INCORPORATING SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES INTO FACILITY MANAGEMENT:
A STUDY OF IFM GHANA LIMITED, AIRPORT RESIDENTIAL AREA

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JULY, 2019
DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that this work is the result of my own research and has not been presented by anyone for any academic award in this or any other university. All references in the work have been fully acknowledged.

I bear sole responsibility for any shortcomings.

..............................................  ..............................................

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CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this long essay was supervised in accordance with the laid down procedures of the University.

................................. .................................
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DEDICATION

“We know what we are, but know not what we may be.”

William Shakespeare

This work is dedicated to:

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relevance of the concept of sustainability to facility management. Initiatives and research into sustainability are more often focused on the environment while overlooking the economic and socio-cultural dimension of sustainability.

This study therefore focused on the impacts that the concept of sustainability can have if incorporated into facility management in Ghana.

For this study, the qualitative research method was selected to be able to provide in-depth details rather than given generalized details and outcomes. The unit of analysis was IFM Ghana Limited. The data collection was done by administering questionnaires and carrying out semi-structured interviews.

The results from the study indicated that, generally, personnel of the firm knew about sustainability from school and a few from training. Also, though there are some sustainability principles that have been applied in IFM Ghana Limited in relation to facility management, their practice cannot be justified as entirely sustainable. Moreover, there was no clear distinction of a pursuit of sustainability by IFM Ghana Limited.

It was recommended in this study that IFM Ghana Limited develop a sustainability plan to be implemented alongside its strategic plan and this plan should cut across all aspects of the organization and seek to pursue economic, social, environmental, ethical as well as corporate social responsibility of the company towards all of its stakeholders.
INTRODUCTION

Not many studies have been conducted on the sustainability of the facility management practice in Ghana. Assessments of sustainability tend to evaluate whether an activity or project has a plan, measures or strategies in place to ensure that it has a prolonged life cycle. The concept of sustainability looks to have been embraced in industries such as tourism but its definition is still widely discussed and researched (Butler, 1999; Sharpley 2000; Wall. 1999).

Awareness has been drawn to the environment and how human activity has impacted it but the complexity and difficulty in defining the concept of sustainability has been underlined as a barrier to translating the concept into precise actions and practices.

The concept of sustainability has its roots traced to the United Nations 1972 Stockholm Conference but the Brundtland report is credited for drawing attention to the concept first, even though Ward and Dubos (1972) presented on Sustainable Development at the conference.

According to (Swarbrooke, 1999; Mowforth and Munt 2009) the accommodation and tourism industry have acknowledged the critiques of their contribution to the unsustainable depletion of resources. Sustainability principles in the building industry are often considered most in the primary stage of life of buildings but tend to be ignored at the stage of occupancy, which represents the longest of the life cycle phases. It is therefore very important that this stage be taken into account in relation to sustainability.

It is therefore imperative for managers or management of built facilities in Ghana to carry out assessments during the occupancy stage to assess if the sustainability concept was considered in both the long and short term.
1.1 Problem Statement

Before the 1970’s, sustainable business practices were perceived as a problem by corporations and considered a risk factor with inadequate strategic value. Stakeholders of businesses have become more conscious of the socio-environmental consequences of business activities. The sustainable development concept has therefore been embraced by many businesses even though there is evidence that not enough progress has been made towards its full realization (IUCN, 2006).

There have been challenges that have risen in the course of implementing sustainable business practices which ranges from the perception of corporate executives that, sustainable development strategy implementation diminishes the company’s competition ability through to a lack of understanding of the derived value that could accrue from corporate sustainable development practices (Porter & van der Linde, 1995).

Factors such as technological change, call for smart solutions from customers, increased stakeholder power and globalization have pushed businesses to change their management practices to be able to compete. As sustainable business practices have gained the spotlight, novel strategic management practices have become crucial to sustainable development.

The concept of sustainability is still in its developmental stages and therefore holds new potential for debate on its relevance and application.

1.2 Rationale for the Study

Sustainability has gained recognition as one of the significant factors to consider in determining strategies for global businesses. Organizations around the world are relentlessly leading and championing the sustainability agenda. Sustainable practices ensure value for money because of the efficiency it brings to bear, the reduction in wastage of scarce resources
and how it enhances technological advancement while factoring environmental and social interests.

Facility management, which centers on providing facilities for various purposes and uses in modern times is evolving to factor environmental and sustainability focuses. Consideration of all technicalities including education, training and development of facility management companies and consultancies is key to placing greater value on sustainability.

This study outlines the impacts of incorporating the concept of sustainability in facility management in Ghana and assesses and provides recommendations on the learnings from the research.

1.3 Research Objectives

IFM Ghana Limited is a facility management company that provides integrated facility management services from property maintenance, building maintenance to janitorial services and has been in existence since 2015. They are one of the industry’s major stakeholders and as such are worth studying. This study will:

1. Identify a definitive process for assessing sustainability in Facility Management.

2. Determine what advocates for the application of the sustainability concept in the facility management practice.

3. Determine how applicable sustainable practices can be to IFM Ghana Limited.

1.4 Research Questions

The research question that this study seeks to answer are;

1. What is the definitive process for assessing sustainability in Facility Management?

2. How can the concept of sustainability be incorporated into facility management?

3. How applicable can sustainable practices be to IFM Ghana Limited?
1.5 Organization of Study

Chapter One gives an overview of the study and comprises the background of the study, the rationale for the study, scope, objectives, a summary of the research design and the outline of the study.

Chapter Two covers the literature review that presents a concise history on the development and also the current knowledge on the concept of sustainability, sustainability assessment and the methodology for carrying out such an assessment.

Chapter Three highlights the research method, strategy, method of data collection and enquiry.

Chapter Four provides details on the discussion and analysis of the techniques employed and the results obtained.

Chapter Five summarizes the recommendations and conclusions derived from the study, its significance and the opportunities it presents for the future and future research.
LITERATURE REVIEW

This section briefly introduces the concept of sustainability, popular definitions, and its origins and explains the different conceptualizations of the relationships that exist between the social, economic and environmental factors. Focus is then turned to sustainability in Ghana and sustainable facility management. The status of Ghana in relation to sustainability will be briefly discussed while introducing the case study and then assessing sustainability, assessing sustainability related performance and presenting a conceptual framework while listing criteria for assessment as a guide to assess sustainability in facility management at IFM Ghana Limited.

2.1 Definition of Sustainable Development and its Origin

The sustainable development concept can be traced to the 1970s, when concerns were raised on the increased depletion of resources by population growth that was inevitable with the knowledge of how fragile the environment is and the exhaustible nature of resources.

The most globally accepted definition of sustainable development is accredited to the Brundtland report, which defines it as “The development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs,” (Brundtland, 1987).

The value of sustainable development has gained popularity, which has challenged the conventional way of doing business and how development is interpreted. (Poveda, 2011). Sustainable development has become and continues to become a globally accepted policy goal, however, the wide range of goals, definitions and criteria related to the concept makes it confusing (Giddings et al., 2002).

Sustainability is also defined in other contexts as the path to balance social, economic and environmental needs. This highlights the interdependency, interconnection and equal
importance between economy, society and the environment, which are termed the three pillars of sustainability. This is an asymmetric interdependence. Another definition of sustainability “sustainable development comprises types of economic and social development which protect and enhance the natural environment and social equity” reflects the challenge that the environment places on the types of socio-economic development (Diesendorf, 2000). The conceptualization of sustainability as separate pillars is considered reductionist; it perpetuates fragmentation and allows for stakeholders to sometimes focus on certain aspects to the detriment of another (Gibson, 2006).

2.2 Facilities Management

The most widely used definition for facilities management is “an integrated approach to maintaining, operating, enhancing and adapting the buildings and infrastructure of an organization in order to create an environment that strongly supports its primary functions” (Atkin and Brooks, 2009). One of the similarities between sustainability and facilities management is its ever-evolving nature and varying definitions. Usually based on the client’s needs, facilities management may consist mainly of building maintenance, utilities supplies, domestic services such as cleaning but may also extend to health and safety management, estate management, contract management, financial management, change management and human resource management.

According to standards in Europe, facilities management is defined as “the integration of processes within an organization to maintain and develop the agreed services which encourage and improve the effectiveness of its primary activities” (European Committee for Standardization, 2006).

The core focus highlighted by both definitions is the integrative and cooperative approach to support an organization’s business objectives (Atkin and Brooks, 2009)
This implies that the job of a facility manager or facility management company is multidisciplinary and if properly undertaken can impact the performance of the client organization massively (Alexander, 2003).

2.2.1 The Core Functions of Facility Management

In an analysis conducted in 2009 by the Global Job Task Analysis where sixty-two (62) economies were included and eleven core functions emerged. These functions include the following:

- Emergency Preparedness and Business Continuity
- Communication
- Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability
- Finance and Business
- Leadership and Strategy
- Operations and Maintenance
- Project Management
- Quality
- Human Factors
- Technology
- Real Estate and Property Management

2.2.2 Importance of Facilities Management

- **Cost Efficiency and Value for Money:** Facilities management service providers are more often than not able to provide services at a lower cost by eliminating overhead costs for the companies with results in savings and promotes value for money.
• **Reduction in Liabilities:** Facilities management service providers assume some of the liabilities of services they provide thereby reducing the liabilities on the client company.

• **Streamlined Operations:** Facility management service providers competitively offer a 24-hour service support. This ensures that services are uninterrupted and solutions can be devised to address them as and when they occur.

• **Quality Assurance:** The client company is assured of quality services since the facility management service provider will work with qualified and trained personnel to provide quality services to maintain and enhance their brand name.

• **Stress Reduction:** The outsourcing of such services takes the responsibility of staffing, performance reviews and any other duties off the client company. This allows them to concentrate on their core activities. (International Facilities Management Association, 2016).

2.3 **Sustainable Facility Management**

Facilities management has become a very sought after service because of the potential positive impacts that it could have on the performance of organizations. This is a major contributing factor to the increase in facilities management companies in the world. Facility management, though a relatively new profession, is seeking to secure its future and gain a reputation as a credible discipline and profession (Alexander, 2003).

Sustainability plays a part in an organization’s branding and is increasingly a part of its overall mission (International Facilities Management Association, 2016). Efficient facility management can have very substantial influences on profitability, productivity, employee wellbeing, waste management and energy management (Elmualim et al., 2012). Facility management companies are in a better position to push the sustainability agenda by
influencing organizations they work with by highlighting its importance. Since the industry was established, the facility management market begun to gain acceptance and has seen the entrance of both local and international companies over the past few years. Some of these companies include (City Facilities Management, Silver Star Property Management, UT Properties, Taysec Facility Management, Sunda Real Estate Company from China, Blue Rose Facilities Limited, Assenta Property and Kingdom Hotel Investment Group (Saudi Arabia) listed by (Broll Ghana Limited, 2016).

IFM Ghana Limited is a facility management company established in Ghana in 2015. This company provides services such as property and project management, integrated facilities, property management, janitorial services and building maintenance.

IFM Ghana Limited’s mission include the following:

- To position their brand as the first choice for efficient services
- To combine efforts in ensuring that value is added to every property we manage.
- To develop effective processes and source groundbreaking tools to provide quality services.
- To recruit and empower staff using international standards

Currently, IFM Ghana Limited provides facility management services to all Imperial Homes Ghana Limited properties and other private businesses. These properties include Imperial Court, Premier Place, Bentley Grove, Imperial Lodge, Imperial Grove, Imperial Square, Bentley Place, Imperial Gardens, Palazzo, Bentley Oak and Mankata Apartments.

The portfolio of the company is very impressive as it also extends services to private businesses such as Advance Health. They have been operating mainly in Accra for just over 2 years. The company’s vision is “to be the leading homegrown facilities management firm across Africa”. With the rate at which the company is expanding its operations, it is a case worth studying in relation to the quest to achieve sustainability.
The impact that sustainability of organizations such as facility management companies have on the natural environment, the workforce, the economy as well as the society as a whole is why (Diesendoff, 2000) encourages the study of sustainability in such organizations as he makes a case for their contribution to the sustainability or unsustainability of a society considering their impact on the above sectors. The vision of IFM Ghana Limited to be the leading homegrown facilities management firm depends on the ability of the company to be sustainable. In order to achieve this, assessments of sustainability must be made. This research establishes the current level of knowledge, understanding and application of sustainable practices within facility management by focusing on IFM Ghana Limited.

2.4 Assessment of Sustainability

Sustainability assessment is what determines whether a company is developing and has the potential to continue to develop or if its development will be stunted. These assessments evaluate the current running state and assesses whether there has been any growth or progress. This will contribute positively to planning, decision making and leading change as it will assess also the impact of existing policies and the need to develop new policies focused on sustainability.

The measurement process is one in which variables related to sustainable development are identified, data is collected and analysed with technically appropriate methods whiles the assessment comprises comparing performance against a standard number of criteria according to (Poveda, 2011).

Sustainability assessments are comparatively modern processes and so there is no laid-down standard. (Fiksel et al., 1999) also argues that based on the complex nature of the concept of sustainability, developing a resolution that covers the broad and multi-faceted nature of
sustainability is challenging. Additionally, the measurement requires looking beyond the boundaries of a single company.

To be able to properly address this challenge, different approaches have been suggested to assess the progress towards sustainability according to (Sors, 2011). The use of indicators is one of the many approaches.

Indicators stipulate vital information on current and future developments that are prerequisites for assessing our current state as a society or as an individual. Intelligent decisions can be made based on the information provided and its analysis.

Indicators used in the assessment of sustainability are usually of different structures. However, awareness has been created generally on the shortfalls of single indicators such as GDP and aggregate indexes such as Ecological Footprint in assessing sustainability because they are usually less extensive. (Bossel, 1999) suggests that a more holistic approach be adopted to identify indicators that reflect the interconnection of the economy, environment and society. He argues that the systems approach reduces the risk of ignoring or overstating others.

With the consideration of this approach, sustainability indicators should include and reflect the following:

- **Measurable**: Measures should be consistent, comparable and based on easily available information over time.
- **Understandable**: It should be simple, clear, concise and understandable to inexperienced people in the field.
- **Sensitive**: It should be able to respond to social, environmental and economic changes.
- **Relevant**: It should be able to factor the individualities of local conditions in emphasizing the aspects and problems of sustainability.
• **Significant:** It should evaluate the long and short term effects of sustainability.

• **Scientifically Valid:** It should be based on a conceptually sound framework.

• **Reproducible:** Calculating or measuring the indicators should be easily replicable.

• **Coherent:** It should be significant on its own and as part of a set of indicators.

• **Synthetic:** It should be capable of integrating a large quantity of information in a single numeric value.

• **Disaggregateable:** It should have the ability to be broken down to cater for smaller territories, social groups etc.

• **Convenient:** It should be relatively easy to carry out measurements as often as needed while utilizing minimal use of resources.

• **Timely for decision-making** (Diesendorf, 2000; Sors 2001).

Considering how complex carrying out sustainability assessments are, it is imperative that a clear conceptual framework is developed to guide the process. One of such frameworks is the Bellagio Principles (Hardi and Zdan 1997), which is a set of guidelines for the assessment of progress aimed at sustainable development.

Applying the Bellagio Principles can aid in the assessment of activities of non-governmental organizations, corporations, international institutions, community groups and governments (Hardi and Zdan, 1997). These principles were developed from a wide range of work related to sustainability assessment and are set to provide guidelines for the development and design of the entire assessment process.

The Bellagio Principles were developed to serve as a guideline for developing

• **Scope:** The range of assessments including the temporal, geographical and thematic.

• **Process:** The method through which the assessments would be done.

• **Content:** The questions that the assessments should address.

• **Impact:** The way to highlight the impacts that assessments have on policy.
Sustainability has also been defined as how social, economic and environmental needs are balanced. This definition puts the spotlight on the inter-relation, interdependency between the three pillars of sustainability which are the society, economy and the environment.

Figure 1: The Three Pillars of Sustainability

Source: (Ledger, 2014)

As the venn diagram suggests, the aspects of sustainability under consideration are to be considered equally as there are three equal intersecting circles. It has been argued that a representation where the economy is dependent on society and both of them dependent on the environment would be more precise. Sustainability was defined by (Diesendorf, 2000) as “sustainable development that comprises types of economic and social development which protect and enhance the natural environment and social equity” exhibits how the environment
affects the types of socio-economic development. (Lozano, 2008) however criticized this definition as being overgeneralized and made suggestions that incorporate diversity over time and space of the three pillars.

**METHODOLOGY**

This section focuses on the approach to the study, how the study was conducted as well as details of data collection techniques employed for the research. This study highlights how to incorporate sustainability practices in facility management, a case study of IFM Ghana Limited.

### 3.1 Research Method

The qualitative approach was selected for this research since the study is geared towards the discovery of the progress of IFM Ghana Limited towards sustainability and provides in-depth details rather than generalized details and outcomes.

### 3.2 Research Strategy

The strategy that has been adopted because the case study in question is a descriptive case study. In the assessment of sustainability it was suggested by (Hardi and Zdan 1997) that conceptual and technical issues should be taken into consideration within the context of the delicate value-driven processes of real, day-to-day decision making so that decision making, process of assessment and decision making is fed by the insights and can enhance technical and public enquiry.

The following are the components of the case study strategy:

- Case Study Questions – “How do you incorporate sustainability practices into facilities management services in Ghana?”
- **Units of Analysis** – The case study is IFM Ghana Limited and it is to be assessed, as a single case but should be relevant enough to offer practical lessons and conclusions. The target group is facility managers in IFM Ghana Limited.

- **Use of theory** – This study seeks to stand off the principles of sustainability highlighted by Gibson et al (2005) and serves as the guideline for data collection.

- **Data collection and analysis** – The administration of questionnaires and semi-structured interviews and a survey was employed in the data collection. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences will be employed to analyze the data. The Managing Director, the Facilities and Operations Manager and Assistants as well as Facility Managers will be interviewed. These people were chosen because of their leadership roles, their knowledge of activities and processes of the facility management company as well as their availability.

This study seeks to establish if any strategic plan document exists and review it as it outlines the strategic direction of the company and outlines broad strategies that the company has developed to achieve short and medium term objectives and lead to the achievement of long term goals.

The survey was conducted to assess the level of knowledge of facility managers on the concept of sustainability. It was conducted via questionnaires to eighteen (18) relevant persons employed by the company. The interest group will be the total number of operation managers, facility managers and top management within the company because of the small number. The survey instrument will be prepared specifically for this study.

The data will be analyzed using statistical techniques and content analysis.
3.3 Time Schedule for Study

The study is divided into the designing of data collection tools, meetings with stakeholders, collation of data from various sources, data analysis, proof reading and corrections by supervisor and final printing of study.

3.4 Data Analysis and Discussion

This section highlights the details of the analysis of the data that was collected from interviews, observations, surveys, documents and the results.

3.5 Survey

The survey was conducted to assess the facility managers as IFM Ghana Limited’s level of literacy on the concept of sustainability.

The survey was done through the use of questionnaires which were administered to twelve (12) Facility Managers, one (1) Facilities and Operations Manager, three (3) Assistant Facilities and Operations Managers, the General Manager and the Managing Director. The total number of questionnaires administered were eighteen (18).

3.6 Sample size description

This is a summary of the final sample that was utilized in the data analysis. All the questionnaires administered were used for the purpose of this research. The following figures and table depict the responses received from the various respondents.
DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This section focuses on the presenting, analyzing and discussing the data received from the respondents. It specifically presents the demographic data of respondents and the main data obtained from the field interviews held with the various respondents. Presentation of the findings and discussions were guided by the three (3) objectives set at the beginning of the study with the themes and sub themes developed under each of the objectives.

The first section of the analysis focuses on assessing the knowledge that facility managers have on sustainability. The second part focuses on identifying a definitive process for assessing sustainability in facility management. The third section presents and discusses data on what advocates for the application of the sustainability concept in the facility management practice. The fourth and final sections of this chapter presents and discusses the findings on how applicable sustainable practices can be to IFM Ghana Limited.

4.1 Responses Received from Interview Guide

The interview guide was administered to 18 persons and all eighteen (18) (representing 100%) of the interview guides were received. However, out of the eighteen (18) responses only fifteen (15) (representing 83%) were deemed to have been properly answered and were used for the analysis. This brings the number that was not used for the analysis to three (3) (representing 17%). Those that were deemed to have not been properly answered were responses that had a lot of blank spaces. Figure 2 shows the responses received on the interview guide.
Figure 2: Responses Received on the interview Guide

4.2 Demographic Data of Respondents

The demographic data on respondents collected in this study included gender, age range, educational background and position of the respondent in the company.

4.3 Gender of Respondents

From the responses received as shown in figure 3, the responses indicate that more males participated in the study as compared to females. From the pie chart thirteen (13) (representing 87%) of the respondents were males whiles two (2) (representing 13%) were
females. This picture provides a reflection of the male to female ratio of persons working in managerial and supervisory roles at IFM Facilities Management.

*Figure 3: Gender of Respondents*

![Pie chart showing gender distribution of respondents: 13 males (87%), 2 females (13%)](image)

**4.4 Age Range of Respondents**

The study also collected data on the ages of the respondents. From the graph, as shown in *figure 4* below, nine (9) (representing 60%) of the respondents were between the ages of 26-35, four (4) (representing 26%) were between the ages of 36-45 years, one (1) (representing 7%) was between the ages of 19-25 years and another one (1) (representing 7%) was between the ages 46-55 years.

*Figure 4: Age Range of Respondents*
4.5 Educational Level of Respondents

From the pie chart as shown in figure 5, fourteen (14) (representing 93%) of respondents had a bachelor’s degree whiles one (1) person (representing 7%) had a master’s degree. This shows that most of the persons holding managerial and supervisory roles at IFM Facilities management are highly educated with the least qualification being a bachelor’s degree and the highest qualification being a master’s degree.

*Figure 5: Educational Level of Respondents*
4.6 Position of Respondents in the Company

From the bar chart as shown in figure 6, eleven (11) (representing 73%) were Facility Managers, two (2) (representing 13%) were Assistant Operations Managers, one (1) (representing 7%) was an Operations Manager and another one (1) (representing 7%) was a Managing Director.

Figure 6: Position of Respondents in the Company
4.7 Analysis of Data on Focus of Study

4.7.1 Knowledge about Sustainability

The data collected from the field interviews shows all respondents knew about sustainability. They had learnt about it from school or in their line of work or other sources such as the media and journal articles. A respondent for example said; “I learnt about it in school” whiles another said “Through academic work”. Another also said “During school learning about economic growth”, with another respondent saying “I found out in my JHS days in a topic called sustainable governance in social studies”.

Others also said “I heard about it through the working environment”, “I learnt about it through training” and another said “Through training at my former job”.

The responses by those who found out through other means such journals and the media said; “I got to know about it through the media” and “I read about it in a journal” respectively.

Regarding their understanding on what sustainability is most of the respondents defined it as the efficient use resources available in order to maintain it for over a long period of time so as to sustain it for the future generation. Below are some of the responses received;

A respondent defined it as “the ability to maintain at a certain level over a long period of time” another said, “Sustainability refers to the way things are maintained” another also responded that “it is the use of resources in a way that it does not affect future generations in terms of using such resources”. One other person said, “Sustainability is the ability of a country or organisation to use resources available to develop and maintain the country or organisations without compromising the future generation”.

In summary, in assessing knowledge about sustainability within the organization, the responses show all respondent knew about sustainability. Knowledge on sustainability had been acquired from school or in the line of work or other sources such as the media and
journal articles. Sustainability was also understood as the efficient use of resources available in order to maintain it for over a long period of time so sustain it for the future generation.

4.8 Assessing Sustainability Practices in Facility Management

Assessing sustainability practices involves the presentation of the duties of managers and how sustainability is practiced in the company. It also touches on whether sustainability is perceived and practiced in IFM.

The findings reveal that respondents mostly performed supervisory and managerial roles. A respondent for example said; “As the facility manager I am responsible for the general upkeep and maintenance of buildings to ensure that they meet the health and safety standards and legal requirements. I am also responsible for managing the office systems which often include IT and office equipment”

One respondent also said; “I am responsible for the evaluation of happenings and solutions, assessment of company assets, supervision of maintenance schedules and report writing on quarterly basis”

In an alternative response, a respondent said; “I’m responsible for daily and monthly reports to management, supervising of cleaning and maintenance, liaison between tenants and management”.

In summary, the findings reveal that the responsibilities of the respondents was mostly to perform supervisory and managerial roles.

Respondents were also asked whether they consider sustainability a key objective within their organization considering organizational sustainability being defined as ensuring that environmental, social and economic concerns are addressed coherently. In response, one (1) person (representing 7%) said “No” whiles fourteen (14) persons (representing 93%) said
“Yes”. Figure 7 below provides a graphical representation of respondents in considering sustainability a key objective within their organization.

**Figure 7: Respondents who consider sustainability a key objective within the organization.**

Respondents were also asked whether they consider sustainability applicable to their job. In response, one (1) person (representing 7%) said “No” whiles fourteen (14) persons (representing 93%) said “Yes”. Figure 8 below provides a graphical representation of respondents in considering sustainability applicable to their job.

**Figure 8: Respondents who consider sustainability to be applicable to their job**
Respondents were also asked how long they have worked as facility managers as well as how long they have worked for IFM Ghana Limited. The responses indicated that in terms of how long they have worked as a facility manager two (2) persons (representing 13%) had worked below 1 year whiles for the corresponding years in working for IFM Ghana Limited, there were three (3) persons (representing 20%). Further, nine (9) persons (representing 60%) had worked as facility managers for between 1-3 years whiles with its corresponding years of working for IFM Ghana Limited, there were ten (10) persons (representing 66 %). Further, three (3) persons (representing 20%) had worked as facility managers between 4-6 years whiles with its corresponding years of working for IFM Ghana Limited, there was one (1) person (representing 7%). Finally, one (1) person (representing 7%) had worked as a facility manager between 7-10 years whiles with its corresponding years of working for IFM Ghana Limited, there was one (1) person (representing 7%). Figure 9 below provides a graphical representation of the length of time in working as a facility manager as well as working for IFM.

*Figure 9: Responses on number of years working as a Facility manager and with IFM*
The study also sought to find out from respondents whether any form of training on sustainability had been organized since they joined the company. The responses indicated that seven (7) persons (representing 47%) said “Yes” some form of training had been organised whiles eight (8) persons (representing 53%) said “No”, no form of training had been organised. Figure 10 shows a graphical representation of responses from respondents on whether training had been organised for them since they joined the company.

*Figure 10: Response on whether training had been organized since joining IFM*
The study also sought to find out whether respondents employ any sustainable practices in their daily activities as facility managers. The responses indicated that twelve (12) persons (representing 80%) said “Yes” whiles three (3) persons (representing 20%) of the respondents said “No”. *Figure 11* shows a graphical representation of responses from respondents on employing any sustainable practices in their daily activities as a facility manager.

*Figure 11: Response on employing any sustainable practices in daily activities as a facility manager*

For respondents who said “Yes”, the reasons they gave include; regular supervision of maintenance of equipment and reporting of issues that may lead to the sustainability of the
company as well as pro-activeness in ensuring equipment and resources are used properly. A respondent for example said “I go for routine check-up on the machines and equipment” another said “I supervise planned maintenance of equipment and tools”, another also said “By reporting issues immediately they are found out and regular maintenance check.” Another respondent said “Yes, Being proactive by checking amount of credit left on the meter on daily basis, and checking the amount of fuel left in the generator and another respondent said “Yes, by carrying out scheduled maintenance tasks and being proactive rather than reactive in maintenance.

While for respondents who said “No”, the reasons was that they have not had any training on sustainability. A respondent for example said: “No because I have not been trained in any sustainable practise at my workplace”.

In summary, respondents employ sustainable practices daily activities as a facility manager through regular supervision of scheduled maintenance of equipment and reporting of issues as well as pro-activeness in ensuring equipment and resources are used properly for the sustainability of the company.

The study also revealed that customer dissatisfaction, low occupancy, deterioration of facility, low profitability, high staff turnover and the breakdown of equipment among others, are how sustainability is assessed in the company. A respondent said; “It is assessed through high cost of operation, customer dissatisfaction, staff job dissatisfaction”. Another said “It is assessed through the further deterioration of facility”. In another response “It is assessed through low occupancy, high cost of operation, negative effect on company brand and image”.

In summary, regarding how sustainability is assessed in the company respondents indicated
customer dissatisfaction, low occupancy, deterioration of facility, low profitability, high staff
turnover and the breakdown of equipment. In other words, if these happen frequently, the
concept of sustainability has not been adhered to or practiced.

Also, the study found out why respondents think sustainability is important in facility
management. Their responses revealed profitability, reducing risk and efficiency in
operations and management of resources, cost reduction, enhanced customer satisfaction as
well as good reputation and image of the company as reasons they think sustainability is
important in facility management. A respondent for example said; “Sustainability practices
are profitable because they reduce risk and make businesses more efficient”. Another said
“Sustainability ensures effectiveness and efficiency a well as saves cost. Through
sustainability the organisation will be able to use resources to its maximum”.

In another response, a respondent said “It results in cost cutting and improves the company’s
brand, reduces waste of resources and enhances customer satisfaction”. Another respondent
said “It helps to cut cost and keep the business going”. Another said; “Sustainability helps to
keep residents satisfied with the services provided at the complex”.

In summary, regarding why respondents think sustainability is important in facility
management. The factors of profitability, risk reduction, efficiency in operation and
management of resources, cost reduction, enhanced customer satisfaction as well as good
reputation and image of the company were gathered from the responses given.
4.9 Sustainable Practices Applicable To IFM Ghana Limited.

Regarding responses on how to ensure that the sustainability concept is practiced in IFM Ghana Limited, respondents pointed to awareness creation and training, staff motivation as well as regular monitoring and evaluation of sustainable practices.

Respondents in their response said; “Advising domestic staff on their role in practising sustainability, helping to schedule work tasks in a sustainable manner, suggesting sustainable practices to management to solve problems”. Another also said “Cutting costs on energy consumption and negotiating for competitive pricing of services”. In another response “Informing colleagues of the importance of sustaining the business and how it affects IFM and its investors”. Another also said “Quality assessment of the team and creating an award system to motivate outstanding individuals that exhibit sustainable practices”.

In summary, regarding how to ensure that the concept of sustainability is practiced in IFM Ghana Limited, respondents pointed to awareness creation and training, staff motivation, reward schemes as well as regular monitoring and evaluation of sustainable practices.

On the aspect of the possible implications if sustainable practices are not adhered to at IFM Ghana, respondents indicated the high cost of business/utilities, reduced profits, possible collapse of business, customer dissatisfaction and the poor image of the brand as some of the implications. Below are some of the response from respondents;

“The brand will not be attractive”. Another respondent said “Brand loss due to poor recommendations from clients” another said “It can lead to high cost of operation and customer dissatisfaction which will delay payment of their bills and rent”. Another also said “It leads to high cost of running the business and utility cost” and another said “The company will lose revenue and the business can collapse”.

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In summary, on the aspect of the possible implications if sustainable practices are not adhered to, respondents indicated the high cost of business and utilities, reduced profits, possible collapse of business, customer dissatisfaction and the poor image and brand of the company are some of the implications that could occur if sustainable practices are not adhered to at IFM Ghana.

In asking respondents about whether their supervisors and top management are aware of the concept of sustainability, most respondents indicated that their supervisors were aware. Particularly in their responses, thirteen (13) persons (representing 86%) of the respondents said “Yes”, one (1) person (representing 7%) of the respondents said “No” whiles another person (representing 7%) of the respondents said “Not Sure”. Figure 12 is the graphical representation on respondents’ perception regarding supervisors and top management awareness of the concept of sustainability.

*Figure 12: Response on supervisors and top management awareness of the concept of sustainability*
The study also sought to find out whether respondents were part of any registered professional body. In the responses majority were not part of any professional body as one (1) person (representing 7%) said “Yes” while fourteen (14) persons (representing 93%) said “No”.

The one who responded in the affirmative was a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants.
Figure 14: Response on membership to a professional body

![Pie chart showing response on membership to a professional body.](http://ugspace.ug.edu.gh)
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This section presents the conclusions from the study summarizing all the findings also provides recommendations to the findings.

5.1 Conclusion

The main focus of the study was to assess how the sustainability concept has been applied in the facility management practice in Ghana using IFM Ghana Limited as the case under study. It was deduced from the study that even though there are some sustainability principles that have been applied in IFM Ghana Limited in relation to facility management, their practice cannot be justified as entirely sustainable. Also, there was so clear distinction of a pursuit of sustainability by IFM Ghana Limited in their facility management practice. Meanwhile, personnel at IFM Ghana Limited generally knew about sustainability from school and a few from training. However, the applicability of sustainability practices was very limited. While some had no training at all since they joined the organization.

This document can help with decision making in IFM Ghana Limited and any similar organization on how to include sustainability in the entire facility management practice and do it comprehensively too.

Awareness of sustainability has increased substantially over the years and has become a vital consideration for both public and private firms and organizations around the world. Investors look at how sustainable a business is in all aspects of their business processes and operations before they invest in the company and thus places the responsibility on firms like IFM Ghana Limited to proactively seek to incorporate it into their operations so as to keep them competitive and give them a competitive advantage. It is in the interest of the company to do
this so that they can find the balance in satisfying all their stakeholders including their shareholders, customers, employees, the government as well as the society as a whole.

5.2 Recommendations

It is recommended that IFM Ghana Limited develop a sustainability plan to be implemented alongside its strategic plan. This sustainability plan should cut across all aspects of the organization and should seek to address economic, social, environmental, ethical and the corporate social responsibility of the company to all its stakeholders.
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