

Cubyertos de Kawayan

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ABSTRACT

The study aimed to determine the acceptability of bamboo cutlery products, primarily tableware, to lessen the use of plastic cutleries and to be the most sought-after store offering eco-friendly and sustainable products by assisting in the elimination of single-use plastic waste while making a meaningful impact on the lives of the people in the Province of Ilocos Sur. The objective of the study is to promote the usage of eco-friendly products as a replacement for plastic cutleries; it serves as a contributor to the action needed by the government to combat environmental destruction and for environmental protection, and to preserve the culture of Ilokanos in using wooden or bamboo cutleries. Alongside the personal factors of the respondents, the extent of knowledge of the residents of Ilocos Sur about bamboo products was also identified about how feasible the bamboo cutlery once established. The study utilized the simple random sampling technique to determine the sample size of the respondents, which utilized frequency and percentage to determine the profile, familiarity, and marketability of bamboo products. The result showed a great familiarity with bamboo products, wherein the respondents stated their keen interest in such products. There is a "High" possibility that the feasibility of the Cubyertos de Kawayan will be established.

Keywords: *Bamboo cutlery, environmental protection, sustainability, pollution, feasibility*

INTRODUCTION

Plastic waste has been a problem for almost decades and is also considered a global problem. It has numerous notable adverse effects, including the environmental pollution brought by plastic cutleries. (Alabi OA, Ologbonjaye KI, Awosolu O, Alalade OE, 2019). Indeed, people can't cope with the amount of plastic on the planet — nor the amount that continues to be produced. For this reason, everyone's attitudes and behaviors towards plastic must change to ensure a safe and healthy future for the planet.

Numerous innovations have been made in pre-pandemic times, including popularizing wooden cutlery. Single-use plastic cutlery has become easily disposable, leading to plastic pollution and environmental degradation.

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With this alarming increase in carbon footprint and plastic menace, going green is the best solution to help the earth recover.

Wooden cutlery arose due to the immediate necessity for a green revolution. These cutleries are well-known in Manila, the Philippines' capital, and the researchers would like to bring them to the far-flung province of Ilocos Sur. According to Earth911 (2019), these utensils are a compostable and environmentally friendly alternative to plastic, making them a far better choice for environmentally conscious consumers. The researchers intend to use bamboo as the primary raw material to create durable and environmentally beneficial cutlery.

To spread awareness and familiarity with bamboo cutlery, there is a need to push through an "Cubyertos de Kawayan" assessment to know if bamboo cutlery will be feasible here in Ilocos Sur. Cubyertos de Kawayan seeks to create the best products for the customers. This is not only a venue for the green movement but also to revive the long-gone culture and preserve the value of being an Ilokano.

Cubyertos de Kawayan is a local business venture that offers sustainable bamboo products, primarily tableware, made up of bamboo products to lessen the use of plastic cutlery. It will be located at Bayubay Norte, San Vicente, Ilocos Sur, which is known to be the home of artisans in the north. This is an opportunity to create tableware with an aesthetic look and something unique not usually seen in the area.

It aims to be the most sought-after store offering eco-friendly and sustainable products by assisting in the elimination of single-use plastic waste from the world while making a meaningful impact on people's lives.

Cubyertos de Kawayan will offer the best products, assuring complete customer and stakeholder satisfaction. One of its objectives is to open further branches in Luzon, where the necessary materials are available, and to export the products to various nations for more excellent production. The company hopes to grow to a few locations to spread the message of rapid action against plastic waste.

This study was conducted to examine the viability of the proposed project. This business venture is not well-liked in the neighborhood, and the researchers are unsure about its chances of success. This study highlighted critical strategies for establishing and growing their brand so that they can advertise their items and outperform competitors. As a result, it is necessary to perform this research on how to run the organization, particularly regarding marketing strategy and risk and return.

The study was conducted to participate in the government's action towards environmental protection and preservation. The viability and feasibility of establishing bamboo cutlery products have been enforced to address this particular concern. The study promotes the cultural preservation of the Ilokanos using wooden utensils in their everyday lives.

With the uncertainty of the public replacing their traditional tableware with eco-friendly ones and adding that it is not yet fully known by some, qualities and

reasons why they should dive into wooden tableware should be highlighted. Therefore, marketers need to understand which factors will contribute to the total success of the business. Hence, through this study, marketers will have a broader perspective on how to introduce a new way of eating greener to create strategies that will help them convince the public.

Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to determine the feasibility of bamboo cutlery in the province of Ilocos Sur. Alongside personal factors being determined by the researchers, the extent of knowledge of the respondents about bamboo products was also examined about how feasible the bamboo cutlery would be when established.

METHODOLOGY

This section presents the research design and sample, data gathering instrument, procedure, and statistical tool used in this study.

Research Design

The study utilized a descriptive quantitative research method with the main objective of generating the feasibility of the bamboo cutlery products. Furthermore, it utilized the data gathered and the production process of bamboo cutlery products to create a projected capital cost. The study also used documentary analysis as a tool to compute the marketability and profitability of the product based on the data that had been gathered.

Population and Sample

In identifying the needed respondents, the data of the population ranging from 18 to 60 years old were forecasted by the Philippine Statistics Authority. Random sampling was incorporated, considering the total population of respondents. The survey is completed online. A Google form link was created and distributed to random people.

Table 1

Distribution of respondents

	Respondents	
	Population (N)	Sample (n)
	386,511	258

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Data Collection and Instruments

The researchers used a consent form upon approval of the Dean; the researcher immediately floated the questionnaire through Google Docs. The data gathered was statistically treated and analyzed.

The principal device used by the researchers to collect the data was a survey questionnaire to gather information about personal factors, the extent of knowledge of the respondents about bamboo products, and how feasible bamboo cutlery products are as perceived by the respondents. The study made use of a questionnaire that is composed of two parts. Part I contains the profile of the respondents, and Part II contains the respondents' knowledge of bamboo products and the feasibility of bamboo cutlery products.

Analysis of Data

To attain the objectives set for this study, the following statistical tools were used to treat the data gathered. Frequency and percentage to describe the profile of the respondents and their extent of knowledge regarding bamboo products alongside their feasibility.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Profile of the Respondents

On age. Most respondents (90.70% or 234) are between 18 and 25, while the least (0.39% or 1) fall under the age bracket of 58 to 60. The data means that most of the respondents are younger people. The presented data reflects that most of the respondents who usually buy or purchase items are of younger generations. Younger generations tend to purchase things quickly.

On address. Many of the respondents (23.26% or 60) are from Bantay. One (0.39% or 1) is from the municipalities of Banayoyo, Burgos, Galimuyod, Magsingal, Santiago, San Esteban, and Sta. Lucia. The given data shows that we reached 25 out of 34 municipalities and cities here in the province. The presentation reflects that the possible market of the proposed business is around Metro Vigan, such as Bantay, a town near San Vicente. Upland municipalities' curiosity is rising as we introduce the product in the province.

On employment status. A great majority of the respondents (84.88% or 219) are students, while the least (1.94% or 5) of the respondents are environmental enthusiasts. Students make up a significant portion of the customer base. They typically dominate commercial establishments such as malls, restaurants, and boutiques.

The Extent of knowledge of the respondents about bamboo products

Table 2 shows the extent of the respondents' knowledge of bamboo products.

Table 2

The Extent of knowledge of the respondents about bamboo products

	f	%
Usage of bamboo products		
Yes	254	98.45
No	4	1.55
Total	258	100.00
Familiarity with bamboo products		
Furniture	238	92.25
Instruments	193	74.81
Kitchen Utensils	185	71.71
Flooring	126	48.84
School Supplies	81	31.40
Bamboo Infused Makeup Products	51	19.77
Others:		
Toothbrush	1	0.39
Bamboo Palace	1	0.39
Bamboo houses and Bridges	1	0.39
Straws	1	0.39
Bicycle Frames	1	0.39
Total	258	100.00
Familiarity with Bamboo Cutleries		
Yes	174	67.44
No	84	32.56
Total	258	100.00
Usage of Bamboo Cutleries		
Yes	181	70.16
No	77	29.84
Total	258	100.00

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On the usage of bamboo products. Almost all respondents (98.45% or 254) are familiar with bamboo products, while 1.55% (4 out of 258) are not. People are gradually becoming aware of the presence of bamboo products. With the data gathered, the researchers are slowly getting the population we need to help the environment by being well-informed about eco-friendly products. As per Bamboo Instruments (n.d.), it is part of the Filipinos' daily way of living. Due to its abundance, availability, and low cost, it is considered the practical choice of material for building various things.

On familiarity with bamboo products. For those who were aware, most of the respondents (92.25% or 238) were familiar with bamboo-made Furniture. Also, bicycle frames are familiar to (1.16% or 3) respondents. From the respondents familiar with bamboo products, bamboo-made furniture is the most famous. This only proves that back then, Filipinos were using bamboo products amid the popularity of plastic things.

On familiarity with Bamboo Cutleries. The majority of respondents (174 or 67.44%) are familiar with bamboo products, while (32.56% or 84) are not familiar. With this, some are aware of bamboo cutlery because of the low exposure in the province. Since Filipino households have introduced plastics and metal utensils, the fear of shifting to a greener way of eating has been heightened. Yet still, the result generated a higher percentage of respondents being aware of bamboo cutleries.

The Marketability of Bamboo Cutlery

Table 3 shows the feasibility of bamboo cutlery products as the respondents perceive.

On deciding factors on buying bamboo cutleries. Some people differ in opinions as to why they purchase a sure thing. The majority of the respondents (67.44% or 174) consider the durability of the products. Functions and Taglines have the same weight (0.39% or 1). A product's physical durability provides numerous direct practical benefits to its end consumers. According to the results, durability is the most crucial factor to consider when purchasing items. After all, the longer a single product lasts, the more time it takes for the environment to recover the materials used to make it.

Table 3*The marketability of bamboo cutlery*

	f	%
Deciding factor in buying bamboo cutleries		
Durability	174	67.44
Price	49	18.99
Aesthetics	30	11.63
Others:		
Eco-friendly	3	1.16
The Design and Tagline	1	0.39
Function	1	1.16
Total	258	100.00
Volume of Purchase		
Per set	167	64.73
One by one	91	35.27
Total	258	100.00
Price Range		
Php 100.00 – Php 150.00	138	53.49
Php 151.00 – Php 200.00	75	29.07
Php 201.00 – Php 250.00	19	7.36
Php 251.00 and up	26	10.08
Total	258	100.00
Willingness to visit the store		
Yes	255	98.84
No	3	1.16
Total	258	100.00
Sustainability of buying the product		
Yes	249	96.51
No	9	3.49
Total	258	100.00
Recommendation to other people		
Yes	257	99.61
No	1	0.39
Total	258	100.00

Volume of Purchase. Most respondents (64.73% or 258) are willing to buy our bamboo cutlery by set, while a significant percentage of the respondents (35.27% or 91) are for individual purchase. With this, some respondents are to buy per set to save up a small amount rather than buy them separately. Most people choose to buy things in a set to be cost-effective. Buying things individually will cost a lot compared to buying those things in a set.

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Price Range. Most respondents (53.49% or 138) want to buy the product with a price of Php 100.00-Php 150.00. At the same time, a significant percentage of the respondents (7.36% or 19) will buy at Php 201.00-Php 250.00. This reflects the fact that the majority of respondents want a lower price for the cutlery. The pricing with the highest percentage is the cheapest because most consumers choose to buy items at a lower cost while maintaining high quality. Being cheap nearly usually means having a higher appreciation for money and goods.

On willingness to visit the store. The physical store will be built alongside the online operation of the business. Almost all of the respondents (98.84% or 255) wanted to visit our physical store, while a significant number (1.16% or 3) did not. This implies that people are looking forward to visiting the place. A glimpse of the actual product will give them a broader perspective on how the products contribute to the total healing and protection of the environment.

On sustainability on buying the product. Most respondents (96.51% or 249) are willing to buy the products, while a significant number of respondents (3.49% or 9) abstain from buying. The figure shows that 96% of the respondents are pro-environmental protection. Luckily, the gathered data reflects how a particular person sees environmental protection as an urgent call to everyone. By purchasing things, people's micro efforts will result in a macro effect on the environment. Bamboo cutlery is an environmentally sustainable and rapidly renewable material. When thrown away, bamboo utensils will degrade naturally, transforming into nutrient-rich soil and helping other plants to grow (Mitrovic, 2018).

On recommending to other people. The figure shows the willingness of the respondents to recommend the products to other people. Almost all respondents (99.61% or 257) are willing to recommend. Somehow, a lone person isn't willing to recommend it (0.39% or 1). Recommendations are being regarded as a new key measure of determining whether or not products, services, and businesses are booming. As a result, there is a greater probability of touching the life of every individual across the country in order to achieve the common good.

Product Capital Cost in Putting Up Cutleries Made of Bamboo Products

The business partners will share Php 26,834.00 each to produce the start-up capital amounting to Php 161,000.00. The amount stated will be used for the procurement of raw materials, machinery, tools, equipment, furniture and fixtures, and other necessary documents needed for the operation of the business.

Starting a business may be an exciting process, but it costs money. When determining business startup costs, it's essential to be realistic (Caramela, 2022). Moreover, Kriss (2020) added that the cost of starting a small business depends on the type and size of the business you're opening and your industry. As per Cubyertos de

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Kawayan, below is the business startup cost to be used within the first three months of operation.

Table 4
Projected cost

Start-Up Cost	
EXPENSES	
Advertising Expenses	5,000.01
Comm., light and water	7,050.00
Delivery Expense	900.00
Office Supplies	1,722.75
Salaries and wages	15,000.00
Miscellaneous Expense	450.00
Rental	18,000.00
Taxes and licenses	2,000.00
Packaging Materials	16,974.24
Total	<u>67,097.00</u>

To further understand the distribution of start-up cost in relation to the start-up capital, presented below is the beginning total asset of the business.

Table 5
Needed assets

ASSETS	
Leasehold Improvement	1,200.00
Production Equipment	11,203.00
Furniture and Fixtures	8,000.00
Raw Materials	43,500.00
Total	63,903.00
Cash	30,000.00
Total Assets	<u>93,903.00</u>

Before opening the business, one must acquire machinery, tools, and equipment in preparation for producing its products. Presented above are the actual number of assets acquired before the operation. The total assets of the business amount to Php 63,903.00. As per the petty cash fund amounting to Php 30,000.00, it will be used when unforeseeable events happen. This petty cash fund will be regarded as an emergency fund.

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Table 6

Start-Up capital allocation

Start-Up Capital	161,000.00
Total Expenses	67,097.00
Total Assets	93,903.00
Total	161,000.00

In total, the startup cost amounting to Php 161,000.00 was spent on purchasing machinery, tools, and equipment needed for the operation of the business. To further understand the allocation of funds, below is the simplified computation of startup costs.

CONCLUSIONS

On personal factors, the respondents are mainly between the ages of 18 and 25; a significant number are from Bantay, and a great majority are students. On the extent of knowledge of the respondents in relation to bamboo products, the results from the respondents have a remarkable meaning in the achievement of goals where foremost widespread information for familiarity with bamboo products is needed. The plastic menace has been a problem for decades. Due to the unexpected rise of COVID-19 risks, people are being instructed to use disposal masks rather than recyclable ones. As per this observation, people are immersed in utilizing bamboo cutlery in the current day, where environmental conservation is being prioritized. Familiarity is vital in achieving the common good, where global solidarity is required to combat the ever-changing effects of the plastic menace. On the feasibility of bamboo cutlery products, as perceived by the respondents, the result shows that there is a high possibility of viability and feasibility when Cubyertos de Kawayan is established. Social Responsibility is still a need to help the community around you. It is to help your community and the environment, as well as to promote the common good for all well-being. The goal of the proposed business will be attainable in no time, resulting in meaningful change. Before opening the business, one must acquire machinery, tools, and equipment in preparation for producing its products. In total, the start-up cost amounting to Php 161,000.00 was spent on purchasing machinery, tools, and equipment needed for the operation of the business.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Sustainability is becoming more and more important nowadays. It is suggested that businesses should convert to green energy in order to influence more people to use eco-friendly products and minimize the use of plastic-made things. This

thing, when not properly disposed of, will contribute to the worst plastic pollution scenario. To fully help the environment recover from destruction, mutual effort from everyone is needed. By simply patronizing eco-friendly products, our simple steps will result in a more significant effect on the environment. Usage is not enough; consistency is needed—consistency results in sustainability. As Miss Earth 2015, Angelia Ong said, “All things are possible and feasible if we work together.” New ideas bloom from curious minds; let us be open to trying new things. Who knows, that idea will be a great help in the future. Do not hesitate to make a move when it is for the common good. With community involvement, environmental protection and preservation can be attained in no time. Innovation of bamboo products, most especially bamboo cutleries, should be incorporated. In order not to be overpowered by future innovations from existing businesses, businesses should give another flavor and another touch to make the products appealing and have an edge over other competitors. Start-up costs really need a higher amount since the beginning of the business is the most crucial part of the operation. Machinery, tools, and equipment must be acquired ultimately to have a better production process. As to the needed funds, businesses should focus on passive income activities before opening up a business to have sufficient funding pre-operations. If not sufficient, business owners can apply for loans. For future researchers, a study should be conducted to improve the projected capital cost further.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

The study underwent an ethics review. The researcher applied the ethical guidelines of business research throughout data gathering, analysis, and presentation. Permission for the study's conduct was obtained from the University of Northern Philippines. Full consent of the respondents was sought through a letter of consent. The research objectives were explained to the respondents, who would then decide whether they wanted to participate. The dignity, rights, safety, and well-being of the respondents were given primary consideration. The protection of the privacy of research participants and an adequate level of confidentiality of the research data will be ensured. The anonymity of individuals will be maintained, and any communication about the study will be done with honesty and transparency.

The names of the participants in the survey were coded with numbers. Strict confidentiality was used when treating data from individual respondents, and the results were presented, which consisted of aggregate data that would not lead to the identification of participants. They could opt out of the study anytime. Data was kept secure and only accessed by the researchers.

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