The Drivers and the Outcomes of Environmental Management Practices in the Hotel Industry: A Proposed Framework

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This conceptual paper seeks to identify the variables that drive Environmental Management Practices (EMPs) in Malaysian hotels. This paper attempts to illustrate how institutional theory is relevant to be applied in this study. The roles and the importance of variables such as regulation or government, pressure and demands from customers, level of competition, organizational awareness of green practices, and the organization's attitude towards change will be discussed. The hotel industry has always been one of the major players in the tourism sector. As such, it has an essential role in protecting the environment since the industry generally uses huge amounts of energy, consumes large amounts of water and generates unbalanced amounts of waste. In addition to protecting the environment, hotels can also ensure the sustainability of their businesses by incorporating environmentally friendly practices and improving their marketing performance. As such, this paper aims to explain the relationship between the drivers and EMPs and the impact of EMPs on marketing performance (efficiency, effectiveness and adaptability measures) in the hotel industry.

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Introduction

There are many types of service industries such as hospitality, tourism, finance, transportation and healthcare; each has its own characteristics that are different from those of the manufacturing industry. In conventional economic literature, services are defined as intangible goods and the services sector is known as the tertiary sector which involves the provision of services to businesses as well as final consumers (Ottenbacher and Gnoth 2005). In Malaysia, the service sector’s contribution to the Gross Domestic Product increased to 57.4% in 2009 from 55.0% in 2008 (Bank Negara Malaysia, 2009 Annual Report). The services sector also contributed to about 60% of the Malaysian small medium enterprises Gross Domestic Product in 2008 (SMECorp Malaysia). According to AmResearch, Malaysia’s services sector is expected to grow by 7.1% in 2010, led by a stronger demand arising from a positive wealth effect from the financial markets, stable employment conditions and rising income levels (The Star 2010).

Hence, it can be seen that Malaysia is becoming increasingly concerned about the service sector, especially the tourism industry. The tourism industry contributed RM 53,367.7 million in 2009 to total Malaysian revenue, a 7.7% increase from last year. In 2009, the World Tourism Organization reported that Malaysia was in the 9th place of the ‘top ten most visited countries’ list, jumping from its 11th position in 2008 (UNWTO). The impact of this on Malaysian revenue is an increase from RM 49,561.2 million in 2008 to RM 53,367.7 million in 2009 with an estimated figure of RM 59.4 billion in 2010 (Ninth Malaysia Plan, 2006). The fifth year of survey by Global Traveler Magazine (a US-based business travel publication) in 2008 resulted in Malaysia winning the Best International Tourism Destination for the third time. From the said survey, it was found that more than 31,000 readers claimed that Malaysia was the best destination for business and leisure holiday products (Tourism Malaysia).

Therefore, the tourism industry is a highly significant part of the Malaysian economy. Continuous efforts to improve the quality of tourism sectors, such as the hotel industry, play an important role in attracting more visitors. The Ninth Malaysia Plan, 2006-2010, showed that the average hotel occupancy rate in Malaysia increased from 59.2 percent in 2000 to 63.5 percent in 2005 and is projected to increase further to 66.4 percent by 2010. This industry has to progress in order to maximize tourism’s contribution to economic growth and development. Expanding the role of the hotel industry requires adjustments to fulfill shifting customer needs. The hotel industry in Malaysia needs to be concerned about the rapidly changing demands and focus on customer satisfaction to remain flexible and competitive in a global market.

Lately, there is a trend whereby tourists are demanding environmentally friendly accommodation (Font 2002; Kirk 1998; Park 2009). This has led to a number of hotels to improve their environmental performance. Similarly, some of the hotels in Malaysia have been recognized as green hotels through their efforts to become more environmentally friendly. In Malaysia, 12 hotels were declared by ‘The Best Green Hotel’ as Environmental Friendly Hotels. ‘The Best Green Hotel’ is the title given to lodging properties which have taken environmental actions and extraordinary steps towards greening themselves and the hospitality industry, whereas ‘Environmental Friendly Hotels’ is the title given to hotels that are environmentally friendly and that act "green", even if in only one small way (Environmentally Friendly Hotels).

The objective of this paper is to discuss the drivers for the adoption of environmental management practices and the outcomes. Based on the institutional theory, there are five drivers that push organizations to adopt environmental management practices: regulation/government, customer demand, level of competition, greenness at the
organizational level and attitude towards change/level of risk taking. Environmental management practices are conceptualized to include two dimensions: comprehensiveness of the Environmental Management Systems (EMS) and management of stakeholders’ relations. Marketing performance is conceptualized into three dimensions which are effectiveness measure of marketing performance, efficiency measure of marketing performance and adaptability measure of marketing performance.

The conceptualization of Environmental Management Practices

Montabon et al. (2006) defined environmental management practices as the techniques, policies and procedures which an organization use that are specifically aimed at monitoring and controlling the impact of its operations on the natural environment. Furthermore, questions relating to the execution of environmental responsibility, for example, ‘what needs to be done’, ‘when it has to be done’, and ‘how it should be done’ can be answered by looking at the environmental management practices of the organization (USAID 2002). The environmental management practices provide the directions relating to the means in achieving the action plan and often include resource requirements (USAID 2002).

The hospitality industry has been traditionally considered as one that does not have a great impact on the natural environment compared to such industries as gas and oil, and other consumer product manufacturing industries. However, the hotel sector, in particular, is one of the main business sectors in the hospitality industry, generating much more negative environmental impact than the public perceives, consuming a vast amount of local and imported non-durable goods, energy and water, as well as emitting a large amount of carbon dioxide (Bohdanowicz 2005; Kirk 1998). As a result, as an emerging business strategy in the hospitality industry, environmental management has been attracting much interest from industry practitioners as well as scholars.

The implementation of environmental management practices also permits product/services differentiation in the hotel industry. An improvement in the pollution levels will probably increase the demand from environmentally sensitive tourists (Chan and Wong 2006). Tourists have become increasingly demanding about the product/service and thus force hoteliers to adapt to their new tastes and preferences, including having a greater respect towards the environment (Tarí, Claver-Cortés, Pereira-Moliner and Molina-Azorín 2009). The World Trade Organization (1998) states that guest perception about the accommodation service quality level is influenced by such factors as the state of conservation of the environment. Thus, if hotels apply environmental management practices, they are likely to improve their guests’ perception of environmental quality both about the hotel and about the tourism product as a whole, apart from offering a healthy location and obtaining differentiation badges such as the eco-labels (Chan and Wong 2006; Kirk 1998).

Institutional Theory

According to institutional theory, social pressure from other actors in the market, such as the government and general public, are important in determining an organization’s intention to adopt or even over-comply with environmentally friendly programs (Le, Hollenhorst, Harris, McLaughlin and Shook 2006; Rivera 2002, 2004; Rivera, Oetzel, deLeon and Starik 2009). Institutional theory emphasizes the role of social and cultural pressures forced on organizations that influence organizational practices and structure (Delmas and Toffel 2004; Scott 2004). Some research has analyzed specific factors external to the firm that drive the implementation of environmental strategies such as regulation and competitive forces and pressure from nongovernmental organizations (Delmas and Toffel 2004).
Delmas and Toffel (2004) hypothesized that organizational structure, strategic positioning and performance will affect how firms perceive institutional pressures and how they decide to respond. Delmas and Toffel provide a model that describes how stakeholders, including regulators, customers, activists, local communities and industrial associations, impose institutional pressures on plants and their parent companies. They also suggest how a variety of plant and parent company factors moderate how managers perceive and act upon these pressures. Their approach complements the institutional theory as it suggests that both institutional pressures and organizational characteristics influence organizations to adopt environmental management practices.

Institutional theory outlines three forms of isomorphism which can result in institutional environmental pressures for organizations (DiMaggio and Powell 1983; Scott 2003):

1. **Coercive isomorphism**: Coercive isomorphism results from pressures exerted on organizations by other organizations upon which they are dependent. Such pressures maybe felt as force, as persuasion, or as invitation to join in a collusion.

2. **Normative isomorphism**: Normative isomorphism refers to sets of expectations, within a particular organizational context, of what constitutes appropriate and legitimate behavior. These expectations are set by social organizations, professional associations and academic institutions.

3. **Cultural-cognitive isomorphism**: Cultural-cognitive isomorphism results from the rational desire of an organization to imitate the behavior of other organizations. Such imitation results mainly from an organization’s perception that the imitated behavior is legitimate or has technical value. There are three modes of imitation (Haunschild and Miner 1997):
   a. **Frequency-based imitation**: imitating practices that have been adopted by large numbers of other organizations,
   b. **Trait-based imitation**: imitating practices that have been adopted by organizations that have certain positive traits such as large size and success,
   c. **Outcome-based imitation**: imitating practices that have produced positive outcomes or consequences in other organizations.

The principles of institutional theory have been used to identify the drivers for environmental practices. The theory gives plausible base for explaining the effect of the coercive isomorphism (regulation/government), normative isomorphism (customer demand), and cultural-cognitive isomorphism (level of competition, greenness at firm level and attitude of organization level toward change). Therefore, institutional theory appears to be the most appropriate theory to explain the effect of the drivers on environmental management practices. Moreover, the general objective of institutional theory is to explain how organizations become homogenous in adopting certain practices or structures, which is in line with the objective of this study to investigate how environmental management practices initiatives are diffused among organizations.
Drivers for the Adoption of Environmental Management Practices

Drivers are defined as motivation and inducements that motivate business organizations to adopt environmental management practices (SitiNabiha, Wahid and KamalulAriffin 2010). Environmental management literature has directly addressed the pressures on hotel industries for environmental improvement practices. Some research has analyzed that drivers generally emanate from pressures of external and internal stakeholders such as government, investors, customers, suppliers, community groups and employees as well as from organizational culture or moral values related to doing the right or acceptable things (Carter and Jennings 2002; Donaldson and Preston 1995). Previous research has also analyzed specific factors external to the hotels that drive the adoption of environmental issues such as regulation and competitive forces, and pressure from non-governmental organizations (Delmas and Toffel 2004; Kasim 2007; Le et al. 2006). Some studies have looked at the role of the characteristics of the organization to explain the adoption of environmental management practices.

Kasim (2007) identified government’s regulatory forces as one of the main drivers for Malaysian hotels to adopt environmental management practices. For example, local government organizations can provide hotels with environmental management guidelines and some even attempt to include environmental management into the hotel rating systems. On the other hand, Bohdanowicz (2005) identified customer demands as a powerful incentive for hotels to adopt environmentally friendly practices in the European hotel industry. This indicates that hoteliers are becoming aware of the customers’ increasing concerns about the natural environment, corporate social responsibility and environmental purchasing trends. Instead, Jaworski and Kohli (1993) found that the ‘level of competition’ is one of the most important drivers for organizations to adopt new practices. Jaworski and Kohli (1993) explain this driver by stating that when rivalry is fierce, products and processes have to be innovated, new markets have to be explored, innovative ways to compete have to be found and finally ways to differentiate the company from its competitors is essential.

From other research, the concerns of organizations about their greenness level have been proven to be one of the main drivers that determine environmental initiatives in hotels. Horobin and Long (1996) examined awareness and the concern of organizations towards green practices in small UK tourism businesses. They found that there is a significant relationship between greenness at the organizational level and adoption of green practices. However, Le et al. (2006) argued that hotel companies’ environmental risk taking strategies is one of the more important drivers in Vietnamese hotels and can be instrumental in attracting ever increasing environmentally conscious customers. The results suggest that attitude towards change (level of risk taking) positively affects an organization as it is able to enter new or establish markets with new or existing goods, in which the organization can implement new ideas, services or practices.

**H1:** There is a positive and significant relationship between the drivers and Environmental Management Practices

- **Regulation/Government**

Based on Rivera et al. (2009), government policies are regulations that establish price, service standards, environmental standards, marketing or distribution methods, accounting procedures, amongst other things, and these tend to be demanded by existing businesses which are their main beneficiaries. In reference to this study, government agencies are in charge of developing and deploying the monitoring and enforcement efforts to execute
protective policies and this also involves economic policies. Lack of enforcement may disregard the public policy prescriptions and regulations (Rivera et al. 2009).

According to recent research, regulations have significant impact on environmental management practices implementation (Darnall, Henriques and Sadowsky 2008; Delmas and Toffel 2004; Le et al. 2006; Tarí et al. 2009). However, there is still a lack of understanding of the conditions under which these various rationales attempt to explain the adoption of practices beyond regulatory compliance at the organizations (Delmas and Toffel 2004).

Therefore, this research proposes the following hypothesis:

**H1.1:** There is a positive and significant relationship between Regulation/Government and Environmental Management Practices.

- **Customer Demand**

Jaworski and Kohli (1996) defined customer demand as the set of beliefs that puts the customer’s interest first, while not excluding those of other stakeholders such as owners, managers, and employees, in order to develop a long-term profitable enterprise. Organizations that operate in the more turbulent markets are likely to have to modify their services and products continually in order to satisfactorily cater to customers’ changing preferences (Jaworski and Kohli 1993).

Several studies have found that organizations that adopted environmental management practices were motivated by customer demand (Le et al. 2006). A survey of the largest Canadian organizations showed that customer demand was the second most cited source of pressure to adopt an environmental management plan, after government pressure (Henriques and Sadowsky 1996). Deshpande et al. (1993) concluded in their empirical investigation into customer demand and environmental practices among Japanese organizations that customer demand was positively associated with environmental practices. Khanna and Anton (2002) found that US organizations that sell final goods adopt more comprehensive EMS than organizations that sell intermediate goods.

From the previous studies disclosed above, it can be seen that customer demand has significant positive effect on environmental management practices (Christmann and Taylor 2001; Delmas and Toffel 2004; Henriques and Sadowsky 1996; Khanna and Anton 2002; Le et al. 2006). Accordingly, it is hypothesized that:

**H1.2:** There is a positive and significant relationship between Customer Demand and Environmental Management Practices.

- **Level of Competition**

Level of competition can be defined as the intensity of rivalry in a situation where competition might be fierce or calm due to the number of competitors in the market and the lack or presence of potential opportunities for further growth (Jaworski and Kohli 1993). Jaworski and Kohli (1993) explains this phenomenon by stating that when rivalry is fierce, products and processes have to be innovated, new markets have to be explored, novel ways to compete have to be found and, finally, ways to differentiate the company from its competitors have to be used. Businesses are willing to comply with environmental protection practices because they perceive benefits from doing so, such as competitive advantage (Darnall 2008; Delmas and Toffel 2004; Hurley and Hult 1998).

Regarding environmental factors, empirical studies have shown that competition increases the likelihood of innovation adoption (Sigala 2006). It is tough rivalry that pushes
businesses to be innovative. Competition leads to environmental uncertainty and increases both the need for and the rate of innovation adoption. Thus, managers perceiving a greater level of competition would feel a greater need to turn to environmental practices to gain a competitive advantage, while managers perceiving a lower perceived level of competition would not be faced with a push to be innovative (Sigala 2006).

Hart (1995) argued that organizations with capabilities needed to achieve environmental practices in connection with pollution prevention, product stewardship and sustainable development strategies, can differentiate themselves and achieve competitive advantage. The organizations with greater resource and capability profiles and a more progressive environmental orientation are better positioned to exploit the opportunities by gaining an environmental competitive advantage (Hart 1995; Karagozoglu and Lindell 2000). From the previous studies, shows that level of competition have significant positive effect on environmental management practices (Delmas and Toffel 2004; Jaworski and Kohli 1993; Le et al. 2006). Accordingly, it is hypothesized that:

**H1.3**: There is a positive and significant relationship between Level of Competition and Environmental Management Practices.

**Greenness at the Organizational Level**

Horobin and Long (1996) defined ‘greenness at organizational level’ as the awareness and the concern of the organization to protect the environment, and the attitude of the organization towards sustainability. Some research states that implementing green practices at the organizational level to improve environmental performance generally involves several types of cost (Darnall et al. 2008; Delmas and Toffel 2004; Hoffman 2001; Le et al. 2006; Telle 2006).

Previous researches in this “green” area argue that organizations will have to deal in an impressive culture change in order to respond to environmental challenges (Harris and Crane 2002). Hoffman (1999) assumes that management implemented values will be widely shared and strongly held by organizational members. Thus, the cultural fix model advocated by Harris and Crane (2002) generally centers on a top-down flow of values from management to the shop floor. In particular, it is managers who have generally been enlisted to further organizations’ environmental practices, and it is (other) managers who may often provide the most formidable obstacle (Harris and Crane 2002).

Harris and Crane (2002) show how greening at the organizational level can have economic as well as environmental benefits (for example, competitive advantage) and can also deliver the level of environmental practices demanded by green stakeholder (customers, regulators and pressure groups). Previous research suggests that greenness at the organizational level has, to date, been quite limited in business organizations (Fineman 1997; Finemam and Clarke 1996; Harris and Crane 2002). Hence, this research tests the following hypothesis:

**H1.4**: There is a positive and significant relationship between Greenness at the Organizational Level and Environmental Management Practices.
• **Attitude towards Change (Level of Risk Taking)**

Attitude towards change as defined by Hurley and Hult (1998) as the organization being able to enter new or established markets with new or existing goods, in which the organization can implement new ideas, services or practices. Le et al. (2006) also defines attitude towards change as the same as innovations which are ideas, practices, or concepts perceived as new to potential adopters. However new practices, services, products and programs often run a high risk of failure and tend to be more salient than established services (Jaworski and Kohli 1993; Le et al. 2006). Organizations whose cultures emphasize innovation when resources are available tend to implement more innovations and develop competitive advantage (Hurley and Hult 1998).

Hurley and Hult (1998) argue that market orientation should focus on attitude towards change (innovation, implementation of new ideas, products, services, or processes) rather than learning (development of new knowledge and insights) as the primary mechanism for responding to markets. Organizations whose cultures emphasize innovation when resources are available tend to implement more innovations and develop competitive advantage (Hurley and Hult 1998). Hurley and Hult (1998) argue that organizations with greater capacity to innovate will be more successful in responding to their environments and develop new capabilities that lead to superior performance. Accordingly, this study hypothesizes that:

**H1.5:** There is a positive and significant relationship between **Attitude towards Change (Level of Risk Taking) and Environmental Management Practices**

**Linkages between Environmental Management Practices and Marketing Performance**

Previous studies that have analyzed the relationship between environmental management and marketing performance have used different environmental variables (Tarí et al. 2009). Some works have used variables related to environmental management (initiatives, technologies, environmental management system) (Klassen and Whybark 1999; William Q. Judge and Douglas 1998). Other studies have used environmental performance variables, both positively (emission reductions) and negatively (emissions generated) (Hart and Ahuja 1996). Moreover, the findings about these relationships are mixed, but the majority of studies found that environmental management has positive effects on marketing performance.

Recently, there has been a great deal of interest in the research literature regarding whether or not environmental management practices can improve performance. Environmental management practices are the techniques, policies and procedures a firm uses that are specifically aimed at monitoring and controlling the impact of its operations on the natural environment (Montabon, Stroufe and Narasimhan 2007). According to Rondinelli and Vastag (1996), firms may be reacting to an increasingly difficult regulatory environment or responding to market pressure in adopting environmental management practices. However, the next three sub-sections will describe the relationship among environmental management practices and marketing performance perspectives. Marketing performance is conceptualized as having three dimensions, which are, efficiency measure of marketing performance, effectiveness measure of marketing performance, and adaptability measure of marketing performance (Baker and Sinkula 1999; Rondinelli and Vastag 1996; Tay 2002).

**H2:** There is a positive and significant relationship between **Environmental Management Practices and Marketing Performance.**
Effectiveness is described as the degree to which organizational goals and objectives are met (Baker and Sinkula 1999; Morgan, Clark and Gooner 2002; Ruekert, Walker, Jr. and Roering 1985; Tay 2002). Moreover, traditional organizational theory tends to view the environment as a deterministic influence to which organizations adapt their strategies, structures and processes (Zeithaml and Zeithaml 1984). This attitude was reflected particularly in the previous empirical research done. In summary, traditional environmental determinism performance conceptualized the environment as a causal variable, organizational performance was dependent upon the efficient and effective adaption of organizational characteristics to environmental contingency (Zeithaml and Zeithaml 1984).

The organization first attempts to discover what the consumer wants, then structures organizational goals, objectives and activities to deliver the desired product, service or idea better than competing organizations. The domain of marketing activity appears to start at a point where a system of environmental constraint already has been defined for the organization. In general, marketing theory appears to assume that the organization confronts predetermined opportunities in the environment. Marketing strategies, therefore, are viewed as a set of adaptive responses (Zeithaml and Zeithaml 1984).

Similarly, forecasting market demand trends and analyzing supply and price conditions illustrate activities designed to anticipate future environmental situations so that production levels and other company-controlled variables can be adjusted to optimize the match between the environment and the organization. In summary, traditional environmental determinism perspective conceptualized the environment as a casual variable: organizational performance is dependent upon the efficient and effective adaptation of organizational characteristics to environmental practices. Thus, based on the discussion above the following hypothesis is developed.

**H2.1: There is a positive and significant relationship between Environmental Management Practices and Effectiveness Measure of Marketing Performance.**

Efficiency can be defined as the comparison of outputs (performance) from marketing to inputs (such as marketing expenditure) of marketing with the goal of maximizing the inputs relative to the outputs (Morgan et al. 2002; Sheth and Sisodia 2002). From the earliest study through to the 1970’s, the vast majority of work on measuring the performance of marketing looked at marketing productivity (Clark 2000).

Tyteca (1996) investigates efficiency as the possibility of obtaining an environmental performance indicator/s from an approach that would be analogous to that classically used to quantify output, input or overall productiveness. Demands on companies to measure, document and disclose information about environmental performance will become more invasive (as the result of pressures from employees, neighbors, the general public, environmental groups and regulatory agencies) (Bryant and Wilson 1998; Tyteca 1996).

This paper will require the indicators to allow us not only to perform that kind of comparison in an objective way but also to study the effect of various kinds of regulation or environmental management practices through the efficiency measure of marketing performance dimension. Conversely, the information derived from environmental
management practices can provide public decision makers with meaningful guidelines in order to implement relevant financial or regulatory instruments. Therefore, based on the discussion above the following hypothesis is developed.

**H2.2:** There is a positive and significant relationship between Environmental Management Practices and Efficiency Measure of Marketing Performance.

- **Adaptability Measure of Marketing Performance**

The adaptability measure of marketing performance is the ability of the organization to respond to environmental changes (Baker and Sinkula 1999; Clark 2000; Morgan et al. 2002; Tay 2002; Walker Jr. and Ruekert 1987). Most previous studies posit that environment is a determinant factor of performance. From the adaptability measure of marketing performance, success of a company arises when a company’s strategy fits the environment (Bryant and Wilson 1998), and a company strategy fit the structure-conduct-performance framework in the industrial organization theory (Porter 1981). The adaptability indicator was used on Walker and Ruekert’s (1987) research as one of their three main constructs of performance. Adaptability is said to reflect the ability of the organization to change in order to meet opportunities and threats (Ruekert et al. 1985; Walker et al. 1987). Marketing performance theory appears to assume that the organization confronts predetermined opportunities in the environment. Therefore, marketing strategies are viewed as a set of adaptive performances (Zeithaml and Zeithaml 1984). The reactive performance is reflected in the typical marketing manager’s reliance on marketing intelligence, forecasting and market research (Zeithaml and Zeithaml 1984).

Traditional organizational theory tends to view the environment as a deterministic influence to which organizations adapt their strategies, structures and processes (Zeithaml and Zeithaml 1984). Based on observations, research, and extensions of the traditions found in the business policy and corporate social responsibility literatures, these authors challenge the position that organizations are or need to be passive-reactive entities with respect to the external environment. Instead, they argue that organizations can and do implement a variety of strategies designed to modify existing environmental conditions. Hence, based on the discussion above the following hypothesis is developed.

**H2.3:** There is a positive and significant relationship between Environmental Management Practices and Adaptability Measure of Marketing Performance.
Discussion and Conclusion

Environmentally friendly hotels are not the norm in Malaysia as there are still no specific environmental laws or requirements for the hotel industry (The Star 2010). The hotel industry in Malaysia does not really focus on getting ‘green’ ratings or certifications like the Green Leaf (USA), Green Key (Denmark), Nordic Swan (Scandinavia) and EU Flower (European Union). ‘Green’ rated hotels are hotels that have taken extraordinary steps towards greening the hospitality industry, for example by implementing actions to save water, energy, recycle and have proper waste management. However, the latest requirements of Malaysian hotel star ratings are only based on normal criteria like bedroom requirements, services, safety facilities, staff benefits and others (http://www.hotels.org.my).

Hence, Malaysia is different from environmentally conscious countries as there is less focus on environmental policies and practices, but instead, there is more concern about facilities and services (Abdul Samad et al. 2008). General environmental practices include practices like recycling, proper management of waste, clean air, energy and water conservation, environmental health, issuance and monitoring of permits such as building permits and compliance with legislation, purchasing policy and environmental education (Manaktola and Jauhari 2007). A survey of 14 hotels all over Malaysia by Abdul Samad et al. in 2008 revealed that there is a serious lack of awareness in green practices among hotel management. For example, the survey showed that only 50 percent of the hotels have committees for environmental issues and only a few hotels had best practices as guidelines for staff to follow (Abdul Samad et al. 2008).

The lack of environmental awareness has resulted in a pilot study conducted by Abdul Wahid et al. (2010) to identify common green indicators in various hotels in the two American continents, in order to develop a future Green Practice Index (GPI) that could be used as a benchmark for the environmental performance of Malaysian hotels. However, even with such an index, the hotel and tourism industry will be greatly affected in the long run if nothing is done to improve adoption of environmental practices among Malaysian hotels. Hence, it is essential to identify what drives the adoption of environmental management practices and it would be important to understand the benefits of these practices on marketing performance as this will motivate Malaysian hoteliers to become more environmentally conscious and ensure the industry’s sustainability in the future.
References


