

CUSTOMER PERCEPTIONS OF FOOD-WASTE REDUCTION PRACTICES AT HAPCHAN CHINESE RESTAURANT

ABSTRACT

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Food waste is a major concern in the restaurant sector, the U.S. restaurants generated approximately 12.7 million tons of surplus food in 2023. Consumers increasingly prefer sustainable businesses and may place greater trust in restaurants that reduce waste. This study surveyed diners at Hapchan Chinese Restaurant to examine their perceptions of food-waste reduction practices, including portion control and ingredient reuse, in relation to cleanliness, eco-friendly image, dining comfort, and customer loyalty. A structured questionnaire was administered to 100 diners at Hapchan Chinese Restaurant in Quezon City. It collected demographic information and four-point Likert-scale ratings of food-waste reduction practices, including reduction and reuse, and loyalty-related indicators such as cleanliness, eco-friendly image, and comfort. Data were summarized using frequencies and mean scores. Respondents strongly agreed that food-waste reduction practices improved their dining experience. The cleanliness dimension obtained a mean of 3.83 out of 4, and the highest-rated item (mean $\approx$ 3.87) indicated that proper waste handling made the dining area cleaner and increased trust. Approximately 10% of respondents reported that these practices strengthened their long-term loyalty. Common challenges included embarrassment when requesting leftovers or “doggy bags” and the absence of smaller portion options, reported by approximately 9–11% of respondents. The findings are consistent with the view that visible hygiene and waste-management practices may support customer trust and retention and that environmentally responsible restaurant practices may encourage loyalty and repeat patronage. Respondents nevertheless identified barriers, including embarrassment when requesting leftovers and limited portion-size options. More flexible portions and environmentally appropriate packaging may help address these concerns.

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