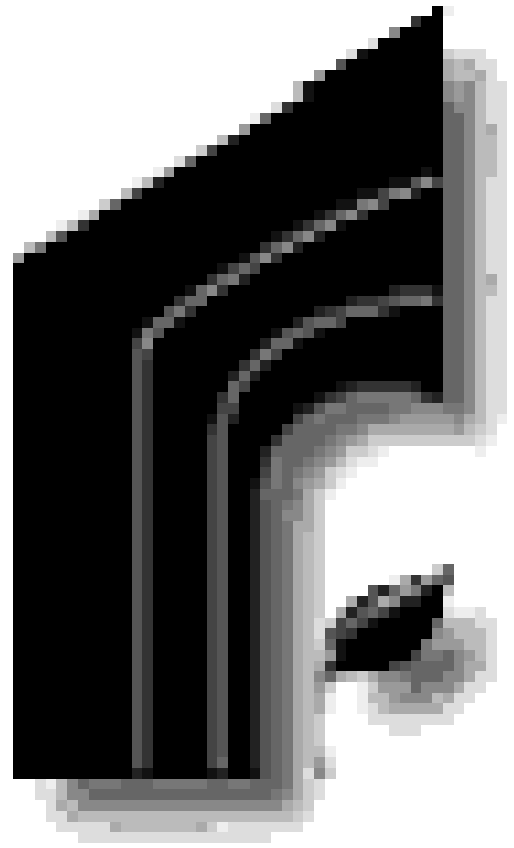


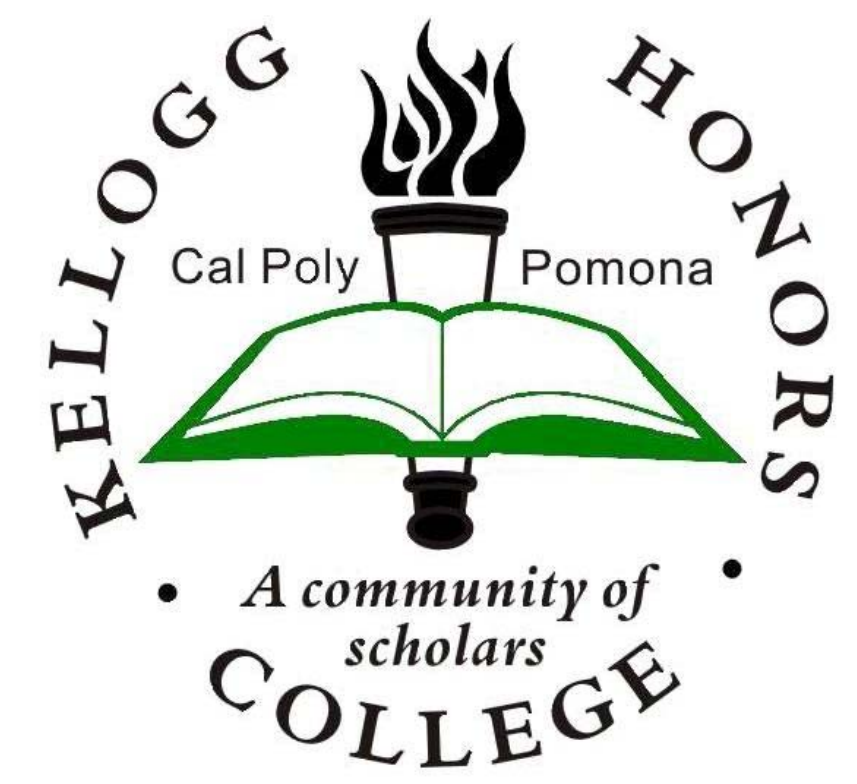
Consumer vs. Marketer: The Caffeine War Consumers Will Lose



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Abstract

The most widely used drug, is present in the majority of American households. It is likely sitting on your kitchen counter or in your cabinets. It effects your psychological state as well as your physical. Most will not admit their addiction to this drug, or will jokingly excuse it. Many forget, this is a drug. Caffeine. The primary objective of this study is to allow for marketing departments of caffeinated products, to better understand who their consumers are. This study has broken down the major demographics of consumers to gender, age, and ethnicity in order to determine which groups are attracted to these caffeinated products. The benefits of this study include opening the eyes of those high consumption caffeine consumers to how they are being pinpointed in this world cluttered with marketing tactics, as well as aiding marketing departments in deciding who to target for particular advertisements to increase their effectiveness. This enables marketing departments to better utilize their resources without over-advertising to potential consumers through ads or promotions that are ineffective. This is a war consumers will lose, because they are not fighting back. Beware caffeine consumer, they're coming for you next.

Research Questions

1. What has prior research determined as the caffeine preferences for the demographics including age, gender, and ethnicity?
2. Does this study come to the same conclusions as those already completed, or does it bring any new information about these demographics in relation to their caffeine preferences?
3. How can the marketing departments better allocate their resources to best reach their target audiences?

Literature Review

Based on all of the research I have completed, there is no solid answer as to whether caffeine consumption can be considered healthy or unhealthy. It can be said that in extremely large doses it is exceedingly unhealthy and can result in death. Through my research, it is fairly clear that many studies have found positive effects, while others have found negative. There is no contradictory data within these studies researched, so it appears that each are valid based on their individual points.

Overall:

- Coffee is preferred caffeinated beverage for older age group
- Young adults prefer soda, energy drinks, and tea
- Males drink more caffeine than females in every age group
- Genes contribute toward caffeine consumption, no studies completed on ethnic preferences
- Preferred way to ingest caffeine is liquid beverage, pills are frowned upon generally

Hypotheses

1. Those that drink caffeine once a week or less are more likely to believe that caffeine is not healthy for you, in comparison to those that consume 2 or more a day.
2. Those that drink caffeine twice a day or more, are more likely to report feeling tired and/or having headaches more often than those that consume it once a week or less.
3. Those under 30 are more likely to prefer soda or tea, rather than coffee; whereas those over 30 will prefer coffee.
4. Those over 30 will be more likely to consume higher amounts of caffeine in comparison to those under 30.
5. Those that consume caffeine twice a day or more frequently will report to buying caffeinated beverages due to a need, more so than any other reason.
6. Males over 30 will be the highest consumers of caffeinated beverages, while women under 30 will be the lowest consumers.

Instrument Design

Descriptive research was used to understand the characteristics of the respondents, the following survey questions were used.

1. How old are you?
2. What is your gender?
3. What is your ethnicity?

The following question was used to measure the respondents perception of caffeine.

1. Do you think caffeine is healthy for you?

The following questions were used to measure the respondents use and preferences of caffeine.

1. How often do you consume a beverage with caffeine in it?
2. Why do you buy caffeinated beverages?
3. What is your favorite form of caffeinated beverage?
4. What is your favorite form of caffeine?

The following question was used to measure the respondents withdrawal symptoms.

1. Do you feel tired or get headaches if you don't have caffeine?

Findings and Results

1. 48% of people that consume a caffeinated beverage once a week or less think it is NOT healthy; whereas 37% of people that consume a caffeinated beverage twice or more daily think it is healthy
2. 60% of people that consume a caffeinated beverage twice or more daily report feeling tired and/or having headaches if they don't have caffeine; whereas 91% of people that consume a caffeinated beverage once a week or less do not report these feelings
3. 56% of people UNDER 30 prefer soda or tea; 59% of people OVER 30 prefer coffee
4. 76% of people OVER 30 have one or more caffeinated beverage of caffeine a day and 71% of people UNDER 30 have less than one caffeinated beverage a day
5. 42% of people that consume a caffeinated beverage twice a day or more report buying due to want, 39% report a need for it
6. 42% of males over 30 consume two or more caffeinated beverages daily; 68% of women under 30 consume a caffeinated beverage less than once a day; Females under 30 are overall the lowest consumer

Analysis

Based on my findings and results I can come to many conclusions on who the top consumers of caffeine are, why they drink it, their preferences toward types of caffeine, and any withdrawal symptoms encountered by the consumers. The majority of the older age group prefers coffee and the majority of the younger age group prefers soda or tea. Males do drink more caffeine than females in every age group. 93% of caffeine consumers prefer to ingest caffeine as a liquid beverage. As you can see, the results of my study support every point that has been made in past research. While the results matched the data from the literature review, this is not true for all of my hypotheses. Through the analysis of the data it can be concluded that:

- High frequency consumers believe caffeine to be healthy and low frequency believe it to be unhealthy
- Majority of high frequency consumers report feeling tired and/or having a headache if they do not consume caffeine; whereas, an overwhelming amount of low frequency consumers do not report these feelings
- People over 30 are more likely to consume higher amounts of caffeine
- Majority of high consumers report to buying caffeinated beverages due to a WANT, not a need
- Males over 30 are the highest consumers of caffeinated beverages, and women under 30 are the lowest consumers

Conclusion & Recommendations

I feel confident that this research will provide caffeine company marketing departments further research and information to delve into, in order to narrow down which consumers they should be including in their target market demographics. Based on this study, I would recommend companies that sell these products to market toward females under 30, as they are the smallest consumers of caffeinated products currently. This will allow for the companies to grow their market share and revenue. This study has expanded and reinforced much of the known data on caffeine consumption; however I believe that there is still a lot of research to be completed. My major recommendation would be to delve further into the preferences and consumption habits of different ethnicities, as I don't believe I had a wide enough variety of participants to come to any major conclusions.