
Improving the Creative Process Strategy of the Specialty Coffee in Eastern Province Saudi Arabia in Strengthening Sustainability in the Coffee Value Chain

Kurniawan Arif Maspul

University of Suffolk
E-mail: k.maspul@uos.ac.uk

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Abstract: *The progress of the coffee trend globally is one of the options for developing SMEs in Eastern Province, Saudi Arabia. The third-wave generation of specialty coffee is growing with a large selection of artisanal coffee drinks, empowering the latest generation to follow the coffee industry's value chain through coffee skills and sustainability. Sustainability in the coffee value chain will be connected to the three-bottom legs that make it sustainable in the social economy and environment. Eastern Province has the potential to become a coffee hub in tackling challenges in the coffee value chain. Still, stakeholder empowerment is needed for coffeeprenuers in Eastern Province to make coffee value chains resilient collaboratively. Creative process strategies are required to investigate the advancement in ideas and innovations. This qualitative descriptive study will help the catch in opening the eyes of the global coffee community and especially in Saudi Arabia, in seeing the opportunity for the coffee value chain in the region.*

INTRODUCTION

Eastern Province is one of the most important cities in Saudi Arabia; it is a hub for eastern and western Arab culture, an intermediate city connecting Saudi Arabia with Bahrain, Qatar, Kuwait and the UAE. In addition to an essential city, Dammam Metropolitan, a satellite city of 11 governorates in Eastern Province, two other major cities; are Khobar and Dhahran. The dynamic culture, as the home of a large population of busy foreign nationalities from various countries globally, makes Eastern Province a great power in becoming a cultural city in Saudi Arabia. In addition, oil, the main commodity, also makes Eastern Province economically the jewel of the Middle East (Britannica, n.d.).

In following the global trend, coffee has become one of the most popular trends in Saudi Arabia, including at Dammam Metropolitan, which is the most crowded place for young people and the elderly. As the largest commodity in the world, coffee goes along a long timeline until it enters the third-wave era, which is currently being found in the coffee value chain in Eastern Province. The advancement of information technology helps in the development of sales from online sales in e-commerce without limits in serving consumers in the Middle East and Europe, the coffee roasted

in the Eastern Province is spread globally. And this is the key to opening the fourth-wave generation in the coffee value chain, where it is not only baristas, coffee roasters and people who are cycled in downstream coffee but also the advancement of information and technology in building coffee resilience which can also help upstream in the coffee value chain (Lindstrom, 2016; Kaçan & Erdoğan, 2017).

Moreover, information technology can be felt in facing the disruption of Covid-19, where challenges in the last two years have been in the short term. And studying developments during the new normal becomes important in mitigating more enormous challenges and issues over a long time, such as climate change and food insecurity (Maspul, 2020). However, creative process strategies are needed here in sustainably developing significant coffee value chains, and support from stakeholders, including coffeepreneurs who are the main actors in Eastern Province, is required (Baumgartner & Rauter, 2017). Emerging competencies in developing a creative process strategy in the coffee value chain will help not only make Eastern Province the most crucial hub in the coffee value chain. Still, they will also become a role in the central city to become a leading hub in the development of coffee sustainability in the Middle East.

Moreover, in formulating a discussion on improving creativity that can collaboratively support the progress of value chain coffee as the largest commodity in the world after oil, it is necessary to recognise why the creative process strategy is vital in the coffee value chain. How do coffeepreneurs tackle future challenges with an innovative process strategy? How can collaboratively make this creative process strategy resilient in the Eastern Province? In addition, this crucial creative strategy will provide sustainability ideas in the coffee value chain, which will also provide synergy in collaborating between all coffee value chains involved, from farm to cup. It will also provide additional, updated references that become core values in the global coffee community by looking at the resilience of specialty coffee developments in Eastern Province in bridging gaps and challenges in coffee value chains in the region.

METHOD

This study uses descriptive qualitative research using data sources from a site visit in September 2022, using interviews with coffee professionals from baristas, coffee roasters and coffeepreneurs to understand more deeply the challenges and gaps related to the coffee value chain in three major satellite cities in the Eastern Province; Khobar Dammam and Dhahran. In addition to observations and interviews as primary data, the author also explores literature reviews as additional data sources, connecting with challenges and looking for opportunities in creative economies developing coffee value chains in the Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Tourism Growth in Eastern Province

Eastern Province is one of the 13 Provinces in Saudi Arabia and is the largest province in terms of area and the most populous after the regions of Riyadh and Makkah. With a recorded population in 2017 of 4.9 million residents, with foreign nationals at 1.9 million. In general, Eastern Province is centred in Dammam Metropolitan and is a satellite city of 12 existing governorates, including two other major cities, Khobar and Dhahran. The Eastern Province is also where the most extensive oil production and export activity is in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, which is geographically adjacent to other major oil-producing countries, including Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and the United Arab Emirates. Historically it is also the most important place where it became an area of trade travel from Iraq, Persian and the Gulf as well, as the Dilmun civilisation was one of the oldest

civilisations in the Gulf until it eventually became part of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Britannica, n.d.).

Economically, Eastern Province is an important area of Saudi Arabia and has a priority in tourism and is a jewel of Saudi Arabia in addition to a comfortable climate in winter and has assets in the form of beautiful views of the corniche, similar to Jeddah and is also a hub for neighbouring countries as a most attractive land route transportation in Saudi Arabia. In addition to the area that has been structured as a tourist area, Dammam Metropolitan also has the most extended waterfront in Saudi Arabia besides Jeddah, which makes it a prominent spot for marine tourism in Saudi Arabia. In addition to the waterfront in the form of a broad corniche in Eastern Province, there are also many large shopping malls from Khobar Dhahran and Dammam, which make this place an object for shopping tours with local and global brands. In Dhahran, there is also Ithra, one of the 100 most magnificent buildings in the world, which Time magazine called to visit, an international cultural centre that becomes a hub for the community to recognise and develop local and global cultural knowledge (Time, 2018).

The development of the latest infrastructure, such as the Metro plan at Dammam Metropolitan, will also make this region easier for sustainable movement. In addition, King Fahd airport is an international airport that connects Saudi Arabia with significant cities worldwide, making it one of the global hubs in the Middle East. There are many promising opportunities to develop more solidly for tourism in the Eastern Province, which is one of the uniqueness of the society in the Gulf, which is home not only to local but also international. Likewise, coffee is the largest commodity after oil globally. The trend continues to advance and is increasingly in demand by the global community, particularly in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Maspul, 2022).

The Coffeepreneur

Coffeepreneur is a combination of two words between coffee and entrepreneur; this naming is widely used in the Middle East and Europe in its function of referring to SMEs (Small and Medium Size Enterprises) at the downstream level of the coffee value chain. They are diligent in managing the coffee business plan and looking for opportunities that can be achieved through a business plan setup with satisfactory sales—connecting direct or indirect purchases of green coffee through a global green coffee broker. They also study a lot about global coffee trends and consumer behaviour in making coffee a part of their daily lives. So coffeepreneur has answered one of the crucial needs of society; caffeine.

The emergence of the latest designation in developing coffee from the supply chain to downstream with coffeepreneur is increasingly being followed, especially with the hectic interest of the global community in specialty coffee. It is also one of the uniqueness of being an entrepreneur in the coffee industry, where the coffee value chain is always dynamic, not only in sales but also with the culture and community in each city. Coffeepreneurs are also the ones who make not unique products developed but also dynamic coffee careers in the coffee industry, from production to artisanal service in bars, where coffee roasters and baristas are warriors in scientific advancement in sales with their skills and knowledge in each field of occupying.

Coffeepreneurs are not only faced with challenges with the dynamics of coffee sales. Still, they must be able to adapt to the local wisdom culture of each local culture so that here there is an excessive challenge in promoting creativity to combine local culture with global culture in the third wave of the coffee value chain. In addition, with the game-changing risk that emerged during Covid-19 for the last three years, coffeepreneurs must also adapt to the lockdown situation while still making sales run well. So creative thinking is needed in adapting it to other sustainable sales methods, such as e-commerce which can be taken as an example in the UAE and Indonesia which

are super crowded online because people's need for coffee has changed their buying behaviour significantly (Maspul, 2021).

Third-wave Coffee Culture in Eastern Province

In deep dives into coffee sustainability in Eastern Province, the demand is high in seeing the journey of the supply chain of coffee itself. The coffee value chain in Eastern Province is enormous and in need by local people of all levels through the downstream in coffee shops; not only that, travellers from Bahrain can only be passed via the 25k King Fahd Causeway, making Dammam Metropolitan a hub for Saudi and several neighbouring countries. Qatar and the United Arab Emirates also have to give through Dammam Metropolitan when visiting by land, making Eastern Province the most critical area for Saudi Arabia in connecting between countries. In addition to the many coffee roasteries located in Dammam Metropolitan, Eastern Province is also a hub for intermediaries travel from coffee coming from Africa, Southeast Asia and South America. Logistics in the Eastern Province is constantly easier since its outstanding location improves the coffee business in Saudi Arabia. King Abdulaziz Seaport, built-in 1940 is the largest seaport after Jeddah Islamic Port in Jeddah and one of the busiest seaports in the Persian Gulf, with a capacity of 13 million containers annually.

Moreover, coffee from all over the world can be stored directly by coffee roasteries, making it easier for them to predict and produce their coffee, so coffee production in Eastern Province has helped in the coffee supply chain in many coffee shops in Saudi Arabia. In addition, several companies that provide green coffee strongly influence the price of local green coffee sold and distributed in Saudi Arabia; the cost of green coffee is available online for the convenience of coffee roasteries in Saudi Arabia. The Artist Hub Company in Dammam, which in 2016 has been one of the former coffee companies, has assisted in distributing green coffee in addition to having massive production in selling roasts through its coffee roastery. Besides Dammam Metropolitan, Jeddah also has the same advantages in aligning green coffee sales; this is because of the convenience of the seaport, which can be accessed directly by coffee companies in circulating green coffee sales and purchases in the region. Neighbouring GCC countries, such as Bahrain, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates, also take the supply chain from green coffee distributed through the Eastern Province.

Furthermore, in looking at sustainability in Eastern Province as well as from baristas and coffee roasters, it was found that the percentage of half of the workers in each coffee company are foreign nationals, thus making resilience in race and culture that makes local dynamic in interacting actively within one company, eliminating intersectionality that appears of race and culture (Maspul, 2022a). Then there are relatively many coffee shops in Eastern Province, but they are spread across many avenues; coffee companies have a green business supporting each other. One of the major coffee producers in Khobar is Qaf Coffee Roasters, whose name has become a unique coffee production brand in Eastern Province, even in neighbouring countries, which are reselling roasted coffee and using their coffee for daily consumption in coffee shops.



Fig. 1, Qaf Coffee Roaster in Khobar (author)



Fig 2, Dose Coffee in Ajdan Walk,

The development of coffeeshops in Eastern Province boosts the local economy by not only producing massive amounts of coffee in coffee roasteries and being able to distribute it in Saudi Arabia and neighbouring countries in the GCC but also with local consumption, which is in great demand and at prices that are still affordable compared to Riyadh. This allows the coffee value chain in the Eastern Province to become the leading top producer, beating Riyadh and Jeddah. Coffee has also become a gastronomic growth that makes people visit Khobar, Dammam and Dhahran to see the development and management of sensory taste produced by local roastery coffee production. In addition to a supportive business environment, advancement from social media is very helpful in introducing local coffee trends in the region and abroad. So gastronomic growth in the Eastern Province can be more collaborative and advanced, especially in developing the creative economy in the coffee value chain.

Coffeeshops in Eastern Province are places to drink coffee and connect with the community, from students to middle and upper social classes to join in one place to enjoy coffee from various origins globally. The shift away from traditional coffee happened dramatically in 2016 when specialty coffee proliferated worldwide and became a global trend, so considering removing social class in the community is resilient rather than local communities in Eastern Province. Strengthening inclusiveness in the community is one of the sustainable things desired in forming communities and eradicating inequality. Here the role of specialty coffee shops is to help improve inclusivity. Even in coffee shops not in the middle of the city, it is a favourite place for the coffee community as long as it has a standard taste that is expected and certainly not from the grading on the sensory cupping table above 80+ (Maspul, 2022a). This hole in the market makes many coffeepreneurs become Q graders and master coffee skills programs from the global coffee organisation.

Meanwhile, at King Fahd University for Petroleum and Minerals, specialty coffee is also widely available and can be accessed by students; only a few who buy from consumers are local students. They understand that today's specialty coffee is not only in demand because of the caffeine but also in learning more deeply about the senses of the coffee tasting itself. The community's desire, both from the student community and the general public, can be advanced in exploring their curiosity about the coffee value chain and the sustainability challenges in global coffee. At the same time, it suggested providing coffee entrepreneurship to enliven the specialty coffee market in Eastern Province.

Moreover, looking at the development of specialty coffee and commercial coffee itself, it can still be seen how the two have developed, but looking at the two types of third-wave coffee, local people enjoy specialty coffee more. Since consumer satisfaction in getting the desired taste, green coffee's quality influences how the coffee is roasted commercially or artisanally. With the artisan process, the coffee can get a more proper flavour development, generally called light medium and medium to dark roast. In making coffee, sustainability in Eastern Province can be observed with three bottom legs of sustainability as a measurement, which will be discussed in the next section.



Fig 3. Saudi Coffee Festival in Ithra Dhahran (author).

Fig 4. Coffeeshops inside the King Fahd University for Petroleum and Minerals, Dhahran (author).

Fig 5. Barista at the Ninety Coffee Dhahran (author).

Developing The Creative Process Strategy for Local Coffeepreneurs

Creativity is each individual's ability to solve a problem and generate the latest sustainable and competent ideas in the community; anyone owns this trait. But what distinguishes it is a novelty which will differentiate the creativity possessed by one individual can be better than others. Hence, it is necessary here to hone that creativity. Coffee is vital in supporting the nation's socioeconomic and environment. Especially in making a coffee value chain which is expected to have a positive impact not only on local sales but also can have sustainable positive impact on the community and even make the city a destination where people will come to see the uniqueness of the selling product and make it a goal. From this creativity, the byproduct will become a concept that needs to be developed by each individual for the coffee value chain stakeholders themselves.

Coffee companies in Eastern Province can develop innovative solutions to sustain coffee value chains. By referring to the three-bottom legs of sustainability from the socioeconomic and environmental aspects, combined with the local wisdom idea that exists in Saudi Arabia, especially in the Eastern Province and not be faraway the trend that currently exists in the world, third-wave coffee, which is also the main focus. In developing ideas in other sectors connected to the coffee value chain. For example, tourism can also help build the local economy through specialty coffee, which has now become a trend for travellers travelling to observe the regional coffee trend in each city visited from the towns and neighbouring countries such as Riyadh, Bahrain, Kuwait and Qatar. Furthermore, through the sustainability of the coffee value chain observed in Eastern Province, it is necessary to develop a creative process strategy to make coffee in Eastern Province and compete with other big cities in Saudi Arabia in developing coffee products and sales, such as Riyadh and Jeddah. In note-taking, it is necessary to brainstorm renewable ideas that will strengthen sustainability in the coffee industry. In analysing the creative process strategy itself, it can be explained by organising ideas as follows to achieve innovative solutions in the coffee value chain (Mumaw, 2021):

1. Objective Finding

Through this step, coffeepreneurs can reflect on the progress of coffee sales in Saudi Arabia or abroad, where the number of innovations in coffee sales is one big idea. It can be measured by the number of people coming to the country to see the progress of coffee production, for example, or the diversity of its products and others. Then raises the question of what can be developed from the coffee value chain in Eastern Province after comparing it with the progress of koi development in other places. Looking for the objectives of the desire to be achieved from coffee sales in the Eastern Province is a step further to see the progress that will later be executed. Generating much information can help find the right plan in this coffee value chain before entering the next step.

2. Data Gathering

With this second step, we will start the process of the creative strategy itself based on the goals that have been created previously. Here, the coffee actor needs to collect from the possibilities and get helpful information for achieving these goals. Asking for facts, feelings, and other

questions is the foremost step in understanding the data obtained through the coffee value chain above. For example, why are coffee lovers in London and Amsterdam so in demand by specialty coffee lovers? Then by incorporating elements of fact and feeling as well as other questions, can Eastern Province compete with or create the latest uniqueness that is more adapted to local wisdom? In carrying out this process, it will be seen that a creative strategy is needed to raise the why question from fact. At the same time, the feeling increases the question of why from the presence and emotion. So that vitals and insights can be connected and come up with the latest ideas in synergising with other ideas.

3. Problem Design

In designing the problem, of course, generating from the source the two previous steps neatly arranged through objectives and data can compare them through purposes and data with the main difficulties each coffeepreneurs want to develop. So that after designing the comparison of the two previous steps and synergising with the current issue, it will appear for the next step; ideation. Meanwhile, if inventiveness has not been formed because of no conformity, it is necessary to design another problem to obtain harmony through the truth that will create ideation.

4. Ideation

The need for brainstorming from design problems in obtaining the opportunities of ideas, differentiating concepts, and connecting them with the relevance of the coffee value chain in Eastern Province. The next step is to generate multiple possibilities in creating the latest ideas that make it sustainable to help coffee companies for local coffeepreneurs. In brainstorming and collecting ideas, four major guidelines can be traced as described as follows:

- Withhold judgment
- Focus on quantity
- Encourage strange and unusual ideas
- Combine and improve ideas

5. Selection

The need for coffeepreneurs here to make it a hook in differentiating with the progress of coffee companies both in Saudi Arabia and abroad. After looking for possibilities in ideation, it is necessary to conclude taking the right idea after brainstorming all the options and opportunities. Specificity is the primary key in this step, identifying and improvising the ideas that have been selected and asking whether they will help the long-term and sustainable objectives.

Meanwhile, the five creative process strategies can assist in qualifying the quantity and quality of the ideas generated through the process and help project new ideas into sustainable business plans. It can be linked to global coffee value chains with local wisdom unique to Saudi Arabia. Executing new ideas and with many coffeepreneurs who have the concept of critical thinking that can make creativity a form of brand strategy will undoubtedly strengthen the sustainability of the coffee value chain in the region.

In formulating the idea that consumers can choose coffee products that are originality of the product, it is necessary here to see how consumers' emotions can be step by step in realising their choice. In addition, in playing with the emotions of consumers, where they are ready to buy, but with so many products that brands choose, this is where the uniqueness of design creativity in product advancement is. Among them are three primary emotional drivers for consumers in making decisions to consume products:

1. Experience

Through experience, it is essential to analyse the relationship between the consumer and the brand offered. Besides, coffee has become a common need in Eastern Province regardless of age and intersectionality; the product has a profound point of interest. So here, what is needed is to create the uniqueness of the coffee product itself, such as packaging, level of roast, and presentation that can differentiate it from other local coffee sales.

2. Trust

Then with this trust, it is necessary for coffee companies to strengthen the sustainability of their brands, both in terms of price, quality and sales techniques. Hence, it is essential to raise why people should trust this coffee to be consumed from time to time. So here, it is also required for coffeepreneurs to take a deeper look at all coffee products, from roasted to shop sales, detailing each product to question whether the product being sold can be trusted with the sustainability level of the product.

3. Convenience

As for this level, coffeepreneurs are required to always provide comfort in providing products to consumers so that consumers always feel comfortable in enjoying not only the product quality but also the service and friendliness offered by the sales process.

Moreover, sales of products from offline channels through shops or online points of sales can be used as two sources of thinking in the advancement of creative thinking, making the buyer journey process from seeing to believing that products built on solid ideas create shortcuts for consumers to choose coffee products. So here, it is necessary to develop ideas from the coffee value chain which need to be understood so that it can be conceptualised in its priority for the idea of advancement of the coffee products sold. In developing ideas to promote the brand, progressive steps are also needed here through the seven characteristics of compelling ideas in the brand strategy (Mumaw, 2021a), including:

1. Emotional

An emotional presence will bring consumers through the product to participate in providing awareness; this can be done with the help of visualisation of the product through social media. Creative thinking through the strategy process will help discover what and how to incorporate emotional value into ideas for coffee product brands. By bringing up dynamic ideas in the design concept of coffee products, consumers will feel that the product is worth having and will grow a strong marketing power.

2. Entertaining

The resulting product can be used to entertain those who see it, distinguishing it from other coffee products such as sustainable packaging, use of colours and others. Creative thinking in helping the development of ideas is also needed in what and how product ideas in brands can enrich value entertainment. Exploring fun ideas in developing the concept of coffee products will provide more decisive insights into marketing the coffee market both offline and online.

3. Experimental

Before releasing a new product, the main thing is to read what is interesting from consumers in general by making different roasting levels of coffee and inviting consumers to try it on the cupping table so that they understand the desired desires of consumers in certain single-origin coffees. With the concept of experimental ideas, in the design stage of coffee products, it will be more vital to differentiate from coffee products in general.

4. Novel

Something new can be developed through ideas that have not yet appeared in the coffee market; here, it is necessary to brainstorm and compare with the uniqueness of global coffee products

and bring it to the local market. Although it is difficult to get a novel, the concept implanted from a designed coffee product will help find its uniqueness in creative design.

5. Story-based

Consumers generally learn from stories, by bringing up stories from, for example, the coffee value chain will provide additional magnetic strength for consumers to increase trust and believe that the product they choose is theirs. The mechanism is developed to deliver causes that provide feedback from the consumer's emotional response. The idea that arises from the story will bring the three pillars of consumers in choosing their coffee products.

6. Authentic

Explaining the authenticity of both the product and the consumer who enjoys the coffee itself by bringing up an original idea where consumers believe that this product is unique compared to the coffee products they have encountered before. Pictures built on original concepts will be unique in understanding their coffee products and being able to read the market and differentiate them with more creative images.

7. Risky

The idea that has passed the concept of risky thinking, the designed coffee product will be more resilient and sustainable in the future. So that it will produce better products and compete with the coffee market. Understanding whether the product will have risk will also help understand how to mitigate risk.

Nevertheless, with the help of characteristics in building brand ideas and strategies, it is expected to be able to come up with progressive ideas that can make the coffee value chain in the Eastern Province not unique but also in benchmarking local products that can become a sales magnet globally through e-commerce and social media assistance (Maspul, 2021a).

Sustaining the Creative Process Strategy in Eastern Province's Coffee Value Chain

In discussing how to sustain the coffee value chain in the Eastern Province, it can be traced here from stakeholders who directly or indirectly help coffee to continue to be sustainable and make it one of the cores of the most exciting tourism point for Saudi or global citizens in visiting the Eastern Province. In addition to creating a competitive climate in the Eastern Province, coffeepreneurs are also expected to be able to play creativity collaboratively with all stakeholders in the coffee value chain in the Eastern Province in how to develop coffee as an essential commodity in the region. This can be done by opening the development of a coffee centre and knowledge hub, which will help all stakeholders understand more deeply related to sustainability in the coffee value chain, in addition to deepening coffee skills which become core knowledge for baristas and coffee roasters. Nevertheless, in diversifying the economy in Saudi Arabia, the Public Investment Fund, as the Kingdom's sovereign wealth fund, has established a \$320 million Saudi Coffee Company to develop the national coffee industry and interlink Jazan coffee production upstream to downstream sales in Saudi Arabia. Currently, Jazan is no less than 300 tons producing quality Arabica coffee, and it is predicted that with the development and support fund, it can create a yield of no less than 2500 tons in the next five years (Nereim, 2022; Marhid & Narayan, 2022). Moreover, in making sustainability in the coffee value chain, coffeepreneurs need to concentrate on the three bottom legs of sustainability and how to interconnect it with the creative process strategy in the coffee value chain as explained below:

1. Improving the creative process strategy in the coffee value chain, especially in the Eastern Province, it is necessary to differentiate sales and open many channels other than the point of sales. Here it is also vital for coffeepreneurs to advance IT in product development, and sales are also needed in diversifying the local coffee economy in Eastern Province. Moreover, with

its strength and the use of SEO in developing its marketing so that it can be reached anywhere in the world, E-commerce makes specialty coffee roasted in Dammam to be enjoyed by coffee lovers worldwide. Significantly the development of the creative economy, as traced from the previous discussion, will strengthen the coffee market in the Eastern Province.

2. In developing the community here, it is undoubtedly important to make coffee as a strengthening of the general assembly where all coffee activities can not only be connected as an individual daily in the community but also form resilience for the community to learn about the coffee value chain. This can be driven by building a coffee knowledge hub as a creative forum that the public can access to learn about coffee because it is essential now for the community to learn such as climate change which can affect the yield of world coffee. Then partnerships with local campuses such as KFUPM can also be carried out, leading to coffee excellence degree programs tackling global and regional challenges.
3. Sustaining the coffee value chain for the environmental resilience in Jazan coffee, which through the development of local products and brands in the Eastern Province, is constantly able to grow regional sales in the Eastern Province. Utilising the creative process strategy in the previous discussion will help make roasting production benchmarks with local sensory specialties globally in demand.

CONCLUSION

Eastern Province, strategically located in Saudi Arabia, has the opportunity to develop SMEs, especially advancement in the coffee value chain. However, advancing a coffee value chain in the Eastern Province requires collaboratively from all stakeholders to build creativity and a strong identity in making coffee sustainable in the future. By taking advantage of opportunities from the Government through the Saudi Coffee 2022 program and together with blue competition from coffeepreneurs in the Eastern Province, they will be able to tackle future challenges and explore the wealth of local coffee from the Jazan farm upstream to cups in the Eastern Province.

Moreover, bringing Eastern Province to be the face of global specialty coffee with the development of a regional coffee knowledge hub will also strengthen Dammam Metropolitan's coffee value chain as a compass for international coffee. The implication of the suggested strategic plan must be known to all those involved in the coffee value chain. In addition, it is highly recommended that coffeepreneurs create resilience and apply sustainability in the coffee value chain as described above in improving, developing and sustaining the local coffee community in synergy to make the future of Eastern Province a reference to specialty coffee in the region.

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