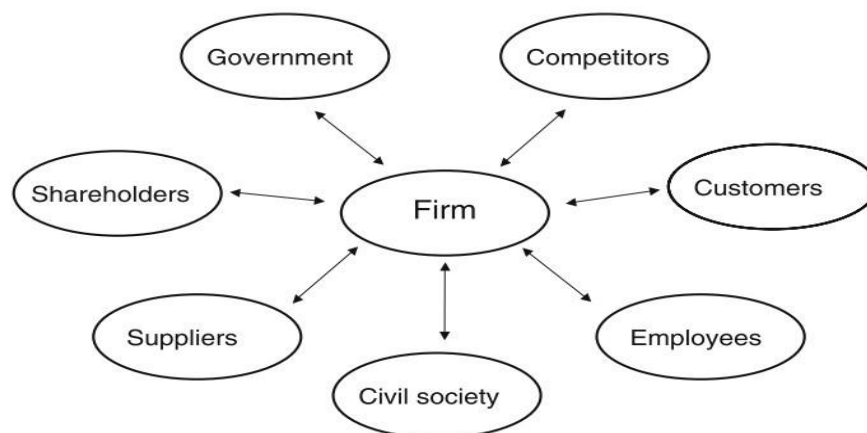
Hotel studies focused on Egypt include El Demerdash and Mohamed (2013), Abou Kamar (2017) El Demerdash (2019), Abduelhassan and Elsayed (2020) Sobaih et al. (2020), Soliman (2020), Eid et al. (2021), Rady et al. (2021). Restaurant studies however only include Saad and Raslan (2017), Saleh and Elsaied (2018), Abbas and Hussien (2021). Also, from a governmental perspective, Egypt has already started giving attention to hotels, in terms of their environmental sustainability. This has created a gap for the restaurant industry with no guidelines provided on how this sector can be more environmentally conscious. In addition, earlier studies have not

been able to highlight, in-depth, the major obstacles hindering the application of green practices nor the necessitated stakeholder entities required to influence such an implementation. Different stakeholders can have the ability to carry out a certain task, for example, the provision of a resource, in order to facilitate and progress the adoption of environmental measures within business operations. In specific, research is required into which stakeholders are considered important and how each of these stakeholders can help in implementing and achieving environmental targets through stakeholder engagement. Other lens, from a theoretical perspective, such as resource theories or behavioral theory (TPB), will not allow for the further exploration and in-depth understanding of how the stakeholder approach and salience theory can be utilized for facilitating and achieving environmental sustainability in Egyptian restaurants. For this reason, this study chooses to adopt the stakeholder ideology and not other academic theories.

4. Stakeholder Theory

Any business is said to have both an internal and external environment, where both have tremendous effects on its long-term survival. Businesses constantly search for ways to sustain themselves in their relative market and one common approach adopted is engaging in the art of sustained strategic management. Planning for the future entails satisfying and adhering to the demands and requests of the relevant entities which businesses are continuously interacting with (Freeman, 2010). These entities are deemed crucial, where it is believed that businesses more than ever, cannot afford to survive without their existence. Hence, management adopt innovative strategies to tackle stakeholder claims, with regard to the current organizational lifecycle stage (Jawahar and McLaughlin, 2001). This means it is necessitated that those businesses carefully acknowledge such parties, address their requirements and optimally satisfy their interests.
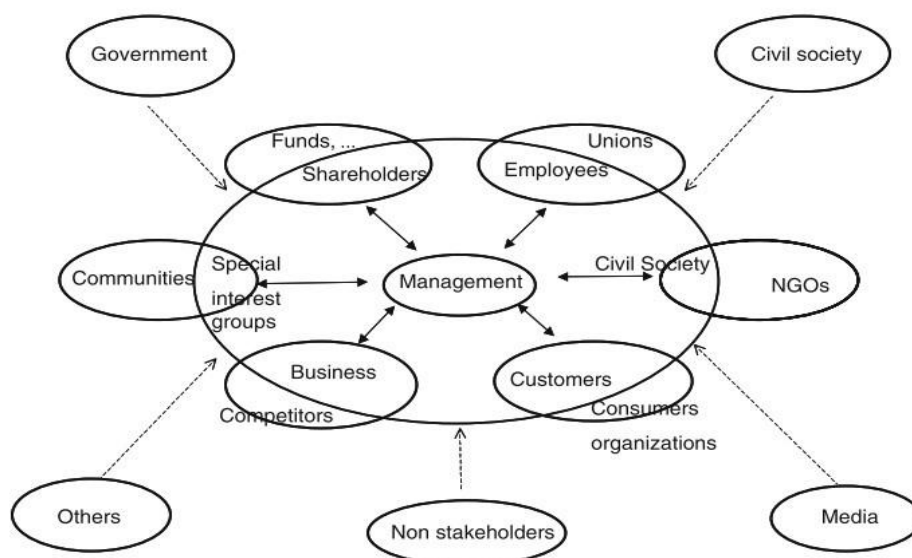
Freeman (1984) establishes the initial concept of stakeholder theory, explaining that stakeholders represent entities that affect or are affected by organizational objectives. The author graphically shows groups of stakeholders, in relation to the focal firm i.e., organization, namely through a stakeholder map. Figure 1 shows the original stakeholder model.

Figure 1 The original stakeholder model (Freeman, 1984)

Adapted from: Fassin (2009)

Some of the traditional depictions of stakeholders include having interest in firm activities (Clarkson, 1995) or stake (Carroll, 1989) with possible influence (Savage et al., 1991), are internal vs. external to the firm (Freeman, 2003), normative vs. derivative (Philips, 2003) where the former has a legitimate claim, while the latter may have the ability to affect normative stakeholders. Most articulations in stakeholder literature present the concept of legitimate claims and an existence of a degree of influence (Freeman, 1984; Cornell and Shapiro; 1987; Freeman and Evan, 1990; Savage et al., 1991; Hill and Jones, 1992; Brenner, 1993; Clarkson, 1995; Mitchell et al., 1997; Phillips, 2003; Fassin, 2009; Miles, 2017). Indeed, it is precisely highlighted that a relationship exists between the firm and its stakeholders, as defined by Thompson et al. (1991).

For example, Fassin (2009) identifies three categories, namely stakeholders, stakewatchers (protect stakeholders' interests) and stakekeepers (may influence previous types), shown in Figure 2. This model arranges stakeholder groups differently and categorizes them into stakeholders (real stakeholders, such as customers), stakewatchers (don't have a real stake in organization, yet can protect interests of real stakeholders, such as consumer associations) and stakekeepers (don't possess a stake either, but can exercise influence, such as the government).

Figure 2 The stake model of the firm

Adapted from: Fassin (2009)

It can be seen that governments, suppliers, financiers, customers, employees, communities, media, shareholders, NGOs, shareholders, competitors, businesses, critics, etc. as stakeholders.

This shows that many groups can be considered stakeholders meaning that firm management will have to attend to multiple, variant, sometimes conflicting, stakeholder interests (Phillips and Reichart, 2000; Laplume et al., 2008). This is a debate in stakeholder literature known as "Who or what really counts" (Freeman, 1994), where a seminal paper by Mitchell et al. (1997) outlines how managers can organize and prioritize stakeholder claims; stakeholder salience.

4.1 Stakeholder salience

Hamidu et al. (2014, pg.6) write that "The whole idea behind stakeholder management is to identify stakeholders based on the three attributes which defines their power to influence decision making and enforce their will, the legitimacy of the claims or rights they possess to expect fulfilment from the organization, and the urgent nature in which they require the satisfaction of their needs and expectations". In their

seminal paper, Mitchell et al. (1997) explain that stakeholders can be powerful, where they have the ability to force others to act in a certain way, by use of punishment or incentives. Parent and Deephouse (2007, pg.21) define stakeholder power as "the (potential) ability of stakeholders to impose their will on a given relationship through coercive, utilitarian or normative means". Coercive power stems from the ability to force or restraint physical resources, utilitarian power is related to financial resources, while normative power deals with social aspects, such as esteem and prestige (Mitchel et al., 1997).

Suchman (1995, pg. 574) defines legitimacy as "a general perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed systems of norms, values and beliefs". In other words, when stakeholders possess legitimacy, it means their demands are socially acceptable and correlate with societal norms (Mitchell et al., 1997). Ibrahim et al. (2023) argue that businesses make efforts to be seen as legitimate, with the purpose of gaining important resources from stakeholders. Urgency or urgent stakeholder claims are ones that are viewed as "time sensitive" as portrayed by Parent and Deephouse (2007) or require immediate attention from managers (Laplume et al., 2008). In other words, urgent stakeholders, as described by Rowley and Moldoveanu (2003), have critical issues that necessitate management response. According to Mitchell et al. (1997), stakeholders can exhibit one, two or all three attributes, where a stakeholder possessing all three attributes (definitive) would be the most important to management i.e., salient. Salience is a subjective matter; managers evaluate and rate stakeholders, by ascribing to each group their corresponding attributes.

It should be noted that, due to dynamic environments, stakeholder attributes may change and, therefore, their initial categorization made by management is not static (Mitchell et al., 1997) nor fixed (Magness, 2008). Some stakeholders
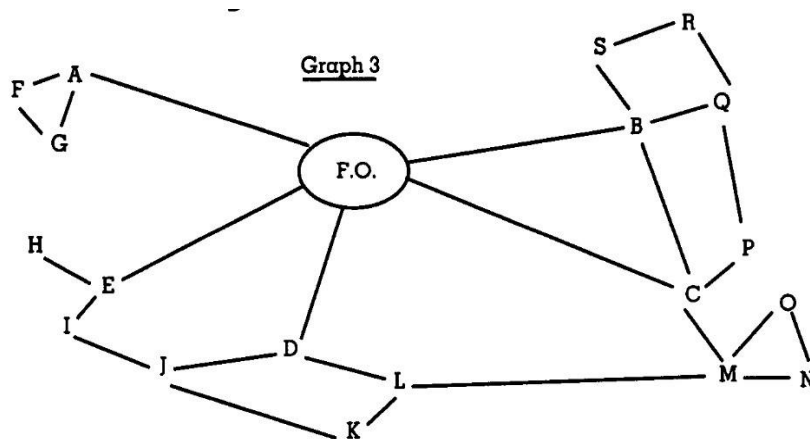
May disappear by time and others may become more significant and of interest to managers (Ali, 2017). The emergence of COVID-19 may have forced hospitality businesses give more attention to their suppliers, consumers and employees, as well as governments. The effect of such a pandemic on business operations and products has forced such businesses to

focus on certain stakeholders more than others. For example, consumers were given more attention by offering products and services that they feel safe to consume, such as the use of disposable items (Magdy, 2020). This results in organizations giving more focus to their suppliers, in terms of the products produced and provided. Also, employees were also given high attention of how to perform their tasks, during such an event.

4.2 Stakeholder influence and networks

Earlier stakeholder maps illustrated stakeholder relations with the firm as one-to-one (Freeman, 1984; Freeman, 2003), referred to as dyadic or hub-and-spoke. However, considered a significant contribution to understanding stakeholder relationships, Rowley (1997) argues, with reference to social networks, that stakeholders of a firm exist in a network, where in some cases, each stakeholder has a different network of their own, as shown in Figure 3. Stakeholders are assumed to be engaged in relationships with each other, where Freeman and Evan (1990, pg. 354) explain the stakeholder arena as "a series of multilateral contracts among stakeholders". Boaventura et al. (2020) argue that stakeholders do have an effect on firm behavior, which presumably leads to value creation.

Figure 3 Network structures: patterns of relationships

Adapted from: Rowley (1997)

The existence of stakeholder networks confirms possible interactions between stakeholders, which signals stakeholder influence on firms. Svendsen and Laberge (2005) argue that strong relationships between network members, built on understanding and trust, are key to an organization's long-term sustainability, since such entities exist in open systems; dealing with many actors in the external environment. Since firm stakeholders likely exist in a network, as argued above, another study about stakeholder interactions, namely stakeholder multiplicity (Neville and Menguc, 2006) provides critical insights. According to the authors, stakeholder interactions can result in either positive outcomes, in the case of complementary, synergistic or alliance formulation, or negative consequences, where claims may be conflicting. This conception promotes the salience model, where the authors argue that the effect of combined stakeholder claims should be acknowledged, rather than perceiving them individually (Neville and Menguc, 2006). Their work also supports the idea that in some cases, claims of certain stakeholders, who are deemed of higher salience, e.g., the government, can support claims of other less salient stakeholders (customers) where, in turn, managers may need to pay attention to these parties as well.
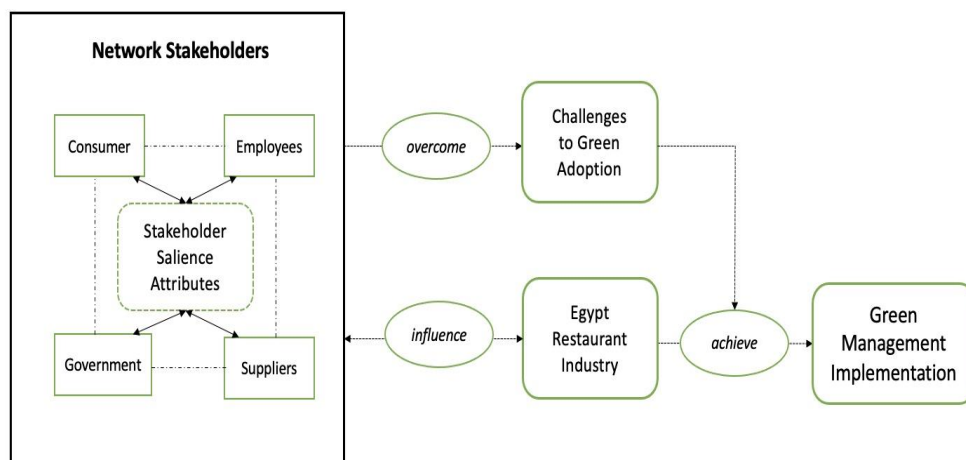
However, Chan and Hsu (2016) write that there is little research aimed at highlighting the links between stakeholders of hospitality businesses and environmental management. In fact, empirical research concerning the effect of stakeholder engagement on the development of environmental sustainability strategies has been understudied. Sharma et al. (2020) call for research into understanding the relevance of important stakeholders, such as governments, suppliers, NGOs, in adopting eco-innovative measures while Haleem et al. (2022) recommend research is required into how stakeholders can pressure firms, within the service industry, to adopt environmental strategies. Kaur et al. (2022) suggest further exploration in terms of the role of crucial stakeholders, including the media and NGOs, which are deemed important for a restaurant's environmental and social objectives.

In addition, Hillman and Keim (2001) confirm that building relationships with stakeholders, such as employees, customers, suppliers and communities increases and sustains an organization's competitive advantage. Initially though, stakeholder groups must be outlined, as Damian et al. (2022, pg. 518) write "To get an effective stakeholder engagement, all

the relevant stakeholders must be identified early in the process. This calls for a systematic approach to define and identify stakeholders in different contexts". In addition, Harrison et al. (2015) assert that value among stakeholders is not clear and needs further research to be more understood. The authors specifically question how stakeholders perceive value and what it means to them. In terms of stakeholder salience, Neville and Menguc (2006) suggest research to consider how the combination of one salience attribute with another, each possessed by a different stakeholder, may affect the organization.

According to all the above claims, it is presumed that stakeholders, jointly and collectively, can influence restaurants in Egypt, from a green management perspective. If stakeholders are accorded salience by management, where they are prioritized or viewed as important, it means such stakeholders can have some degree. Jang et al. (2017, pg.102) confirm that a "stakeholder is also a central variable in corporate environmental strategies; however, limited studies have focused on the effect of stakeholder engagement on the implementation of environmental strategies and practices". Byrd (2007, pg.12) explicitly states that "Without stakeholder involvement, the term sustainable development would just be a marketing slogan or, at best, a topic for theoretical debate". This highlight supports that the stakeholder lens is well suited and can be highly capable in critically understanding the application of green management in the Egyptian context. The following figure is a conceptual framework outlining these major concepts.

Figure 4 The study conceptual framework

The figure emphasizes several aspects that have been obtained through a comprehensive analysis of the pertinent literature. Firstly, it is assumed that consumers, staff, suppliers, and governments have the potential to assist restaurants in adopting environmentally friendly practices. The groups mentioned are derived from past studies on green restaurant management (Raab et al., 2018; Saleh and Elsaied, 2018; Tan et al., 2018; Cho and Yoo, 2021; Perrigot et al., 2021). As there is an increasing trend towards green consumerism, customers are increasingly conscious (Shin et al., 2019; Cho and Yoo, 2021; Maynard et al., 2021) and, in certain instances, willing to incur additional costs in order to consume environmentally friendly products and services. Furthermore, it was deliberated that consumers have the ability to influence the environmentally friendly actions of employees, which can be further encouraged by the implementation of green training. Furthermore, restaurants are recommended to engage with environmentally conscious suppliers if they wish to promote the adoption of sustainable practices, as proposed earlier by Chiu and Hsieh (2016) and Shin and Cho (2022). Governments are acknowledged for their capacity to exert pressure or compel restaurants to adopt environmental measures by enacting laws. These stakeholders are considered crucial for the implementation of green management due to these reasons. Furthermore, management typically gives priority to these particular stakeholders, implying that they possess varying degrees of power on organizations. Furthermore, Rowley (1997) posits that these stakeholders are interconnected inside a network. The author contends that social networks have a superior ability to perceive the stakeholder environment, and it is thought that they can effectively address the obstacles to adopting environmentally friendly practices in the Egyptian restaurant industry.

In addition, stakeholders are thought to possess the capacity to exert influence on restaurant management by virtue of their salient attributes (Mitchell et al., 1997), specifically power, legitimacy, or urgency, in order to encourage the adoption of environmentally friendly practices. The presence of recognized qualities indicates that restaurants are aware of and paying attention to these important parties. This implies that restaurants have the potential to influence stakeholders who are involved in the implementation of environmentally friendly practices. Ultimately, this will streamline the implementation of eco-friendly practices and enable restaurants to attain their environmental objectives. Moreover, the adoption

of these environmentally friendly techniques is thought to promote the generation of added value within the Egyptian restaurant sector.

Conclusion

Sustainability management is a global trend, where currently most businesses are making efforts to incorporate appropriate measures to become more sustainable. The hospitality industry is not an exception, where its sectors such as hotels, try to be innovative in terms of producing greener products and services. However, the restaurant sector is lagging behind its lodging counterpart, lacking the required framework and means on how to become environmental-friendly establishments. Restaurant operations harm the environment and given their size in Egypt, a framework on how to go green is significantly required. Literature outlines that stakeholder engagement can promote the application of green management practices. Different stakeholders, through their acquired salience attributes of power, legitimacy or urgency, can influence restaurants to a certain degree in environmental protection. In other words, a restaurant's stakeholder network can promote the adoption of green measures to overcome challenges hindering restaurant's environmental progression. Future research can inquire into outlining a restaurants' environmental stakeholder groups. Also, studies can investigate how such groups, according to their salience attributes, can help the restaurant industry meet its environmental objectives.

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