

THE 7S THEORY OF SUSTAINABLE CONSUMERISM IN FOOD SECTOR

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Abstract

Sustainability in resource consumption has become integral to business responsibility in our age. Minimum wastage, optimum utilisation, and economy in usage of resources through techniques such as recycling are some of the features of sustainable consumption. However, the concern towards sustainability in resource use has hitherto been only limited to business enterprises. Sustainability in consumerism is a novel concept that has many dimensions. Sustainability in consumerism entails economy in consumption, wastage minimisation, recycling, reuse, and responsible consumer behaviour. It has financial, social, health, economic and philosophical dimensions. Unsustainable consumerism in food sector can lead to widespread lifestyle diseases, inequity in food availability and nutrition, and environmental degradation. Defining sustainable consumerism and its components could be the first step towards inculcating a culture of sustainability among consumers at the global level. This paper is aimed at expounding a theory on sustainable consumerism in food sector known as 'The 7S Theory on Sustainable Consumerism in food sector'. The theory explains the concept in terms of its seven basic components, namely, Sensible, Sensitive, Shared, Sufficiency, Spirituality, Salvage, and Savings. All these components of sustainable consumerism have been discussed in details with appropriate analogies, illustrations, and examples. An attempt has also been made to relate these components with the consumer rights regime and enforcement mechanism under the Consumer Protection Act, 2020. For instance, consumers in food sector have a right to be informed about the nutritional content or ingredients of food they consume. This comes under 'Sensible' dimension, which deals with the qualitative aspects of consumption. 'Sensitive' entails concern for animals and their habitats. 'Shared' deals with equity in food availability and distribution. 'Sufficiency' involves the quantitative aspects of food consumption. 'Spirituality' takes consumerism beyond strictly material calculus. 'Salvage' involves minimising food wastage. 'Savings' involve economy in consumption. Recommendations have been made to further deepen consumer rights regime and strengthen consumer protection laws in India, consistent with the essence of the theory. Suggestions have been made to popularise the idea of sustainable consumerism among the general public.

Keywords: Sustainability, Consumerism, Law, Rights, Food

Introduction to Sustainable Consumerism

Sustainable consumerism is the application of the principles of sustainability and sustainable development in resource consumption. The United Nations Brundtland Commission held in 1987 issued a Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future. The report defined sustainability as meeting the needs of the present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.¹ Since then sustainability has become a running theme in all discussions and debates on issues related to environment and nature conservation. In simple terms, sustainability means an inherent ability of the nature or environment to sustain itself, when left undisturbed. For instance, forests when left undisturbed regenerate eventually. However, human intervention and unsustainable use of resources disrupts that inherent regenerative capacity of nature. This happens when the pace of resource exploitation exceeds the carrying capacity or regenerative rate of the nature. Resources are not infinite. Nature needs time to regenerate its resources and recoup its losses. Sustainability erodes when resources start depleting due to excessively high rates of consumption of resources by the present generation that leaves comparatively lesser amounts of resources for the use of future generations. Sustainability is thus closely connected with inter-generational equity. Even within the same generation, unequal capacities, capabilities, affordability, and accessibility to resources cause intra-generational inequity.

Sustainable consumerism is a pattern of consumption or consumer behaviour that has sustainability as its central concern. Its about doing more and better with less.² It includes efficiency and economy in use of resources. Efficiency means maximising consumer satisfaction at the same level of resources consumption or minimising resources consumption for the same level of consumer satisfaction. This could be possible by adopting methods, practices and technologies that result in better resource efficiency per unit of resources consumed. Economy means reduction or minimisation of resource consumption, regardless of levels of consumer satisfaction. Sustainable consumerism is a culture that emanates from awareness about environmental issues and sustainability concerns. It covers all the stages of consumption from planning to buy or consume resources to their safe and sustainable disposal

¹ REPORT OF THE WORLD COMMISSION ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT: OUR COMMON FUTURE, <http://www.un-documents.net/our-common-future.pdf> (last visited Oct. 23, 2022).

² SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS, <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-consumption-production/> (last visited Oct. 23, 2022).

and includes all intermediate stages such as buying, consumption, reuse, recycling, and recovering. Sustainable consumerism may apply to all kinds of resources that we consume that are subject to sustainability concerns due to their scarcity or constrained regenerative capacity, such as water, energy, and food.

Sustainability Issues Specific to Food Sector

Some of the issues related to sustainable consumerism in food sector that need resolution by global and coordinated efforts are listed as below –

a) Food wastage

13.3% of the world's food is lost after harvesting and before reaching retail markets while 17% is wasted at the consumer level.³ Each year one-third of all food produced ends up as waste, costing the world around \$1 trillion and measuring equivalent to \$1.3 billion tonnes. Most of this wastage is owed to poor transportation from the sources of supply to market places and faulty harvesting practices.⁴ India has its own food wastage conundrum. The per capita food wastage of Indian households amounts to 50 Kg per annum. In financial terms the total cost of food wastage in India is estimated at a monumental INR 92,651 Crores annually.⁵ This is approximately 26.5% of annual food subsidy allocation to Food Corporate of India in the financial year 2020-21.⁶ This huge scale and volume of food wastage exists in spite of the fact that India ranked 107th out of 121 countries with a 'serious' level score of 29.1 in the 2022 edition of the Global Hunger Index.⁷ India is a land of stark inequalities and contrasts. Starvation sleeps next to abundance and even obesity in this country.

b) Health Epidemic

According to the National Family Health Survey (NFHS-5), obesity level in India was estimated to be around 24% in case of women and 23% in case of men.⁸ Lifestyle

³ UNITED NATIONS, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals/goal12> (last visited Oct. 22, 2022).

⁴ *Supra* note 2.

⁵ Vishwa Mohan, *Why it's Time to put Farm and Food Waste to Use*, TIMES OF INDIA (Jul. 16, 2022, 10:54 AM), <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/india/why-its-time-to-put-farm-and-food-waste-to-use/articleshow/92910335.cms#:~:text=NEW%20DELHI%3A%20Every%20year%20India,to%20Rs%2092%20C651%20crore%20yearly>.

⁶ PRS LEGISLATIVE RESEARCH, <https://prsindia.org/budgets/parliament/demand-for-grants-2021-22-analysis-food-and-public-distribution> (last visited Oct. 22, 2022).

⁷ GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX, <https://www.globalhungerindex.org/india.html> (last visited Oct. 22, 2022).

⁸ Sohini Das, *Nearly One-fourth of all Men and Women in India are Now Obese*, BUSINESS STANDARD (May 6, 2022, 22:33PM), https://www.business-standard.com/article/current-affairs/nearly-one-fourth-of-all-men-and-women-in-india-are-now-obese-nfhs-122050600458_1.html.

diseases have become the leading causes of deaths all over the world. Around 16% of world's total deaths are caused by ischaemic heart disease.⁹ This dismal state is mainly due to unhealthy diet and sedentary lifestyle. Unsustainable food consumption has taken an epidemic proportion world over. Lifestyle diseases such as strokes, heart attacks, lung diseases, diabetes, cancer, etc. have become the leading causes of deaths globally. Fast food chains, applying the assembly line approach of production to food sector and using economies of scale, have become convenient alternatives to healthy home-made food. Despite all persuasions and market compulsion driven by health concerns, these giant corporations do not transparently disclose the calorific content and nutritional breakup, albeit a few exceptions. Trans-fat or partially hydrogenated fat is used profusely by these fast-food ventures that have a global appeal to local market due to innovative marketing strategies and pricing policies. Excessive consumption of food, far more than dietary needs, may not only result in diseases at an epidemic scale but also cause rapid exploitation of scarce resources, that are used as inputs in food production such as water, land, chemical fertilisers, power, etc. Ranches and farmland cost trees, forests, and habitats of wild animals. Consumerism fuelled by debt is the worst form of unsustainable consumerism as it postpones and transmits the financial burden of unsustainable levels of consumption by present generations to future generations.

c) **Inequity**

Food availability and accessibility is not universal and equal globally. A vast section of population cannot afford nutrient rich food while a \$ trillion worth of food gets wasted every year. Poor food management, distribution and transportation is the main reason behind the situation. Public distribution system is not efficient in targeting beneficiaries accurately while leakages from the system add to the financial and operational woes. This results in a peculiarly familiar situation of abundance co-existing with starvation and hunger in countries like India. Affordability, capability, and accessibility gaps need to be filled to achieve the objective of equitability as a goal with our broader goal of sustainability.

d) **Waste Disposal**

⁹ WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION, <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/the-top-10-causes-of-death> (last visited Oct. 21, 2022).

The volume of food waste is huge, mainly fuelled by unsustainably high levels of consumption. However, the methods and techniques of disposal of these wastes raises serious concerns. Segregation of biodegradable or food wastes and non-biodegradable wastes such as plastics or e-wastes at source is not widespread due to lack of environmental education and awareness among communities. This makes composting difficult as plastics get mixed with food wastes. If managed efficiently, food wastes may become critical resources in restoring fertility of soil in the form of organic manures. Vermicomposting is a more efficient way of composting by the aid of earthworms. Anaerobic composting is another form of composting in absence of oxygen. Municipal procedures and practices involved in handling food wastes are highly unstructured, disjointed, unplanned and inefficient in urban localities. Waste handling and disposal is an important aspect of sustainability, as SDG 11 aims at sustainable cities and communities.

e) Animal Cruelty & Environmental Degradation

Poultry farms with shanty sheds, improper ventilation, overcrowding with little physical space for movement, and unhygienic conditions are some of the images we deliberately choose to ignore as consumers. Industrial level slaughtering using painful and brutal procedures and tools treat animals as objects. The emphasis is entirely on volume and speed of production and not on care, living conditions, and compassionate treatment of animals. The meat that comes out from such meat processing units poses risks to human health. Animals in the wild are not safe either as demand for farmland for food production causes human encroachment into forests. Higher quantities of food for a rapidly rising population requires more land under cultivation and as ranches for animal rearing. This leads to deforestation at rates exceeding the regenerative capacity of nature. As per the Indian State of Forest Report 2021, only a fourth of India's total land area was under forest and tree cover. Only 17 states and Union Territories had the figure of 33% or more of forest and tree cover.¹⁰ Repeated and excessive use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides have degraded the fertility of soil in land under cultivation. This not only lowers productivity of cultivated land but also adds pressure on forested land of conversion for agricultural purposes.

¹⁰ PRESS INFORMATION BUREAU, <https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=1789635> (last visited Oct.20, 2022).

The 7S Theory of Sustainable Consumerism

The 7S Theory of Sustainable Consumerism explains the concept of sustainable consumerism in term of its 7 basic elements, each of which are listed and explained below. The theory is aligned with the most contemporary concerns on the issue of sustainability in consumerism. It covers issues of animal cruelty, consumer rights, lifestyle diseases, food safety, food wastage and management, waste disposal, waste recovery, food distribution and donation, and economy in food expenditure. The theory is multi-dimensional and holistic in the sense that it has economic, social, environmental, philosophical, and scientific aspects. Each component requires consumers to ask certain questions about their food consumption pattern as a form of self-introspection. The theory places consumers at the centre of sustainability concerns as their decisions and choices are the ultimate factors to achieve the goal of sustainable consumerism. The 7S of sustainable consumerism in food sector are explained below.

1S.Sensible

Sensible relates to the quality of food consumed. It concerns with being sensible and mindful about the nutritional content and hygiene of food being consumed. Consumer protection laws in most countries today entitle them to know the nutritional content in terms of ingredients or calorific content of the food they buy. For instance, The Food Safety and Standards (Packaging and Labelling) Regulations, 2011 requires all pre-packaged food products sold in India to comply with the food labelling norms. Consumers must use such remedies to inform themselves about the qualitative content of the food they eat. Knowing the nature of food one consumes is nothing but sensible consumption. Such enlightened consumer behaviour is rewarding in the long run as it brings down the risk of diseases due to unhealthy diet, leads to better nutritional intake, and thus may result in a longer and healthier life. It requires consumers to ask questions to themselves such as –

- What am I eating?
- What is the nutritional content of my food?
- Does my food provide me the needed nutrition?
- Does the consumption of the food make sense to me?

Being sensible about the food is eating nutritive food of hygienic quality. It also entails refraining from food that are deficient in nutrition, harmful to health, or unhygienic. Sensitive

choice in consumption also supports Sustainable Development Goal ('SDG') 3 that aims at good health and well-being.

Section 2(9) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019¹¹ provides for a bundle of consumer rights. Consumer has been defined under Section 2(7) as the buyer of goods for consideration and for own non-commercial consumption and includes a user of such goods where such use has been approved by the buyer. Goods under section 2(21) specifically includes food as defined under section 3(1)(j) of the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006.¹² The definition of food in the said act is exhaustive enough to include both, processed and unprocessed substances intended for human consumption. Even processed meat (but not live animals) is included in the definition. Consumers have a right to be informed about the quality, quantity, potency, purity, standard and price of food products they consumer to protect themselves against unfair trade practices or defective food products. Further, they have a right to be protected against marketing of food products hazardous to life and property, in addition to right to consumer awareness. Section 90 and Section 91 make manufacture, sale, storage, distribution or import of adulterated or spurious (falsely claimed to be genuine) food products punishable. A sensible consumer may bring a product liability action for compensation for any harm caused by any defective food products against the manufacturer or service providers. Thus, the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 lays down an exhaustive consumer rights and remedy regime that promotes sensibility in food consumption.

2S. Sensitive

It means being sensitive to the needs of other creatures and consuming in a manner that does not threaten the habitats of other animals. Animals should be treated with care and kept hygienically by those engaged in animal husbandry or associated with meat industry. The manner and means adopted in slaughtering of animals should cause least pain. Rare and exotic species of animals should not be consumed, as it risks their extinction. Wild animals should also be left undisturbed in their habitats as consuming them may give rise to COVID 19 like pandemics. The food that we grow requires cultivable land, ranches, fodder, water, power, and other renewable and non-renewable resources. The population pressure on land is high in our times and any addition to farmland will only come at the cost of forested land. Such diversion of land resource usage threatens wildlife and their habitats. The same is true about meat industry and animal husbandry. Therefore, being rational about the quantity of food consumed

¹¹ Consumer Protection Act, 2019, No. 35, Acts of Parliament, 2019 (India).

¹² Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, No. 34, Acts of Parliament, 2006 (India).

and minimising the wastage is being sensitive as it minimises diversion of land usage pattern, deforestation, and loss of habitat of wild beings. Sensitivity about habitats and needs of other creatures and concern for environment and forests is thus an important component of sustainable consumerism. Sensitive consumption of food supports SDG 15 that aims at sustainability in the use of terrestrial ecosystems and forest management, and prevention of loss of biodiversity and land degradation and desertification. The questions that consumers may ask themselves at this stage includes –

- Am I being insensitive to other animals and their habitats?
- Is my consumption pattern insensitive to environment in any manner?
- Are the animals that I consume reared in a sensitive manner? Are they kept at hygienic places and treated with care and compassion?

The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960¹³ is the law that prevents infliction of unnecessary pain or suffering on animals and encapsulates the idea of ‘Sensitive’ as explained above. Section 2(a) defines animals as any living creatures other than human being. Section 11 prohibits and penalises cruel treatment of animals. Cruelty to animals could include treatments such as confining any animal in cage or receptacle of insufficient measure without permitting reasonable opportunity for movement. Similarly, keeping any animal chained by an unreasonably short or heavy cord for an unreasonable time; failure to provide sufficient food, drink, or shelter to any owned animals; offering for sale or possessing any animals suffering pain by reason of mutilation, starvation, thirst, or overcrowding; or ill-treatment, killing or mutilating of animals in any unnecessarily cruel manner also amounts to cruel treatment of animals.

Sensitive aspect of sustainability has been championed by the Indian judiciary time and again. In *G. R. Simon and Others etc. v. Union of India*, the Delhi High Court held that wildlife is our cultural heritage and an asset to be persevered for the future generations. It rejected the contention of the petitioner that certain animals (in this case Jackal and Snakes) are detrimental to human life. Every animal has a role to play in retaining the ecological balance.¹⁴

3S. Shared

¹³ The Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, 1960, No. 59, Acts of Parliament, 1960 (India).

¹⁴ *G.R. Simon vs Union of India*, AIR 1997 Delhi 301.

‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam’ is the ancient Indian belief that has its origin in Maha Upanishad and it means that the world is one family. Equity in consumption and distribution of food is a critical aspect of sustainable consumerism. ‘Shared’ means consumption that takes care of the needs of the hungry and the starved in the vicinity. A situation where one household consumes many times more than the recommended calorific requirement and another in the neighbourhood struggling to touch that threshold is not sustainable at all. This is because the former household would suffer from lifestyle diseases such as diabetes, obesity, strokes, etc. if such consumption pattern is prolonged, while the later one would struggle against malnutrition and starvation perpetually. Inequity perpetuates poverty, malnutrition, inequality, crimes, misery, etc. A win-win situation would be sharing of surplus by those having excess food with those who are deficient in food. A rational consumption that is mindful about the quantity and wastage also indirectly contributes to equity. Food more than the nutritional requirement may cause diseases or obesity. Such surplus food may either get spoilt, if not consumed. The best alternative is sharing it with others in need of it, as it saves our costs in health remediation against lifestyle diseases in future and prevents food from getting spoilt. Public Distribution System (‘PDS’) should also make sure that no one is left out of the subsidy net while the food is rotting in the silos. Prudent management of food resources and distribution of surplus food at affordable cost by governments is also an aspect of ‘Shared’. Sharing food also supports SDG 10, and 1 that aim at reducing inequalities and eliminating poverty, respectively. SDG 2 which aims at ending hunger, achieving food security, and improved nutrition, also gets realised if sharing food becomes part of our consumption culture. Consumers need to ask the following questions to themselves at this stage –

- Is anyone hungry, starving or suffering from malnutrition in my neighbourhood?
- Do I’ve surplus food with me that may get spoilt if not consumed?
- Am I sharing my food with those in need in my vicinity?
- How and with whom can I share my surplus food with?

Section 2(9) of the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 provides consumers the right to assured access to a variety of food products and services at competitive prices. Assured access and competitive prices are the keywords. Thus, accessibility and affordability are two most important goals of securing consumer rights and welfare and the idea is central to the concept of ‘Shared’ in food distribution.

4S. Sufficiency

‘Sufficiency’ emphasises on quantity of food being consumed. Sufficient quantity and composition of food may differ for different individuals, depending upon factors such as height, weight, age, gender, and occupation. For instance, those involved in physical labour may require a heavier and a different kind of diet than those involved in mental labour. Physical labour may require energy giving and muscle building nutrients such as protein, carbohydrates, and fat in larger proportions of the diet while mental labour may require food rich in vitamins and minerals. Food in excess of the nutritional requirements of body or with disproportionate composition of nutrients may cause diseases and obesity. Storing food in excess of needs may result in wastage. Unsustainably high levels of consumption add to out-of-pocket expenses on health in future. Spoilt food results in lost resources such as water, fertilisers, fodder feeds, etc. tied to the wasted food. A balanced diet is the key. A balanced diet leads to optimum Body Mass Index (‘BMI’) due to optimum quantity and composition of nutrients. Optimum BMI leads to a healthy life, savings on health, and minimises diversion of forest and wildlife habitats. Consumers may ask the following relevant questions to themselves at this level –

- What quantity and composition of food is sufficient for my needs, having regards to my physique, age, gender, and occupation?
- Am I eating food in quantity more than sufficient for my sustenance?

5S. Spirituality

Spirituality means consumption of food that nourishes the soul and not just the body. The food which is guilt-free, hygienic, and that goes beyond just material considerations, such as taste, is spiritual. The Bhagwat Gita, the ancient Indian ocean of wisdom, classifies food in three categories, namely, Sattvik, Tamasik, and Rajasik. Rajasik food is energy rich diet and primarily nourishes the body rather than the mind or soul. Tamasik food is the one that is harmful to the body in long-run and causes lethargy and indolence. Sattvik is the kind of diet that feeds the spirit or soul primarily while sustaining the body. Its neither too hot nor too cold and respects seasonality. Its not too spicy or oily nor too heavy and is ideal diet for those engaged in mental labour or intellectual pursuits that requires least energy. Bhagwat Gita’s Sattvik food could be traced to a diet consisting of fruits, vegetables, staple crops, and seeds. We refer to such natural diet today as ‘falahaar’ or a fruit diet. ‘Spirituality’ as a concept includes Bhagwat Gita’s Sattvik diet but is not limited to it. Spirituality also means eating in quantities that are adequate to support the body and not excessively. Taste or sense gratification should not be the only factor for choice of a diet. It requires control over senses or taste buds

to choose nutritive food, wisely and rationally. Emphasis is on nutritional content and enrichment of the soul and mind. Any food that harms the body or is in excess of the requirements of body, or that causes guilt, or which is stale or unhygienic, is not spiritual. At this stage, consumers may ask themselves the following questions –

- Does my food enrich my soul or mind?
- Does my food cause anger, indolence, lethargy, restlessness or harms my body in any manner?
- Do I choose my food purely based on taste, regardless of nutritional content or requirements of my body?

6S. Salvage

‘Salvage’ relates to waste handling in food sector. It’s the equivalent of the 3Rs (Reduce, recycle, and reuse) in food sector. Food wastage should be reduced and minimised as resources have been spent on their production. Edible food should be recovered or salvaged out of wasted food to the extent possible. Food cannot be reused once spoilt as it may lead to serious health issues. However, efforts should be made to reduce wastage and maximise edibility. Food saved is food produced. Salvage may involve refrigeration, cold storage, heating, pasteurisation, sorting, and other such techniques and treatments that help preserve and prolong edibility of food. Judicious use of food is the key, as food is also a vital resource of the nation. Salvage also deals with the manner in which food waste is disposed off. Waste disposal must make sure that non-biodegradable wastes such as plastics be segregated from the bio-degradable ones such as food. This allows for recycling of the waste in the form of manures to provide fertility and nutrition to the soil. Consumers may ask the following key questions at this level –

- How can I reduce food wastage?
- How to preserve and prolongate the edibility of my food?
- Can I salvage any amount of edible food from the food not consumed or wasted?
- Do I segregate non-biodegradable wastes from my food waste before disposal?

7S. Savings

Savings relate to economy in food consumption. Cost of food consumption should not be unreasonably high. Food is just one of the several components of our consumption basket and

thus expenses on food should not be disproportionate relative to other important elements of consumption such as health, education, leisure, housing, clothing, etc. Excessive spending on food relative to the biological needs may lead to high rates of indebtedness or financial ruin in addition to lifestyle diseases. Prudence and economy in food spending brings multiple benefits such as financial savings, better health, environmental sustainability. Reasonable spending on food consumption results in a more equitable availability of food and lesser exclusion. At this stage, consumers may ask the following questions to themselves –

- What proportion of my disposable income is spent on food?
- Do I spend excessively on food?
- How can I bring down my food expenditure to a rational level, keeping in mind my nutritional needs?

Recommendations

Following are some recommendations that could be made to promote sustainable consumerism in food sector based on the 7S Theory of Sustainable Consumerism –

- Labelling regulations currently cover only pre-packaged food products. Laws need to be enacted/amended to make it mandatory for restaurants and food chains to transparently and proactively disclose the nutritional content of different items of food displayed in their menu. Periodical inspection and testing of the disclosed nutritional information should be provisioned in such legislation. The objective is to uphold the right of consumers to be informed about the food they consume.
- Awareness should be created at mass scale on the optimum Body Mass Index ('BMI') and its interpretation relative to body measures. Health stalls could be installed at public places with appropriate machinery tools to measure BMI, visceral fat, muscle mass, and other indicators of fitness level and health risks. Health counsellors and dieticians could be attached to such stalls to provide personalised dietary or nutritional information for a balanced diet that upholds sufficiency and sensibility in food consumption.
- Decentralised food stalls should be installed at equidistant locations across cities and towns to cater to the nutritional needs of those facing affordability, accessibility, and capability gaps in food consumption. Such stalls may source their material requirements from those willing to share their surplus food stocks. Weddings and banquet halls,

religious and philanthropic organisations, NGOs, universities, etc. too could contribute to the running of such stalls by contributing materials, men, and money.

- Animal cruelty must stop. Those engaged in meat processing and slaughtering should be mandated to devise an Standard Operating Procedure (‘SOP’) for every stage of their processes such as rearing, breeding, sheltering, vaccination, sanitization, feeding, veterinary support, slaughtering procedures and mechanism, and hygiene practices. Regular inspection after initial approval of the SOP should be carried out to make sure that actual practices comply with the proposed ones.
- Education and awareness should be created in students of schools, universities and among adults about the significance of sustainable consumerism and the harmful effects of unsustainable consumption of food. Risk of obesity, cardio-vascular diseases, cancer, respiratory diseases, etc. should be highlighted through such campaigns while projecting 7S of sustainable consumerism as the ideal solution.

Conclusion

The 7S Theory on Sustainable Consumption on Food Sector is aimed at fostering a culture of sustainability in our consumption pattern and behaviour, consistent with the aims of SDG 12 on responsible and sustainable consumption. The idea may seem like a utopia or too idealistic. But that does not make it less worthy of adoption and execution. Every idea in the beginning seems to be utopian. For instance, Ozone layer depletion was a serious threat to environment in 1980s. The ideals proposed in the Montreal Protocol of 1987 on protection of Ozone layer seemed utopian and impossible to execute at the time. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) in august 2022 announced that the levels of Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) in 2022 are back to those observed in 1980. It took us nearly 40 years to achieve that milestone but we eventually did it. Our resolve and commitment to environmental remediation prevailed over our fears, doubts, and pessimism. Today, resource consumption sustainability is one of the most pressing environmental issues. And we need the same level of resolve, enthusiasm, and sincerity, as witnessed in Montreal Protocol, to resolve it. The 7S Theory of Sustainable Consumerism in Food Sector is a small but significant step towards inculcating environmental sensitivity and sustainability in food consumption, as part of the global sustainability movement. The road of sustainable consumption is long and tough and the theory only lays down a roadmap. Ultimately, it is for consumers themselves to walk the talk.