
LOCAL ECONOMY EMPOWERMENT THROUGH THE SUSTAINABLE COFFEE KNOWLEDGE FOR COFFEE PROFESSIONALS IN BURAIDAH, SAUDI ARABIA

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Abstract

The crowds of specialty coffee in Saudi Arabia have made this country one of the specialty coffee Meccas in the Middle East. Several national and global events have made Saudi Arabia a country visited by many international coffee professionals and professional coffee workers working in Saudi Arabia. Especially with the 2022 Year of Saudi Coffee, Saudi Arabia has also become a significant player in the coffee value chain in the Middle East, counterbalancing the UAE in its role in the global coffee market. One of the challenges is sustainability in the coffee area in Buraidah, where coffee professionals such as baristas and cup tasters have an essential role in maintaining consistency of presentation skills and customer engagement which are the benchmarks and represent specialty coffee as one of its goals. Therefore, with the curriculum used through the Coffee Skills Program and the Coffee Sustainability Program from the Specialty Coffee Association. The author provides training and counselling to calibrate knowledge in coffee from the skills and behaviour of coffee professionals to achieve sustainability in the coffee value chain area and sustain core business more profound. Moreover, to strengthen the local economy after the Covid-19 pandemic.

Keyword :

Saudi Arabia ,
Buraidah, Covid-19
pandemic, customer
engagement

1. Introduction

In the last five years, coffee has become a robust trend in the GCC (Gulf Cooperation Council), where the role of the latest generation is to strengthen this trend in the long term. In addition, the caffeine contained in this strengthening drink makes consumers who will continue to consume daily coffee drinks. This is observed by the emergence of not only the newest young people as consumers but also from various age levels who also become daily connoisseurs. So that the coffee profile has become very closely related to human life everywhere in the Gulf society.

Likewise, Saudi Arabia is one of the pioneers in developing specialty coffee in the Gulf, along with the United Arab Emirates and Kuwait; the development of coffee is like cherry blossoms that grow in early spring. This is not only strengthened by the people's desire to consume coffee addictively but also by becoming a rendezvous gathering of all age groups, which has become the history of the cafe itself. So here, coffee must become a part of people's lives in the Gulf. On the other hand, Covid19 has become a global challenge in several regions and the Middle East in the last three years. This global issue does certain businesses out of business and all those

related to trade in all sectors. In the hospitality sector, retail sales have to shift online, including the sales sector in food and beverages; in some places, they are seconded to e-commerce and online shuttle businesses, such as in several Asian countries; Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore (Maspul, 2020a; Fischer, 2021).

Meanwhile, in recent times, the coffee industry has also become a challenge, especially in Saudi Arabia, where the supply chain is slow in distributing coffee from several origins that come through global traders or directly from direct sources. The supply chain is the most crucial thing in its rotation as a basic economy that covers the secondary needs of the people in Saudi Arabia in general. In Saudi Arabia in general, regarding business in the coffee sector itself, there are many coffee roasteries estimated at almost 150 coffee roasteries operating in several big cities such as Riyadh, Dammam, and Jeddah, which cover all the small towns have around a thousand coffee shops. The emergence of coffeeshop continues to grow; since it is a trend, it also gets support from the Saudi Arabian government in making 2022 the year of Saudi Coffee (Al-Thaqafi, 2021; Maspul, 2020b). Regarding specialty coffee, which is currently busy developing in Saudi Arabia, the bustle of activity makes it much more crowded than classical heritage coffee itself. As it is known that the coffee itself comes from Ethiopia and Yemen, from which these two countries have developed traditional coffee (Arabic coffee) and specialty coffee. In fact, the world is focusing on the Middle East with its rapid development in coffee and its community, evidenced by many global coffee roasters and baristas who come to the Middle East and participate in enlivening the coffee world in this region (Maspul, 2021a; Ukers, 1935). With many local and international events being held in the Middle East, such as the World of Coffee Dubai 2022, competitions had a year more than once in Riyadh, Dubai, Kuwait and several other big cities in the GCC. This makes the development of this trend from the community and with a coffee magnet that pivots from the Middle East, bringing the global community to join in celebrating it through the Middle East.

The problem here is whether it will have a significant impact in the future related to the development of coffee that is more advanced than today, where the Year of Saudi Coffee 2022 is one of the leading indicators to do the coffee business in the future more sustainable and will become a magnet that can force the coffee industry to be stronger. It can participate in global coffee trading by making Saudi Arabia the

hub of coffee. So here, it is necessary to link with coffee professionals who work in the specialty coffee industry, especially local ones where their future with a national spirit will make Saudi Arabia one of the roles needed to become sustainable coffee. In addition, it is also required here to re-strengthen the local economy through one of the coffee value chains, with the courage of young entrepreneurs who collaborate in making the coffee trend a booster for the local economy (WHO, 2019; Al-Thaqafi, 2021). In strengthening the future of the coffee market in supporting the local economy, it is necessary here to explore the sustainability of the coffee sector itself. Sustainability is a crucial goal for all industries, including supply chain soldering standards in the coffee value chain. Coffee professionals indeed cannot be separated from the leading players in representing coffee from farm to cup and being a face in the coffee supply chain, especially with the growth of specialty coffee in recent times. Many coffee professionals do not understand the importance of sustainability in the hospitality sector coffee, from production to hospitality. To improve sustainability to align with skills and behaviour in ethical business, it is essential to apply continuing education in the concept of thinking for professional coffee. Understand the philosophy and science related to their role as coffee bodies and the most critical line in the coffee value chain. Moreover, they connect all stakeholders' interests in the coffee supply chain to consumers who need this information from farm to cup (Ferreira et al., 2021; Maspul, 2021c).

Meanwhile, the development of the specialty coffee industry globally has enriched the food and beverage industry. Specialty coffee serves coffee with standard grades above 80+; on the other hand, also known from the supply chain path and understands the single-origin stored through the process. It is inseparable from the trend that brought people before as classic coffee connoisseurs and started among young people who got the third wave of coffee into a lifestyle trend. This colonial legacy of the coffee value chain, from the supply chain to coffee professionals to the end-user of consumers, is remarkable in each region, especially for several groups that promote sustainability and specialise in coffee professionals for consumers.

The pathway through the various origins and machines used in the production of coffee itself. State-of-the-art machines are used by coffee professionals and several coffee shops in Saudi Arabia, ranging from coffee professionals and related tools to quality measurement to extracting

coffee machines from espresso to filters. Coffee skills cannot separate coffee professionals from all kinds of tools related to coffee from the controller or operator in using them. The frenzied development of the coffee market, especially in Saudi Arabia, where coffee shops globally have become an alternative mecca for specialty coffee. Therefore, good skills are needed to produce quality that is also delicious and enjoyed by the local market (Lopez-Galilea et al., 2007; Maspul, 2021a).

Moreover, coffee professional in the coffee value chain is the core of the coffee sales business. They are crucial in preparing and presenting the final coffee product from quality control and performing internally and externally to connect all ideas about single-origin being sold to end-users. They have exceptional skills every day to operate the coffee machine and other skills in hospitality. However, there are some challenges when coffee professionals maintain their consistency in skills that coffee professionals should adequately equip. However, sometimes they don't understand the general purpose of their profession, from single-origin processing to the size of the grind extracted when making coffee for the consumer. At the same point, it is where it is necessary to calibrate coffee knowledge and science to continue to be a professional coffee with ordinary skills from knowledge to processing coffee suitable for consumers. Furthermore, it is crucial to maintain quality standards for serving specialty coffee and maintaining coffee roster skills since specialty coffee consumers demand them (Boaventura et al., 2018; Okamura et al., 2021; Maspul, 2021a).

With the formulation of the problem above, it is necessary to disseminate knowledge of sustainable coffee to Baristas as part of the coffee professionals in the coffee value chain. This can be traced as below:

- a. Coffee professionals need to be educated to strengthen sustainable knowledge and skills in the coffee industry.
- b. The training is intended to equip coffee professionals with basic knowledge about understanding the journey of coffee from its origin in Ethiopia to becoming a significant commodity today. In addition, to understand more deeply the concept of processing coffee cherries to grow through grading, roasting, and brewing at the coffee bar.
- c. Provide the Specialty Coffee Association (SCA) standard practice as an additional complement to understanding his work as a coffee professional.

- d. Provide coffee professionals with an overview of the coffee value chain as sustainable knowledge and skills to promote sustainability in specialty coffee.

The issue is a sustainability challenge for coffee professionals to be strengthened by in-depth knowledge of their profession. The development of this basic thought concept is needed to explore the idea of sustainability of knowledge, skills, and behaviour from all coffee value chains and in general. Continuation of the blended curriculum for professional coffee through the coffee skills program (CSP) from the Specialty Coffee Association with the modules "Introduction to Coffee" and "Coffee Sustainability – Foundation" will eliminate shortage barriers for coffee professionals. This makes the existence of baristas as one of the stakeholders of coffee professionals as agents of change in bringing the sustainability of the coffee supply chain forward and more sustainable in combining behaviour and profession in one suitable concept (Parliament, 2020; Maspul, 2021b).

2. Methodology

To perform sustainability in the skills of coffee professionals, the author uses a qualitative analysis study by applying the issues found through the survey. Measurement followed by the observation, interviews and documentation through the provision of counselling assistance in increasing coffee knowledge for baristas through the "Introduction to Coffee" dan "Coffee Sustainability – Foundation level" in the Coffee Skills Program (CSP) dan Coffee Sustainability Program at the Specialty Coffee Association as defined below:

- a. The Introduction to Coffee Curriculum has been redesigned to provide students with a more comprehensive picture of the critical concepts of coffee knowledge. A restructured systematic module outline includes more precise learning objectives and suggested practical activities. On the other hand, the Coffee Sustainability – Foundation curriculum made students understand the coffee supply chain from farm to cup. Besides, bring the advantage of more knowledge about how to fit the consumer needs and keep the consistency in the quality control.
- b. To successfully achieve this counselling service, it is necessary to conduct a structured, programmed, and sustainable post-program counselling study. Providing

- this counselling takes a minimum of 16 hours to give a more in-depth explanation, using the typical syllabus tailored by coffee experts in the Specialty Coffee Association.
- c. The author is an Authorised SCA Trainer (AST) 2019 - 2024 licensed for the Coffee Skills Program (Introduction to Coffee, Barista Skills, Brewing, Green Coffee, Roasting, Sensory Skills) and the Coffee Sustainability Program – CsusP (foundation, intermediate and professional), who has the authority to teach the course to anyone who has ever working in the coffee industry or people queuing to learn coffee. Licenses are administered by Roasters, Baristas, and anyone with coffee expertise who has completed one or more coffee skills program modules at introductory (foundation), intermediate, and professional levels. The license itself needs to be confirmed and issued by the SCA education field coordinator and held locally. This license is global and can be used by AST globally, as long as the 3-year permit is valid.
 - d. Each coffee professional has a different job description, but their main job is to operate the roasting machine and other coffee-making accessories. From the formulated objectives, it is necessary to determine the right target here, a coffee professional who already has essential barista and quality control skills. More specifically, the target of this service is competent coffee professionals in Buraidah, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, with a total of 12 coffee professionals.
 - e. Each coffee professional has worked in the same place for more than two years with barista skills, coffee brewing expertise, and good customer service. Furthermore, regarding the intersectionality here, it can be classified that the Baristas are multi-national from three regions, including locals (Saudi), Southeast Asia, and the general Middle East, reinforcing their diverse culture. The language used is other than Arabic because consumers who enjoy coffee are primarily locals, but English is also the basis for serving guests.
 - f. AST has divided the 16-hour study time into eight meetings to make it easier to provide this counselling service. At the final meeting, the AST will assess how much

impact the learning outcomes of the eight sessions have had on outreach and practice. It is also a benchmark for the success of continuing education for coffee professionals.

- g. Moreover, to arrange the steps in implementing these courses and counselling service, it is necessary here the author divides 3 stages of efforts in providing more programmed and structured, including:
 - 1) Preparation Stage
 - 2) Implementation Phase
 - 3) Evaluation Stage

3. Results and Discussion

To define more in this activity and apply sustainable knowledge to coffee professionals through their skills and behaviour, it is necessary to determine the following phases:

- a. Preparation Stage
Coffee professionals in Buraidah are primarily responsible for preparing coffee for consumers. This consists of standard handling of every origin of coffee through barista skills, brewing and quality control through the final product. Then emphasise the process of safety and maintenance by using the authoritative record of the daily maintenance possesses the quality of the coffee production itself by using serial cupping in each single-origin session which can help keep the quality of the roasted coffee assessment of each batch. All experience from the production process to sales will be assessed to know the practical evaluation of each coffee professional.
- b. Implementation Phase
The implementation of this program consists of eight sessions in one shift, where all coffee professionals can follow the curriculum provided by the AST; the practice schedule and assessment through examinations are given in two months, April – May 2022. Practical and reports through review take place regularly hybrids, both in-person and online reports.
In addition to the material presented, cupping sessions are held to hone the sensory techniques of coffee professionals, both duo trio and triangulation. This is important because coffee professionals have the skills and must describe the taste of Arabica coffee from various single origins, both dry and

wet. Several standards related to Covid-19 were also applied in this cupping session to maintain double standard safety. In this case, the measure used is the technical program available from the Specialty Coffee Association.

c. Evaluation Stage

After an assessment has been made for coffee professionals working in Buraidah, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, it can be determined as follows:

- 1) The number of coffee professionals who participated in the training and assessment was 12, partially separated from the different shifts.
- 2) All Baristas who participate in the training and assessment get English language materials offline and online.
- 3) After two months of attending the counselling, all coffee professionals' assessments had a significantly above average value.
- 4) The Specialty Coffee Association's standard assessment for "Introduction to Coffee" and "Coffee Sustainability – Foundation" provides a passing standard of an average of 70% in both practical and written exams.

- 5) All coffee professionals passed the assessment, with the average practice test score for all coffee professionals being 82.18, while the total average for the written exam was 83.72.

- 6) In addition, AST also strengthens vocabs that must be memorised through terms in coffee processing and specialty coffee. Most locals (Saudis) need the knowledge they previously got in Arabic to adapt to English, which is a common term in the global coffee community.

From several interviews conducted after the assessment, most coffee professionals decided that the additional knowledge through "Introduction to Coffee" had a positive impact on building a sustainability framework in their way of thinking. In addition, the "Coffee Sustainability – Foundation" module increases their confidence in daily practice and in-depth understanding of their profession and impacts sustainability in their work areas. Through SCA's curriculum with global standards, others are more confident as international class students by following the specialty coffee trend, which has become the type of the syllabus. Some activity documentation is as follows:



Fig. 1 and 2. Coffee Class in Arabic



Fig. 3 and 4. The Oral Assessment

4. Conclusion and Suggestion

The undertaking activities are some points in concluding this report, including those described as follows:

- a. Participating in training and counselling services for coffee professionals in Buraidah, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, has maintained sustainability through continuous knowledge in the profession of coffee professionals.
- b. The significance of the curriculum assessment results implemented through the training and counselling service has had a tremendous impact. All coffee professionals passed the assessment, with the average practice test assessment for all Baristas being 82.18, while the total average for the written examination was 83.72.
- c. From interviews conducted with coffee professionals, most coffee professionals said that further knowledge through "Introduction to Coffee" and "Coffee Sustainability - Foundation" positively impacted building a framework of sustainability in their reflection and practice on their profession.

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