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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH TRADITIONAL INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS: A CASE STUDY OF EAT RAJA BANGALORE, INDIA

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Abstract

Eat Raja, located in Malleshwaram, Bangalore, is India's first zero-waste juice shop. This study explores how Eat Raja integrates traditional Indian knowledge systems with modern sustainability practices to create a zero-waste ecosystem. By eliminating plastic use, composting organic waste, and promoting community engagement, Eat Raja sets an example for sustainable business operations. The study underscores the significant role such enterprises play in fostering environmental conservation, reducing waste, and supporting the local economy. Furthermore, the paper examines the impact of these initiatives on consumer behaviour and their potential to influence policy decisions toward more sustainable business practices.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Cooking in a healthy manner and maintaining healthy eating habits are vitally important. Currently, even in underdeveloped countries, people are becoming more aware of the

importance of maintaining good eating habits. This is an interesting development. Not only purchasers but also sellers have a responsibility to keep the notions of health and hygiene in mind for their own individual benefit. Over the past few years, environmental concerns and the requirement for environmentally responsible activities have emerged as fundamental themes in the realm of entrepreneurial innovation. One such project that stands out is Eat Raja, a juice shop located in Malleshwaram, Bangalore, which is well-known for its philosophy of producing zero percent waste. This establishment, which was established by Anand Raj, often known as “Raja,” reimagines the straightforward act of drinking juice through the lens of an environmentally responsible perspective, which is strongly based in the traditional traditions carried out in India. Eat Raja demonstrates how local knowledge and cultural history can be utilized to promote sustainability in business by reducing the amount of waste produced and doing away with the use of plastic.

2. OBJECTIVES

1. To critically assess the sustainability initiatives implemented at Eat Raja and their impact on environmental conservation.
2. To explore the role of traditional Indian knowledge systems in shaping sustainable business models.
3. To evaluate the environmental, economic, and social impact of Eat Raja’s zero-waste strategy on the local community and beyond.

3. THE METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

Use of qualitative analysis in conjunction with a case study technique for the research design.

Techniques for the Collection of Data: Data from Primary Sources: Conversations with the proprietor, staff, and clients of the business. Conducting research based on observations at the juice bar in order to document zero-waste procedures. It also uses secondary data. Review of Eat Raja-related stories from the media, content from social media, and any reports that are currently available. Analyzing the Data: Through the utilization of qualitative analytic methodologies such as thematic coding, trends in interviews can be identified. For the purpose of evaluating the company, carrying out an analysis similar to the one that was performed on Eat Raja’s sustainable practices.

Findings from a Case Study It is important to investigate the ways in which Eat Raja's business model incorporates the zero-waste philosophy into its operations, sourcing, and interactions with customers. Evaluation of the Impact: Effects on the environment (such as reducing the amount of waste plastic produced and using alternatives that are biodegradable). Social impact (such as increased awareness among customers and engagement with the community, for example). Potential Obstacles and chances: Investigate any potential obstacles that Eat Raja may encounter in the future, such as scalability and regulatory restrictions, as well as potential chances for expansion.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

The food and beverage sector are dependent on the greatest possible levels of flexibility and productivity in order to fulfill its customers' particular requirements in a timely manner and to the highest possible standard. While this is going on, sustainability is a significant component that contributes to the success of the industry. We are able to assist you in achieving a sustainable energy transition and mastering the digital transformation in production, buildings, and infrastructure through the utilization of digital technologies (Siemens, 2024). Taylor et al. (2005) define healthy eating as behaviors that improve and sustain health. Their study analyzed factors influencing children's and adolescents' eating habits, including food availability at home, school, and fast-food outlets. Family influence and media exposure, particularly television, play a crucial role in shaping dietary choices. While adolescents understand the principles of balanced nutrition, barriers such as lack of time, limited school meal options, and indifference prevent adherence to healthy eating guidelines (Croll et al., 2001).

Street food is an affordable dietary staple for urban consumers but poses health risks due to foodborne illnesses, including E. coli outbreaks. Globalization, modern food production, and changing lifestyles contribute to these risks. Educating consumers about food safety measures and enforcing regulations are crucial to minimizing health hazards (Khairuzzaman et al., 2014).

Unhealthy diets and lack of physical activity among adolescents have led to an increase in cardiovascular diseases (CVDs). A study in Kolkata revealed low awareness of CVD risks among urban school students, coupled with poor nutrition and sedentary habits. The gap between knowledge and practice suggests the need for multi-component educational interventions to encourage long-term behavioral change (Kumar et al., 2017).

Shifting social and cultural trends have increased reliance on street food, driven by convenience, time constraints, and lifestyle changes. Social media significantly influences its popularity, as customer reviews and influencer marketing shape consumer perceptions (Karmakar & Paranjape, 2020). Zhou & Ali (2024) analyzed consumer decision-making styles (CDMS) regarding street food. They introduced food safety and environmental risks as new determinants. Their findings highlight that brand loyalty, impulsiveness, novelty-seeking, and price-consciousness significantly impact consumer behavior. Additionally, social media celebrities (SMCs) play a moderating role in influencing purchase decisions.

The Healthy Eating, Active Living (HEAL) program aimed to promote nutrition and physical activity among disadvantaged youth in out-of-home care (OOHC). However, a study by Cox et al. (2017) found no conclusive evidence of its effectiveness, largely due to challenges in data collection and implementation in complex environments. This underscores the difficulties in intervening in disadvantaged communities and the need for tailored, context-specific health programs.

An investigation of the meanings that customers of a street market in the region known as Recôncavo da Bahia, Bahia, Brazil, ascribe to the concept of healthy eating was carried out by Anrade et al. (2017) [9]. New meanings are derived from intersubjective constructions, and the meanings that are assigned to healthy eating are examined on a daily basis and are tied to the circumstances that individuals have experienced in their lives. According to the findings of the interviews, it was noticed that re-signification is an ongoing process that is characterized by occurrences that influence the individuals who participated in the study to alter their eating habits. These events include diseases, the aging process, information obtained from health care providers, and reports from the media. The clean and sanitary quality of meals, as well as the absence of stringent control over the food choices that people make on a daily basis, were also indicators of healthy eating.

The professionals who are planning and implementing programs and policies for the purpose of boosting community health might look to kids to obtain a unique perspective on the subject. These professionals include social workers, public health authorities, cultural networkers, researchers, and community leaders. There are numerous neighborhoods in the United States that do not have adequate access to nutritious foods, which contributes to the poor health outcomes of marginalized populations. These

populations include people of color, adults who are elderly or disabled, and those who have a lower education or income. The provision of youth voice and the development of youth empowerment may offer innovative solutions to drive community change in order to alleviate gaps in food access. The goal of the Youth CAN (Change. Activity. Nutrition) project was to encourage and enable young people to become transformative agents of change for the betterment of their community's health practices. Through the use of socially engaged art platforms, such as photovoice (photography), street art (graffiti-style art), and spoken word (poetry), young people became active researchers through the process of participatory action research (PAR). This allowed them to investigate their surroundings and determine the factors that encourage and discourage healthy eating within their community. Through the World Café activity, young people and adults were able to engage in conversation and produce suggestions for ways to increase the availability of food in the community. The development of potential solutions for enhancing access to nutritious foods in a low-income area in an urban setting was the result of a collaborative effort involving researchers working with adults and young people as well as community leaders. (Hobbs et al., 2022).

The adolescents CAN project proved how engaging and empowering adolescents through PAR is essential in supporting positive youth development and helping youth to become advocates for equitable food access in their communities. This was demonstrated by the fact that the project was able to be successful. Research Gaps So far, no case study has been conducted on Sustainable Development through Traditional Indian Knowledge Systems in Karnataka in general and Bangalore in particular.

5. THEORETICAL STRUCTURE AND PLAN

People (Social), Planet (Environmental), and Profit (Economic) are the two primary themes of the Triple Bottom Line (TBL) method, which is an approach to business management. The application of this strategy to healthy eating involves incorporating health, environmental, and economic sustainability into the decisions that are made regarding nutrition. This is how it could be translated:

1. (Impact on Society) Individuals:

The well-being of both individuals and communities is taken into consideration by this pillar. The selection of foods that are beneficial to one's health over the long term, such as whole grains, fruits, vegetables, lean proteins, and healthy fats,

is referred to as nutritional value. Accessibility refers to the process of ensuring that social disparities and food deserts are addressed, as well as making sure that healthy food options are available and affordable to everyone. Support for the community: Through investments in local economies and the guarantee of food security, providing assistance to local farmers and food producers contributes to the improvement of community health and well-being.

2. Impact (on the Environment) on the Planet.

Consuming food in a sustainable manner reduces one's impact on the environment. Utilizing plant-based foods or animal products that are sourced in a sustainable manner in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions is one way to reduce one's carbon footprint. The practice of sustainable agriculture involves selecting organic and regenerative agricultural practices, which safeguard the health of the soil, preserve water, and encourage the growth of biodiversity. Reducing waste involves avoiding food waste by practicing conscious eating, planning meals in advance, and composting used food.

3. Profit (the impact on the economy).

An examination of the economic viability of various dietary options is the focus of this pillar. Affordability refers to the process of selecting nutritious and environmentally friendly foods while maintaining levels of cost that are manageable. Providing assistance to local economies purchasing goods and services from local farmers and companies not only helps to strengthen the local economy but also helps to eliminate the need for expensive transportation. Providing assistance to environmentally responsible food sectors, such as organic farming, can result in the development of jobs and contribute to enhanced economic growth. By adopting the TBL approach to healthy eating, individuals are able to make dietary decisions that are beneficial to their own health, that encourage environmental sustainability, and that support the economies of their local communities. For the purpose of developing and visualizing a business model, a strategic tool known as the Business Model Canvas (BMC) is utilized. When the BMC is applied to a business or program that focuses on healthy eating, it provides an outline of the essential components that characterize the firm, its value proposition, and the manner in which it functions.

6. DISCUSSION

The findings are compared with those of other zero-waste or sustainable enterprises operating in the food and beverage industry, both locally and internationally. In this discussion, we will examine how Eat Raja might serve as a paradigm for sustainable business practices in India. Provide a concise summary of the most important insights regarding Eat Raja's successful implementation of a zero-waste methodology.

(a) The Food and Beverage Industry's Sustainable Approach to Agriculture

In the food and beverage (F&B) industry, the term "sustainability" refers to techniques that reduce the negative effects of food production, processing, distribution, and consumption on the environment, society, and the economy. The fast food and beverage sector is a major contributor to environmental problems such as the emission of greenhouse gases, the destruction of forests, the consumption of water, and trash. It is therefore essential to incorporate sustainable practices in order to reduce the effects of these externalities while also boosting economic and social well-being over the long run.

(b) Environmentally Responsible Production and Sourcing

The practices of organic farming, crop rotation, agroforestry, and regenerative farming are examples of sustainable agricultural practices that contribute to the preservation of soil health, biodiversity, and water conservation.

Ethical Sourcing: This type of sourcing involves making certain that ingredients are obtained in a responsible manner, with a little impact on the environment, and that farmers and producers are paid fairly (for example, by obtaining Fair Trade accreditation).

Sustainable Fishing and Livestock Farming: Methods that prevent overfishing, reduce the carbon footprint of livestock farming, and apply humane treatment of animals are all ways that help to the preservation of ecosystems.

(c) Reduction of Waste and Management of Waste

Food waste is a serious issue that plagues the food and beverage industry. Better inventory management, the reuse of food by-products, the donation of surplus food, and the composting of organic waste are all potential strategies for reducing the

amount of food that is wasted. Zero-trash Initiatives: Examples of this trend are companies like Eat Raja that are working to reduce the amount of trash generated by packing packaging by doing away with single-use plastics, encouraging the use of reusable containers, and employing alternatives that are biodegradable. The circular economy is a business model that involves minimizing waste through the reuse or recycling of materials, with the goal of ensuring that by-products are fed back into the production chain. Some businesses have adopted this management strategy.

(d) Conservation of Water and Energy

The food and beverage industry needs to use water management strategies such as effective irrigation, water recycling, and rainwater collecting in order to meet the demands of agriculture, which is the greatest consumer of freshwater at the worldwide level. The reduction of carbon emissions can be achieved through energy efficiency by reducing energy consumption through the utilization of renewable energy sources such as solar, wind, or bioenergy generating systems. Additionally, businesses are concentrating their efforts on developing logistics and machinery that are more energy-efficient.

(e) New developments in packaging

One of the most important sustainability goals is to cut down on the amount of plastic that is used. The development and implementation of environmentally friendly packaging alternatives, such as materials that are biodegradable, compostable, and reusable, are now taking place. A focus on lightweight packaging and refill systems that reduce the amount of material used and the amount of trash generated is what we mean when we talk about package minimization.

(f) The Transparency of the Supply Chain

The concept of traceability refers to the growing need among consumers for information regarding the origin of their food, the methods used to manufacture it, and the working conditions encountered throughout supply chains. There is a correlation between traceability and the ethical and environmentally responsible sourcing of items. The technology known as blockchain is currently being utilized in certain industries to generate records that can be verified for each stage of the supply chain. This provides a higher level of trust and transparency.

(g) Healthy and Long-Term Dietary Practices

Alternatives Derived from Plants The growing popularity of plant-based diets can be attributed to mounting concerns regarding the environmental impact of the production of meat. Reducing the amount of water used, methane emissions, and deforestation that are linked with animal farming can be accomplished by the consumption of plant-based proteins such as soy, pea, and alternative meats. **Locally Sourced Foods:** Procuring food locally helps to reduce emissions caused by transportation and frequently provides support to small-scale farmers who are committed to sustainability.

(h) Engagement and Awareness of the Consumer Market

Certifications such as organic, Fair Trade, RainforestAlliance, and Non-GMO Project Verified are examples of eco-labeling. These certifications provide consumers with information about the sustainability practices of the items they purchase.

Sustainability marketing: In order to attract consumers who are environmentally sensitive, many food and beverage firms are now showcasing the environmental and social sustainability measures they have undertaken. The communication of information regarding packaging, waste management, and ethical sourcing is inclusive of this.

(i) The Food and Beverage Industry and the Benefits of Sustainability

Impact on the Environment: Sustainable practices contribute to the reduction of carbon footprints, together with the conservation of natural resources and the protection of ecosystems. **Economic Resilience:** Businesses can often cut expenses in the long run by adopting sustainable ways (for example, by reducing waste or increasing energy efficiency), to cater to the growing demand for environmentally friendly products, and to lessen their ecological footprint. **Brand Reputation:** Businesses that are dedicated to sustainability have the power to cultivate a favorable brand image and increase customer loyalty by connecting themselves with the values of consumers. **Compliance with restrictions** It is becoming increasingly common for governments all over the world to impose more stringent restrictions on environmental concerns. There is a possibility that businesses might keep ahead of possible legal and regulatory requirements by implementing sustainable practices.

A subscription-based business that provides organic, pre-prepared meals that are tailored to meet the requirements of a variety of diets (for example, ketogenic and vegan). Additionally, it utilizes environmentally friendly packaging, has a significant internet presence through a smartphone app for convenient ordering, and collaborates with local farmers to obtain fresh ingredients wherever possible. Customers have the ability to customize their meals according to their dietary requirements, and the company also publishes instructional information on social media and blogs in order to increase community participation. Behavioural economics is a branch of economics that investigates how people's decisions are influenced by psychological, cognitive, emotional, and social aspects. This field of study frequently departs from the conventional notion that individuals make rational choices. When it comes to healthy eating and sales, behavioral economics can be utilized to gain an understanding of consumer preferences for healthier options and to impact those preferences in a positive direction. Here are some fundamental ideas and how they can be applied:

1. **Agentle prod** Small-scale interventions known as “nudges” are designed to encourage individuals to make better decisions without limiting their range of possibilities. These seemingly insignificant suggestions make use of human behavior patterns in order to encourage favorable outcomes. As an illustration of healthy eating: Putting healthy food, such as fruits and nuts, at eye level in grocery shops or checkout areas encourages customers to select them rather than harmful alternatives. This is an example of product placement. The provision of healthful meals as the default option in restaurants (for example, serving a salad as a side dish rather than fries) has the effect of encouraging consumers to make more favorable selections. Labeling: The use of labels that are simple to comprehend, such as traffic light systems (green for healthy, red for unhealthy), makes it simpler for customers to make decisions that are both speedy and well-informed.
2. **Reluctance to Lose** People have a stronger desire to prevent losses than they do to seek increases in reward. We may use this to our advantage in order to promote healthy eating. Take, for instance: prizes systems: Instead of simply providing discounts for healthy purchases, you should establish systems in which customers can lose points or prizes that they have collected if they frequently choose products that are harmful. When it comes to discounting, rather of saying “save 10% on

healthy meals,” it is more effective to frame the offer as “don’t miss out on a 10% discount if you buy healthy meals.” This approach plays on the psychology of loss aversion.

3. Discounting that is Exaggerated In spite of the fact that long-term benefits, such as improved health, are often more significant, people have a tendency to prioritize current rewards above future benefits. This presents a difficulty for those who are trying to promote good eating, which frequently results in long-term advantages but necessitates compromises in the short term. Take, for instance: Instant Incentives: Providing instant rewards for healthy purchasing can be an effective way to combat the inclination to minimize the benefits that will be received in the future. It is possible to make the selection more enticing by, for instance, offering quick discounts, vouchers, or modest rewards to individuals who choose to consume nutritious meals. Subscription Models: Healthy meal subscription services, such as weekly meal kits, enable individuals to make a commitment in advance, hence minimizing the temptation to choose unhealthy options in the present moment.
4. Proof from the community. In general, people have a tendency to imitate the actions of others, particularly those who are in their peer group. For the purpose of encouraging healthy eating, the concept of herd behavior might be utilized. Through the use of influencer marketing, individuals can be encouraged to adopt a healthier lifestyle by collaborating with health influencers or fitness enthusiasts to demonstrate how they love eating nutritious meals. Reviews and comments from Customers: Including positive comments and photographs of happy customers eating nutritious meals is a great way to generate social proof and encourage others to follow in your footsteps. Displaying statements such as “Our most popular meal is the vegan bowl” can be an effective way to convey the notion that a significant number of consumers prefer healthier options.
5. Holding down When it comes to making judgments, people have a tendency to place a significant amount of weight on the initial piece of information that they are presented with, which is referred to as the “anchor.” Pricing and product selection are two areas that can benefit from anchoring. Pricing Strategies: Establishing an initial “anchor” price for an unhealthy meal and then presenting a healthier alternative at a price that is either slightly lower or equivalent can make the healthier option appear to be a better deal. When it comes to portion sizes, offering a smaller piece of an

unhealthy dish as the “default” size and charging a higher price for it in comparison to bigger portions of healthier meals will encourage customers to select the healthier alternative.

6. **Existence of Bias** People are prone to focusing on immediate gratification, and they frequently struggle with making decisions that have long-term consequences, such as eating healthily, which has delayed rewards. **Meal planning:** By providing services that prepare meals or deliver nutritious meals, you provide customers the opportunity to pre-commit to making healthy choices for the week, which makes it simpler for them to avoid making impulsive selections that are unhealthy. **Gamification:** The process of turning healthy eating into a game, in which players receive daily feedback, awards, or trackable progress (like in a fitness app), appeals to the urge for instant gratification while simultaneously encouraging long-term health advantages.
7. **Calculations in the Mind** In their minds, people frequently classify their money into different categories and assign different values to the various sorts of expenditure, which might have an effect on the decisions they make. Changing the perception of cost by framing healthy choices as “investments”; rather than viewing healthy eating as an immediate expense, it is possible to change the perception of cost by framing healthy eating as a long-term investment in health and wellness. **Healthy Budgeting Plans:** Providing subscription services that break down expenditures into smaller, more manageable payments (such as weekly payments for healthy meals) helps people feel as though they are not overpaying all at once.
8. **The Heuristics of Scarcity** In general, people have a tendency to place a higher value on something when they perceive it to be scarce. **Limited-Time Offers:** Marketing limited-time discounts or special menu items for healthy meals generates a sense of urgency, which encourages customers to take immediate action. **Healthy foods that are in season** The marketing of seasonal fruits and vegetables as “limited edition” commodities has the potential to improve both their appeal and demand.
9. **The effect of endowment.** When people have a connection to something or own it, they tend to place a higher value on it. For the purpose of fostering a sense of ownership over healthy decisions, this might be applied to the selection of nutrition. **Meals That Can Be Customized** Providing consumers with the opportunity to construct their own nutritious meals (for example, selecting the components that will

go into a salad or bowl) enhances the likelihood that they will value and thoroughly enjoy the meal. A sense of ownership over one's journey to better health can be created by providing customers with the ability to set personal health objectives and track their progress toward achieving those goals.

Businesses have the ability to better align their marketing strategies, product offerings, and pricing models with the psychological and emotional decision-making processes of consumers if they understand and leverage the principles of behavioral economics. This will make healthy eating more appealing, accessible, and profitable for businesses. This can be utilized by grocery stores, restaurants, meal delivery services, and even fitness and wellness brands in order to encourage good eating habits and raise the level of satisfaction experienced by customers. In order to minimize the amount of waste that is produced and to maximize the efficiency with which resources are utilized, Zero Waste Theory focuses on the design and management of products, services, and processes that are designed to decrease waste, reuse materials, and recycle. The application of this theory in the context of healthy eating establishments has the potential to dramatically impact the operations of restaurants and cafes, ranging from the procurement of food to the management of leftovers, with the ultimate objective of lowering their impact on the environment.

CONCLUSION

Sourcing ingredients sustainably is a key strategy for minimizing waste in restaurants. Purchasing local and seasonal produce reduces transportation emissions and excessive packaging, while bulk buying dry goods like grains and nuts helps cut down on individual wrappers. Partnering with eco-friendly suppliers who use minimal or reusable packaging further supports a sustainable supply chain. Effective menu planning plays a crucial role in reducing food waste. Restaurants can incorporate whole ingredients by using vegetable scraps for stocks or fruit peels for compost. Offering flexible, seasonal menus based on ingredient availability helps prevent spoilage, and providing portion size options allows customers to order according to their needs, reducing plate waste. Proper waste management is essential in achieving zero waste. Composting organic scraps can support urban farming, and repurposing leftovers into new dishes, such as soups or smoothies, minimizes disposal. Conducting waste audits helps restaurants track where waste occurs and optimize purchasing accordingly.

Eco-friendly packaging alternatives further reduce environmental impact. Encouraging customers to bring reusable containers or offering incentives for their use can significantly cut packaging waste. Using compostable materials like bamboo and sugarcane-based packaging instead of plastic and opting for durable, washable dishware instead of disposables ensures sustainable operations. Water and energy efficiency also contribute to a zero-waste approach. Installing water-efficient appliances and promoting conservation techniques, such as soaking instead of running water for food preparation, reduces consumption. Investing in energy-efficient kitchen equipment like low-energy stoves and adopting sustainable cooking methods such as batch cooking and steaming further optimize resource use. Finally, proper recycling and material reuse play a crucial role in sustainability. Establishing recycling stations for paper, glass, and metal ensures responsible waste disposal, while repurposing glass jars, wooden pallets, and crates for storage or decor aligns with a circular economy model. By integrating these strategies, restaurants can successfully reduce waste, lower costs, and promote sustainable dining practices.

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