SUSTAINABILITY IN BARISTA SKILLS: MONITORING AND EVALUATION FROM BARISTA’S KNOWLEDGE IN SPECIALTY COFFEE AT THE COFFEE LAB DUBAI 2021

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ABSTRACT

Today’s number of coffee shops is inseparable from the third-wave in the coffee supply chain, especially the recent growth of specialty coffee. Sustainability is the main goal for all sectors, including the standardised solder of the supply chain in the coffee shop. Numerous Baristas do not yet understand the importance of sustainability in their coffee bar and management realm. To raise sustainability so that it is aligned with skills and behaviour in ethical business, it is essential to apply sustainable education in the Barista concept of thinking, understand their philosophy as coffee brewers and connect all stakeholders in the coffee supply chain to consumers who need this information. This issue is a sustainability challenge for Barista to be strengthened by knowledge. The continuation of a blended curriculum for professional coffee through the coffee skills program of the Specialty Coffee Association with the “Introduction to Coffee” module will eliminate the barrier of deficiencies for Baristas. It makes Barista’s existence an agent of change in bringing sustainability to the coffee supply chain. This curriculum was delivered along with additional coaching, assessment, and interview at the end of the activity to measure material for Barista knowledge. The current object for this study was Barista at The Coffee Lab Dubai, the United Arab Emirates.

Keywords: Specialty Coffee, Barista Skills, Coffee Supply Chain, Quality Control, Customer Satisfaction, Sustainability

PRELIMINARY

The current development of the specialty coffee industry in the world has enriched the food and beverages industry. (Inma Borrella 2015) This is inseparable from the trend that brought previous people as classic coffee connoisseurs and started among young people who brought third-wave coffee into the lifestyle trend. (Fischer 2017) This colonial heritage coffee chain, from supply chain to roaster, Barista to the consumer, is unique in each area, especially for several groups who raise sustainability, specifically in the coffee bar line to consumers. (Lannigan 2020) Specialty coffee serves coffee with a standard grade above 80+; on the other hand, it is also known from the supply chain line and understands the single origin stored through the place to the process. (Benoit Daviron 2005)

We see the bustling development of the coffee market, especially in the
United Arab Emirates, where the coffee shop is globally one of the meccas for specialty coffee. (Mohammed Ismail El-Adly 2015) With its story through a variety of single origins and the machines used in the production of coffee itself. State-of-the-art machines are used in coffee roasteries and coffee shops in the United Arab Emirates, from roasting machines and tools related to quality gauges to extracting coffee machines from espresso to filters. (André Eiermann 2020) Coffee Roaster or Barista cannot be separated from all types of tools related to the coffee from the controller or operator in using it. Here we need good skills to produce the quality that is also delicious and enjoyed by the local market. In this case, related to bar management is called a barista. (Shamsher Singh 2013)

The Barista is the core person of the coffee sales business, especially at the coffee shop. Where they are the ones who prepare the coffee products from calibration, grinding, extract, serving to consumers during the shift from the opening to closing. (Felton 2019) They have unique skills every day to operate espresso and brewer machines. However, there are some challenges when baristas serve coffee to consumers. Still, sometimes they don’t understand the specialty coffee in general, from single origins processing to the type of grind size extracted when making coffee for consumers. This is important to maintain the quality standards of specialty coffee presentation and maintain the Barista’s skills since its demanded by specialty coffee’s consumer. (Roland Urwin 2019) This is where a calibration in coffee science is needed so that it can be sustainable to become a barista who has ordinary skills from knowledge to making coffee that is suitable in their area. (Ronan Torres Quintão 2015)

With the formulation of the problems above, it is necessary to provide solution steps in promoting sustainable knowledge in coffee for Baristas. This can be traced as below:

1. The Barista needs to be counselling to strengthen sustainable knowledge and skills in the coffee industry.
2. The counselling was intended to provide Barista basic knowledge about understanding coffee’s journey from its origins in Ethiopia to today’s major commodity. From the coffee cherries growth through grading, roasting, and brewing in the coffee bar.
3. Providing SCA-standard practice as an additional supplement in understanding their work as Barista.
4. Providing an overview of the coffee value chain to Baristas as sustainable knowledge and skills to promote sustainability in specialty coffee.

TARGET AUDIENCE

From the objectives formulated, it is necessary to determine the right target here, in this case, baristas who already have an essential skill in brewing coffee for barista skills and brewing. More specifically, this service’s target is all baristas at The Coffee Lab Dubai, with a total of twelve people. Each Barista has a different job description, but their primary job is to operate coffee machines and accessories used in coffee brewing.

Each of the Baristas has been worked in the same place for more than one year with good expertise in coffee making and customer service. Meanwhile, In connection with the intersectionality here can be classified that Baristas here is a multi-national from three continents, including Africa, Southeast Asia and the Middle East, strengthening its diversity culture. The language used is other than English since consumers who enjoy coffee are expatriates and local, but Arabic is also the basis for serving guests.

METHODOLOGY

To achieve sustainability in barista skills, the Author used a qualitative analysis study by applying the problems found through this study. Measuring with observation, interview and documentation through providing counselling assistance in improving coffee knowledge for baristas through the “Introduction to Coffee” module in the Coffee Skills Program (CSP) at the Specialty Coffee Association as defined below:

1. The Introduction to Coffee curriculum has been redesigned to provide the learner with a more comprehensive overview of the critical concepts of coffee knowledge. Through a restructured systematic course outline, including clearer learning objectives and suggested practical activities.
2. To make this counselling service a success, it is necessary to study the extension to be structured, programmed, and provide a sustainable impact after the program. In delivering this counselling, it
takes a minimum of 8 hours to provide a deeper explanation, which here use the curriculum standards made by the Specialty Coffee Association. (Specialty Coffee Association 2021)

3. The Author is a licensed Authorised SCA Trainer (AST) 2019 - 2022, which has the authority to teach courses for anyone who has worked in the coffee industry or people who are queued up to study coffee. This license is maintained by a Roaster, Barista, and anyone with expertise in the coffee field and has completed one or more modules of the coffee skills program at foundation, intermediate and professional levels. The license itself needs to be confirmed and issued by the SCA education’s field coordinator, which is held locally in any city in the world. This license is global and can be used by AST anywhere in the world, as long as the 3-year permit is still valid. (Specialty Coffee Association 2021)

4. To make it easier to provide this counselling service, AST makes the learning time of eight hours divided into four meetings. At the last meeting, AST will assess how much impact the learning outcomes will have during four sessions for outreach and practice. At the same time, it will be a measure of the success of sustainable education for Baristas.

5. Furthermore, to compile the steps in carrying out this counselling service, it is necessary here that the authors share 3 phases of efforts to make it more programmed and structured, including:
   a) Preparation Phase
   b) Implementation Phase
   c) Evaluation Phase

LITERATURE REVIEW

In exploring the sustainability concept in Barista’s knowledge, skills and behaviour, it is necessary to develop these basic concepts of thought. The following is a brief description related to this study:

1. Coffee History and Specialty Coffee Shop

   Coffee has a unique history that has long been known through the Kaldi story, then enlivened by the Ottomans in Aleppo, Izmir and Istanbul 350 years ago, (Ellis 2008) which became a bustling place for discussion and a place for the
exchange of ideas between various levels of people with multiple professions. Then enlivened in the middle ages after that contributed through the Levant’s sponsored company and became a regulated trade with the Ottoman Empire. (McGowan 1981) As the trade progresses, coffee shops are places for distinctive sociability. (Chadios 2005)

The legacy in coffee that is felt today cannot be separated from the colonialism of coffee slavery in the past can be felt through one of the novels written by Eduard Douwes Dekker, Max Havelaar: Or the Coffee Auctions of the Dutch Trade Company. (Maspul, Antara Kolonialisme dan Keberlangsungan Kopi di Indonesia 2020) Until now, coffee’s history has always been black but sweet to bring to the sensory area. (Mathilde Charles 2015)

With the development of coffee passed through a long history, it has entered the term specialty coffee, which has become the third wave of the development of coffee itself. (Robert Fitter 2009) Coffee, which was only known in three types through Arabica Robusta and Liberica, has become more diverse. (C. Orozco-Castillo 1994) Here Arabica itself has many branches of cultivation types and uniqueness, which are increasingly varied, even with its progress, which can provide grades in coffee types, both for Arabica and Robusta. (Teketay 1998)

Now the development of coffee shops provides coffee with a mixture of various sweet variants in coffee drinks. (Natnicha Bhumiratana 2014) But with the crowd of consumers who want originality of high-quality taste of green coffee. So specialty coffee shops have emerged that offer quality coffee concepts with a variety of single origins from various countries in the world. (Teuber 2010)

The coffee provided by coffee shops has a standard in brewing; after the coffee is roasted, the brew ratio varies to adjust the taste quality to the limit of post-roasting coffee consumption. (Érica Mendes dos Santos 2021)

Coffeeshops, which provide specialty coffee, sell coffee for consumption and become a hub for
enthusiastic people about learning about the flavours produced by artisan roasting and sensory on final products’ cupping table. (Ayöz 2018) Consumers feel there is a positive interaction from Baristas through the final products they formulate. (Manning 2008)

Usually, a coffee shop has an exciting atmosphere that makes consumers happy to interact in that place. (Kristina Bäckström 2006) The design concept is varied in providing comfort for consumers who want to input espresso quickly or make it an extended spot to socialise and continue office duties. (Clare Cooper Marcus 1998) Apart from being a comfortable place to enjoy coffee and sweets, generally in an urban style, it has made coffee shops a place to stop between home and work, making it a third place. (Harris 2007) Another thing that coffee shops offer is affordable products for consumption rather than sitting for a long time in a restaurant, which requires expensive fees for products and services from waiters. (Zukin 1990)

Besides, coffee shops for specialty coffee also provide artisan roasted coffee sold as its uniqueness in roasting coffee and has added value for a coffee shop. (West 2010) Many of the coffee shops also sell brewing accessories that consumers can use to brew coffee at home. (Jennifer Ferreira 2021) The brewing tools vary from manual espresso making to various types of variants in using coffee filters. (Pozos-Brewer 2015)

2. Barista Skills and Sustainable Knowledge

A barista brews roasted coffee and makes it a variety of drinks to reserve for customers in coffee shops. (Charles Spence 2020) Baristas have additional skills from their performance in serving guests, and their expertise in adapting to the market, the customer’s desire to enjoy their coffee. (Sabrina Rashid 2015) The Barista must understand what the consumer wants, where each has variants in asking for the type of coffee to be served. (Plessis 2018) Generally, consumers will ask for simple coffee either with milk or just espresso, but baristas who have skills will ask for a single origin which the consumer will try. (Simon 2009) It will build consumer’s
curiosity about single-origin, (Fajar Eko Putrato 2017) where then the explanation will be deepened by Barista both for the type of coffee beans and process and its origin and characteristics. (Agus Jalpi 2020)

As we understand it in its influence, sustainability has the best impact through its three bottom legs: the social economy and environment. (Mensah 2019) Sustainability, which is currently being discussed, has had many positive results to help general thinking issues. (Iris Vermeir 2006) Each of them has an idea to raise a global issue that the UN has long promoted through the Sustainable Development Goals. (World Health Organization 2017) Education is also one of the goals expected to achieve this. Likewise, it cannot be separated from the discussion of coffee in general, which is in the supply chain and the consumer service section in specialty coffee. (Daniele Giovannuccia 2005) Barista’s need to understand more about coffee is crucial, especially to build resilience in their skills and behaviour. (Maspul, A Brief Overview Between Coffee and Covid-19 Pandemic 2020) With a sustainable sense of both the data and information circulating in the barista environment regarding coffee, The sustainable knowledge will fulfil the Barista’s behaviour in environmental terms. (Frodeman 2014)

Even though it is the third wave in its concept, specialty coffee requires a little expertise in compounding coffee and how much knowledge a barista will gain in deepening his understanding of coffee knowledge. (Natalia Li 2020) Its a need for consumer satisfaction to get information consistent with what they consume from the coffee products they sell. (Yi 1990) Besides serving customers with the ordered coffee drink for customers, daily training for coffee brewing conducted by Baristas can build confidence. (Budi Rahardjo 2019) Also, the consistency of Barista’s service standard will give more value to the Barista personality. Simultaneously, Barista’s combination of skills and behaviours will help perfect confidence in their performance in serving and brewing coffee for costumers. (Kühn 2018)
On the institutional business, sustainability can be verified from the company’s efforts, starting from assigning knowledge to the consumers, (Jimeńez-Aleixandre 2010) saving energy consumption, (Heather Chappells 2005) transparent business processes, (Luis A. Perez-Batres 2012) and the decrease of production waste. (Conghu Liu 2018) Sustainability can see those four contributions in this study from three main activities: production and consumption processes and marketing in the coffee business to encourage coffee business processes to be more sustainable. Besides promoting the company to transform into more sustainable and consumer behaviours, keep analysing sustainable values. (Winfred Ikiring Onyas 2018)

In practice, Baristas must also understand how to think sustainably, (Edward E. Lawler III 2011) not only in science known as the basis for information to customers but also how to be sustainable in intelligent behaviour using the basic needs of serving coffee drinks. (Renee Wever 2008) Understand the prudence in using single-origin, which is used when calibrating machines and making coffee drinks for consumers, respecting farmers for using the harvested coffee beans. (Mangku Purnomo 2019)

![Chart 1. Conceptual Model](image-url)
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To define more deeply this activity and apply sustainable knowledge to Baristas through their skills and behaviour, it is necessary to determine several phases as follows:

1. Preparation Phase

Baristas at The Coffee Lab Dubai have the primary responsibility of making coffee for consumers. It consists of calibrating coffee through automatic espresso grinders that prepare five single origins every single time. They are all flexible work with one machine with two handle groups used to extract the espresso. Apart from that, there are also four automatic filter grinder machines for four single origins.

Barista at The Coffee Lab Dubai has Barista procedures to follow product manufacturing standards and quality care, from opening to closing. And the most critical point in monitoring product quality is to keep the slogan “clean as you go”. In maintaining consistency, Baristas are not allowed to change the serving standards that have been reviewed and are SCA standards to ensure specialty coffee. The rest is for all Baristas to have high discipline, which is employee ethics at The Coffee Lab Dubai.

Several types of beverage products are the core sales of The Coffee Lab Dubai, including espresso, cappuccino, flat white, latte, filter coffee, and cold brew. These beverage products have a standard of green coffee storage, roasting, coffee roasting, and grinding. The extraction itself is about to make an espresso base called the brew ratio in extracting coffee, followed by milk frothing or filtering coffee according to consumers’ demand.

2. Implementation Phase

In implementing this program, it consists of four-part sessions in one shift, where all Baristas can participate in following the curriculum provided by AST, as described on the following date:

1. February 1st – 2nd, 2021
   - Section 1: Coffee Knowledge
   - Section 2: Roasting
2. February 8th – 9th, 2021
   - Section 3: Freshness
   - Section 4: Sensory Skills
3. February 15th – 16th, 2021
   - Section 5: Brewing
- Section 6: Water

4. February 22nd – 23rd, 2021

- Section 7: Cleaning and Maintenance

- Assessment

The venue for this extensive training and the assessment is at The Coffee Lab Dubai, at 3:00 pm, which is a shift change between morning and evening shifts. Make it easy for AST to present spare time for counselling and discussions.

In addition to the material presented, cupping sessions were also carried out at each meeting to sharpen sensory techniques for Baristas. This is important because the Barista possesses skills and must describe the taste of Arabica coffee from various single origins, both dry and wet. In this case, the standard used is the standard available from the Specialty Coffee Association. Several standards related to Covid-19 also apply in this cupping session to keep safety in double standards.

3. Evaluation Phase

After the assessment for Baristas who work at The Coffee Lab Dubai, it can be defined as follows:

1. The number of Baristas who participated in the training and assessment was 12 people.

2. All Baristas who participate in the training and assessment received offline and online English materials.

3. After attending the counselling for one month, then the assessment followed by all Baristas has a significant value above the average.

4. The Specialty Coffee Association’s standard
assessments for the “Introduction to Coffee” provides a passing standard that passes 70% in both the practical and written exam.

5. All Baristas pass the assessment, with the average for the practical exam assessment of all Baristas is 87.08, while the total average for the written exam is 84.42. The following table analyses the total average of the evaluation results, as illustrated below:

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<tr>
<th>Table 1. The Average Written and Practical Exam</th>
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<tr>
<td>'Written Exam' by 'Practical Exam'</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written Exam</td>
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<td>Practical Exam</td>
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From several interviews conducted after the assessment, most Baristas said that the additional knowledge through “Introduction to Coffee” has positively impacted building a sustainability framework in their way of thinking. Some said that the other experience from the knowledge enriches how to be more sustainable in coffee practices, and when presented to consumers, where consumers feel happier in receiving information from baristas. They continued that Consumers are satisfied with their costs to buy products from The Coffee Lab Dubai. Some activities’ documentations as follows:

Picture 2. Barista’s skills on the latte art

Picture 3. Barista’s skills on brewing
CONCLUSION

The following are several points in concluding this study, including as described below:

1. Following the counselling service held for Barista The Coffee Lab Dubai, it has maintained sustainability through sustainable knowledge in the Barista profession.

2. The effectiveness of the curriculum assessment results applied through this counselling service has had a terrific impact where All Baristas passes the assessment, with the average for the practical exam assessment of all Baristas is 87.08, while the total average for the written exam is 84.42.

3. From the interviews conducted with Baristas, most Baristas said that further knowledge through “Introduction to Coffee” has positively impacted building a sustainability framework in their reflection and practices towards their profession.

From the conclusion described above, several suggestions are placed forward as follows:

1. With the exciting growth of Specialty Coffee in the coffee industry in the United Arab Emirates, it is appropriate for the local establishment owner to improve sustainable knowledge and behaviour for all coffee professionals who work in their establishments.

2. It is undeniable that the massive specialty coffee business in the United Arab Emirates has provided many distinct ideas about socio-economy and environment that continue the foundation of sustainability. Furthermore, the current hectic coffee trades in the
United Arab Emirates and the exclusive national scale coffee championship have also illustrated the UAE’s growth in the coffee industry, especially in specialty coffee. It is highly recommended to create a coffee excellence centre at a local University to study coffee’s progress and futures in the United Arab Emirates.

3. Challenges that will always arise through the times’ progress are essential to give the role of coffee figures from business owners, roasters, and baristas to face these challenges as things that every person can learn. It is advised to develop coffee science from every actor from the coffee supply chain evenly through this coffee excellence centre and become a bridge between national coffee professionals and international coffee professionals from researchers to baristas.

REFERENCES


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