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Investigating How Brand Sustainability Affects Italian Generations' Coffee Preferences and Buying Habits

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Abstract

The Italian coffee market is a complex landscape shaped by consumer preferences and deep-rooted cultural traditions. Despite this strong traditional influence, the perceptions and decision-making processes of Italian coffee consumers have evolved over time, driven by various factors. This marketing research aims to investigate these changes, focusing on how evolving consumer behaviors and social trends, particularly sustainability, impact the perceptions and preferences of Italian consumers across different generations. Multiple methods, including expert interviews, perceptual mapping, and conjoint analysis, were utilized in this study. The findings highlight a growing interest in sustainability and significant differences in preferences across age groups.

Keywords:

Market Research, Perceptual Mapping, Conjoint Analysis, Consumer Behaviour, Consumer Preferences, Consumer Perception, Italian Coffee Market

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1. Introduction

The coffee market in Italy is a dynamic and evolving industry deeply influenced by consumer preferences and cultural traditions (Coffee Association of Italy, 2023). As Italians are known for their discerning taste in coffee, understanding their behavior and preferences is essential for market success (Coffee Association of Italy, 2023). Over time, the decision-making process among Italian coffee consumers has undergone significant changes, influenced by a multitude of factors. This study aims to explore these shifts and patterns that impact perceptions, with a specific focus on how evolving consumer insights and market trends, especially sustainability, shape decision-making processes.

In marketing research, key tools like perceptual mapping and conjoint analysis play critical roles. Perceptual mapping visually represents how consumers perceive different coffee products, offering insights into their preferences and attitudes. This method helps identify market opportunities and assess competitive positioning. Conjoint analysis, on the other hand, delves into consumer decision-making processes by analyzing how various attributes of coffee products affect consumers' purchasing choices.

This research journey seeks to understand the Italian coffee market, emphasizing consumer perceptions and product preferences by answering to the main question: "What are the effects of brand sustainability and ethical business practices on the perception and preferences of Italian coffee consumers across different generations?".

The study aims to uncover current trends and interpret consumer demands focusing on sustainability's impact on market dynamics through an in-depth analysis of consumer perceptions and preferences towards various coffee brands.

Our goal is to provide valuable insights that can inform strategic marketing decisions by thoroughly investigating how customers perceive and choose different coffee brands, given the raising importance of environmental and ethical practices in the coffee industry.

In the following sections, we will delve into the methodology employed, detailing how perceptual mapping and conjoint analysis are used to unravel the complexities of consumer behavior in the Italian coffee market.

Additionally, we will analyze various factors influencing consumers perceptions and preferences, such as cultural and demographics influences, quality and price expectations, and socio-economic factors like raising environmental concerns, which will be discussed further in subsequent sections.

2. Market Overview

Coffee continues to thrive as one of the most consumed beverages globally and therefore its market has a significant size. The Coffee market includes Roast Coffee in the form of ground coffee and whole beans, that is prepared with coffee machines or a French press, as well as Instant Coffee that only requires the addition of hot water (Statista, 2023).

The global coffee market generated $452.6 billion of revenues in 2023 (Statista, 2024) and is expected to witness a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of approximately 4.13% from 2023 to 2030 (Statista, 2024), considering both roast and instant coffee, distributed through B2B and B2C channels.

When examining different regions, Europe emerged as the leading market in 2023, representing about 33.8% of the global coffee market with a revenue share of $153.1 billion (Statista, 2024). The European coffee market is expected to grow further at a CAGR of 5.0% from 2023 to 2030, also pushed by the increasing demand for specialty and gourmet coffees, organic and sustainable sourcing, and the popularity of premium coffee varieties which are creating new opportunities for the players in the market (Grand View Research, 2024).

Delving into the Italian coffee market, the one of relevance for this research, it registered $16.6 billion of revenues in 2023, and projections indicate a CAGR of 3.35% over the upcoming fiveyear period. The growth will be supported by the availability of diverse, innovative, and premium product offerings, and particularly by the influence of the Italian coffee-drinking culture, which sets it apart from other European regions and holds significant relevance within the country: for example, Italians prefer to drink coffee from local independent coffee shops and bars rather than common coffee chains and internationally known cafés (Stellar Market Research, 2023). Coffee, indeed, is integral to the Italian culture; and Italy is the second

European largest importer of green coffee beans, after Germany (Stellar Market Research, 2023). As Italian espresso blends have unique flavors and characteristics, Italy is as well an important supplier of ground coffee for the other countries (Stellar Market Research, 2024). The strong Italian coffee-drinking heritage makes Italian consumers loyal to their blends and tastes, and more resistant to newness and the introduction of diverse products. In Italy, indeed, coffee is primarily consumed as a short espresso, during various moments of the day, both at home and out of home. Nevertheless, 85% of coffee consumptions in Italy occurs at home (Statista, 2024), a statistic that demonstrates the profound integration of this beverage within the country's cultural fabric.

Despite these characteristics of the market, some new trends are emerging and developing. Between these, out-of-home coffee consumption has been increasing to make Italy the leading country in the numbers of out-of-home coffee servings in Europe (Mordor Intelligence, 2024). This is accompanied by the arrival in Italy of different varieties of coffee and a renewed interest for quality products, together with the growing consumer inclinations for convenience, healthier eating, and the offer of internet connection at coffee shops (Mordor Intelligence, 2024). These are all hallmarks of branded coffee chain culture - firstly introduced to Italy by the arrival of the chain Starbucks - which is being mainly embraced by Millennials and Generation Z, the ones currently driving the coffee market growth (Stellar Market Research, 2024). A more indepth analysis of the market's current trends is provided below in the literature review.

Finally, to provide an overview of the competitive landscape, major entities such as Nestlé S.A., Kimbo S.p.A., Luigi Lavazza S.p.A., and Gruppo Illy S.p.A, among others, emerge as key players in the Italian coffee market (Mordor Intelligence, 2024). The sector is characterized by intense competition and fragmentation, determining the importance of differentiation and innovation as two key features that enable competitive advantage and the successful introduction of new offerings within the market (Mordor Intelligence, 2024).

3. Literature Review

3.1 Historical and Cultural Significance of Coffee in Italy

After a study of the rich history and culture of coffee in Italy, we were able to depict an overview of the historical and cultural significance of coffee in this country, focusing on the long tradition of espresso consumption and its role in Italian social and cultural life, which has been an interesting area of study over the years.

In the Italian culture, coffee is deeply embedded in daily routines and social interactions and occupies a unique place. There is a centuries-old practice of espresso consumption in Italy, indeed in the 16th century Venice was one of the first European ports to import coffee (Cappelletti, 2018). Cafés such as the Caffè Florian in Venice and the Caffè Greco in Rome have become famous meeting places for intellectuals and artists over time, stimulating conversation and intercultural exchange (Cappelletti, 2018; Parkhurst, 2021). These places quickly gained a reputation for offering a welcoming ambiance, stimulating discussion, and delicious cuisine, elevating the coffee experience to a more sophisticated and romantic level (Wanted in Rome, 2020). These iconic coffee houses, set a precedent for the social role a coffee house could play, welcoming people from all walks of life regardless of social class or political beliefs (Wanted in Rome, 2020).

The essence of Italian coffee culture is the ritual of sipping espresso while standing at the bar, which bounds the sense of community and shared experience (Parkhurst, 2021). Espresso is a symbol of Italian culture and the country's devotion to tradition and quality because of its strongly roasted flavor (Cappelletti, 2018).

In addition, Italian espresso culture is a way of life that signifies the passing of time and offers a reason for social meetings in addition to embodying a love for coffee (Cappelletti, 2018).

This strong sense of connection and friendliness has been cultivated by the espresso ritual, which has had a tremendous impact on shaping Italian society. Understanding the cultural evolution and historical foundations of espresso consumption in Italy can help us comprehend the true role that coffee plays in Italian society.

Traditional espresso culture has given way to the rise of specialty coffee and ethical sourcing methods in Italy's evolving coffee consumption trends. Even while espresso is still the staple of Italian coffee culture, there has been a rise in the popularity of premium, ethically sourced coffee in recent years.

This information lays the groundwork for a thorough analysis of how espresso culture affects consumer behavior and preferences in the contemporary coffee market, with a focus on the influence of coffee firms' sustainability activities on the purchasing decisions of Italian generations.

Italian coffee consumption was completely transformed by the invention of the espresso machine in the late 1800s, which made it possible to brew coffee more quickly and produced a stronger, shorter beverage (Lavazza, 2021). With its intensely roasted flavor, espresso quickly rose to prominence around the turn of the century and began to represent a new identity (Lavazza, 2021). Indeed, in Italy, espresso is still the most popular type of coffee to drink; on average, bars sell 230.3 cups of coffee a day, with 59.8% of those being espressos (Coffee Research, 2021). Nonetheless, as anticipated, ethical sourcing methods and specialty coffee have become more popular in Italy in recent years. Although specialty coffee is currently a relatively small industry, it offers exporters of quality coffee with a unique flavor an interesting opportunity. Furthermore, customers are shifting away from the traditional dark roasts that have long been the standard in Italy and toward lighter roasts that preserve acidity and maximum flavor (Stellar Market Research, 2023).

In addition, the availability of a wide range of coffee types, flavors, and preparation methods, as well as the growing number of grocery shops and retail outlets, are driving the growth of the coffee market in Italy (Stellar Market Research, 2023). Industry leaders recognize the growing consumer trends towards convenience, healthier eating, and the expectation of internet availability in coffee shops, all of which are hallmarks of the culture of branded coffee chains (Stellar Market Research, 2023).

The dynamic conflict between tradition and innovation is reflected in the evolution of coffee consumption habits, as Italy navigates the shifting global coffee culture while conserving the core elements of its rich culinary legacy. Determining how espresso and specialty coffee shape Italian consumer behavior and preferences requires an understanding of these shifts, especially in light of our theory regarding the impact of brand sustainability on coffee preferences. Investigating the cultural, sociological, and psychological elements affecting the coffee preferences of various generations in Italy requires taking into account the major research and literature on the subject. The Center for the Promotion of Imports (CBI) conducted a significant study that emphasizes the strong espresso-based coffee culture of Italy. The study highlights the importance of freshly roasted coffee beans and traditional espresso machines in coffee preparation, as well as the preference of Italians for strong espresso-based coffees and the central role of coffee bars in coffee culture (CBI, 2024). The purpose of this study is to highlight the importance Italians place on their morning rituals and the social aspects of coffee drinking, which are crucial in influencing generational preferences.

Further, Lavazza's historical and cultural insights into Italian coffee offer insightful information about the development of espresso consumption in Italy, the significance of espresso as an emblem of Italian identity, and the affinity that Italians have for the robust flavors of roasted coffee (Lavazza, 2021). Gaining insight into the cultural significance and historical background of espresso drinking can help explain how these customs affect the coffee tastes of various Italian age groups. The analysis by Stellar Market Research, which examines the evolving trends in the coffee market, also highlights the rise of specialty coffee and the influence of customer preferences on the sector (Stellar Market Research, 2023).

The research sheds light on how evolving consumer tastes, including a shift towards lighter roasts and diverse brewing styles, are influencing coffee choices among different generations in Italy.

Seeing how tradition, innovation, and shifting consumer trends interact might help us better grasp the complex dynamics of Italian coffee culture and how it affects consumer behavior.

3.2 Consumer Behavior and Brand Preference in Coffee Market

We turned to existing research on this topic to highlight key studies or publications that examine the cultural, sociological, and psychological elements that influence preferences for coffee among different generations in Italy. According to FUPRESS (2016), the study "Consumers' preferences for ethical attributes of coffee: a choice experiment in the Italian market" analyses what Italian customers expect from their coffee, with a focus on ethical content such as fair trade and organic labels. The study analyses the willingness of Italian consumers to pay a premium for ethical coffee attributes and attempts to understand their attitudes towards these attributes. The study sheds light on the importance of sustainability in the coffee industry by analyzing Italian consumers' opinions on fair trade and organic coffee through a choice experiment. Many factors influence the performance of fair trade and/or organic coffee; one important factor analyzed in the study is the willingness of consumers to pay a premium for ethical qualities. The results indicate a growing demand for sustainably and ethically produced coffee and suggest that Italian consumers are willing to pay a premium for fair trade or organic coffee. This study then provides detailed information on the preferences and purchasing behavior of Italian coffee consumers, particularly in relation to ethical certifications and labelling. The results emphasize the importance of sustainability in the coffee sector and the opportunity for companies to differentiate themselves through sustainable and ethical business practices (FUPRESS, 2016).

In a study published in 2018, Samoggia and Riedel conducted a systematic review of the research literature on coffee consumers. They identified the key factors influencing coffee consumption and classified them into five categories: socio-demographic, personal preferences, economic attributes, product characteristics and consumption context. This overview provides a useful framework for understanding the many variables that influence Italian consumers' coffee preferences.

This summary offers a helpful foundation for comprehending the numerous factors influencing the coffee tastes of Italian consumers.

Samoggia and Riedel's study, "Consumers' Perceptions of Coffee Health Benefits and Motives for Coffee Consumption and Purchasing," was published in the journal Nutrients in 2019. This study looks at why consumers buy and consume coffee as well as their opinions on its health advantages. In addition, the study highlights how crucial it is to comprehend the functional requirements, feelings, and perspectives of both coffee consumers and non-consumers in order to shed light on the many variables that affect coffee consumption habits (Samoggia & Riedel, 2019).

"Do connoisseurs care about sustainability?" . Emerald (2021)'s "Exploring Coffee Consumption Practices through Netnography" explores how ethical coffee drinkers incorporate sustainability into their daily routines.

The research used a qualitative ethnographic approach to investigate the narratives of specialty coffee bloggers, who embody a specific segment of the connoisseur community on social media. Connoisseur clients apply and understand sustainability differently from the values, conventions, and symbolic meanings of the general market, according to the study, which is based on an interpretive cultural analysis.

Bartoloni, Ietto, and Pascucci (2022) contribute to the body of knowledge on sustainable coffee consumption behavior by offering insights into alternate patterns and variables of connoisseur customers' sustainable consumption. Studies reveal that consumers with a certain consuming style, known as connoisseurs, place a high importance on the ethical, ethical, and origin of products. As a result, they are especially aware of sustainability and environmental challenges. This study clarifies how aficionados view consuming as a kind of hedonism and symbolism that molds their social standing and sense of self. The results emphasize how crucial it is to comprehend how sustainability and the consumption patterns of specialty coffee consumers are linked (Bartoloni, Ietto, & Pascucci, 2022).

An in-depth examination of the sustainability of coffee production in the UK is provided by Gosalvitr et al. in their study "An environmental and economic sustainability assessment of coffee production in the UK" (2023), which focuses on both environmental and economic factors. In this study, process design, simulation, life cycle analysis (LCA) and life cycle costing (LCC) are used to assess the sustainability of ground and instant coffee production at different roast levels. Because of things like energy utilization and the use of green coffee beans, the study demonstrates that instant coffee is more expensive and has a greater environmental impact than ground coffee. The study's findings also offer the coffee industry, decision-makers in government, and consumers insightful information about sustainable coffee production methods (Gosalvitr et al., 2023).

3.3 Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) in Branding

In the context of brand strategy, the relationship between corporate social responsibility (CSR) and brand sustainability is currently being highlighted in the literature. Corporate efforts to lessen their impact on the environment, encourage social responsibility, and ensure their longterm financial viability are referred to as brand sustainability (Gosalvitr et al., 2023). Conversely, corporate social responsibility (CSR) describes businesses' voluntary attempts to address social and environmental challenges outside of the bounds of the law (Bartoloni, Ietto, and Pascucci, 2022). These concepts are closely related: companies often integrate CSR into their brand strategies and support sustainability.

In the coffee business, brand sustainability has grown in significance as consumer concerns over environmental degradation, social injustice, and poverty have increased (International Trade Center, 2011). Businesses that want to get a competitive edge and boost customer loyalty use corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Harrigan, 2017).

Still up for debate, though, is whether or not certain CSR initiatives, like Fair-Trade accreditation, truly benefit coffee growers or substantially advance sustainable practices (Harrigan, 2017). Because of this, businesses search for different ways to show their dedication to sustainability, like direct business collaborations and open supply chain procedures (Harrigan, 2017).

Connoisseurs, a growing segment of the coffee market, understand sustainability differently than average customers, who place a higher importance on provenance, quality, and ethical characteristics. Businesses who want to reach this demographic might need to modify their brand tactics.

The literature emphasizes how crucial sustainability measures are in influencing consumer attitudes and brand impression, such as ethical sourcing and community involvement (Gosalvitr et al., 2023).

In addition to highlighting the significance of CSR, sustainability, and equity in the global coffee market, Harrigan's (2017) article explores the evolution of CSR programs and their effects on consumer preferences, including Fairtrade and the Rainforest Alliance. In order to increase producer welfare and coffee quality, new approaches of producer involvement and assistance are highlighted, with a particular emphasis on working directly with producer groups.

The 2020 study by Bager and Lambin examines adoption rates and influencing factors in the context of sustainability efforts in the coffee industry. It draws attention to how organizational traits and stakeholder involvement affect how committed a company is to sustainability. The study also examines different approaches to sustainability, including direct trade and internal standards, to address sustainability challenges within coffee value chains.

CSR reporting proves to be an important tool for communicating with stakeholders and facilitates transparency regarding community impact, labor relations, and supply chain (D'Acunto et al., 2020). Finally, it has been shown that effective CSR reporting bridges communication gaps and strengthens the company's reputation (Wang et al., 2013).

3.4 Generational Differences in Consumer Attitudes and Behaviors

In contemporary consumer research, understanding generational differences in attitudes and behaviors towards consumption has emerged as a crucial area of investigation.

The disagreement between Generation Y consumers' positive attitudes and their actual consumption behaviors toward sustainability is examined in the paper "Do as I say, not as I do: a systematic literature review on the attitude-behavior gap toward sustainable consumption of

Generation Y" by Bernardes (Bernardes, J. P., Ferreira, F., Marques, A. D., & Nogueira, M. 2018). The study employs a systematic literature review to clarify the theoretical framework underlying this attitude-behavior gap. The writers find that although Gen Y consumers generally have a favorable attitude toward sustainability, there is a glaring discrepancy between their views and behaviors when it comes to sustainable consumption habits. Customers' ignorance of how their shopping choices affect social and environmental issues could be one reason for this discrepancy.

The need of teaching consumers about sustainable consumption and how their actions might affect the quest of sustainability is emphasized in the essay. The researchers argue that customers need to be aware of the implications of their purchase decisions and that positive attitudes are necessary for positive behaviors.

This research leads to the importance of Gołąb-Andrzejak's (2016) work, "The disparities across Generations in Consumer Behaviour in Service Sales," which examines how customer behavior varies between generations with a particular emphasis on the service sales channel. Gołąb-Andrzejak highlights how Generation Y's purchasing behavior, which is largely motivated by lower perceived pricing, is significantly impacted by the sales channels that are in use today. The study highlights how the younger generation of consumers' purchase decisions is increasingly influenced by empirical and experimental elements, which presents new challenges for service providers. In addition, the study emphasizes the importance of understanding generational differences in consumer behavior, particularly in service distribution channels, as well as the differentiation of customer segments in terms of attachment to products, services, innovation, and education during the purchasing process and the use of new devices.

A new and different view is exposed in the study "Behaviours and values of Generation Z during and after the pandemic" (Harari Tali Te'eni, Sela Yaron, and Bareket-Bojmel Liad. 2023) that seeks to examine the literature on Generation Z's goals, behaviors, and values in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. This study investigates the behaviour and beliefs of Generation Z consumers during and after the pandemic, shedding insight on how the global health crisis shaped this generation's attitudes and actions. The study's findings indicate that generational variations have a substantial impact on coffee preferences and purchasing behavior, particularly when characteristics like social consciousness, environmental awareness, and digital participation are considered.

The study by Harari Tali Te'eni, Sela Yaron, and Bareket-Bojmel Liad provides a systematic review of the literature on Generation Z consumers' behaviors and values related to the COVID19 pandemic. They find that Generation Z values convenience, affordability, customization, and experience when purchasing coffee and other beverages. In contrast, Falkner's exploratory study focuses specifically on generational differences in preferences towards coffee and coffeestyle beverages.

According to Falkner's research, there are clear demographic disparities between Millennials (born 1981–1996) and Generation Z (born 1997–2012) when it comes to their preferences for coffee-like beverages. Specialty drinks including flavored macchiatos, iced coffee, and nitro coffee (cold brew) were more popular among millennials. Additionally, they favor espresso machines both at home and at coffee shops.

All Set to Drink Another area where Millennials differ from previous generations is in the coffee industry, which includes canned and bottled beverages. This decision may have been made because these goods' portability and simplicity fit in well with the fast-paced lifestyle that many Millennials lead.

According to Falkner's research, coffee shops and companies should customize their products to meet the unique needs of Millennials and Generation Z.

Understanding age disparities in coffee consumption allows organizations to create specialized marketing strategies and product ranges to attract and retain these customers.

Additional insight into the characteristics of Generation Z and Generation Y (Millennials) is provided by Tunsakul's (2020) research. These younger generations have different expectations and tastes when it comes to coffee, according to the research. Tunsakul (2020) asserts that when making purchases, Millennials and Generation Z want to feel secure. They have a strong desire to escape reality and seek out unique and exciting experiences. They also have high standards for the goods and services they use, placing a high value on the entire encounter. Additionally, the study discovered that when it comes to buying coffee and other beverages, Millennials and Generation Z are more likely to be swayed by recommendations from peers and social media, which can have an impact on coffee brand popularity and success.

The findings of Tunsakul corroborate earlier research by Falkner (2020), which discovered that younger generations—millennials and Generation Z—prefer ready-to-drink coffee, espresso machines, and specialty drinks over older generations. These tastes are influenced by social media's influence on consumers' purchasing decisions in addition to their demand for unique experiences. In contrast, Tunsakul's research focused on how coffee drink tastes vary between generations, emphasizing contemporary trends like premiumization, convenience, and sustainability.

Important conclusions from the Coffee Across Generations (2020) survey by the National Coffee Association also provide insight into the views and practices of different age groups with regard to coffee drinking. The poll indicates that while people who drink coffee tend to be older, people who drink gourmet beverages tend to be younger. Compared to other generations, millennials exhibit a greater preference for ready-to-drink coffee, espresso machines, and specialty coffee. Additionally, the survey shows that younger groups prefer espresso machines and ready-to-drink coffee, while older groups are more inclined to utilize drip coffee makers. Younger consumers are more inclined to buy single-serve coffee makers, despite older groups being more aware of them. The study also examined the patterns, frequency, and attitudes of different generations about coffee consumption, considering variables like the time of day, the type of coffee, consumption indoors and outdoors, preferences for coffee additives, and so forth. These results demonstrate how important it is to understand how different age groups have different tastes in coffee and how to effectively tailor marketing efforts to meet those differences.

4. Methodology

To gain a deeper understanding of consumers' perceptions and preferences in the Italian coffee market, we conducted this research using a combined qualitative and quantitative approach.

Regarding the qualitative part, we conducted preliminary interviews with experts and professionals from the coffee market to deeply understand the dynamics of this market and its consumers' perception about different features of coffee products and brands. Receiving insights from people who have first-hand experience in the market and its consumers allowed us to catch the currently relevant topics and trends in the market, and understand which factors hold the highest value for consumers when buying and drinking coffee.

Concerning the quantitative part, instead, we conducted two different surveys. The first one explored consumers' preference for existing coffee brands and their perception on different coffee attributes. The data gathered with this survey was used to create a perceptual map that illustrates how the different brands position in the market based on consumers' perceptions. The second survey delved deeper into consumer needs and considerations when confronted with different combinations of coffee attributes and levels. This survey was specifically designed to develop a conjoint analysis, an analytical tool that allowed us to gain insight into the relative importance of each attribute for consumers when buying coffee and discover product preferences.

Both surveys were designed to put attention on the topic of sustainability, to discover how brands' commitments towards more sustainable practices are perceived by consumers when buying coffee, and if it affects their choices in any way.

By combining the two methodologies – perceptual mapping and conjoint analysis – this research provides a comprehensive understanding of both consumer preferences and brand positioning in the Italian coffee market, with an emphasis on sustainability and its impact on consumer choices.

4.1 Preliminary Interviews

For the purpose of this research, three exploratory interviews were conducted with industry experts working in two of the major brands competing in the Italian coffee industry, Lavazza and Nespresso. The mentioned interviews were crucial in validating consumer insights, providing direction for further actions such as the decision of which brand dimensions and product attributes should be considered in our surveys and analyses, and finally guaranteeing that our study was congruent with the realities of the Italian market. The three interviews took place via Microsoft Teams or by phone call and ranged anywhere from 30 to 45 minutes.

The script was divided in the following order:

- The initial phase involved providing a concise overview of the study topic, followed by introducing the expert and delineating their specific area of expertise. This step aimed to set the context for the interview and ensure a focused discussion which could produce valuable insights for our research scope.
- The second part aimed at the definition of the most significant product attributes to understand the experts' knowledge of the characteristics valued by consumers when purchasing coffee, trying to discover the role that sustainability plays in terms of attributes. This was fundamental to confirm the attributes that should be included to create our conjoint analysis.

- Next, our focus shifted to consumer perceptions, as we solicited ideas and insights from professionals regarding what aspects people prioritize and value when evaluating different coffee brands. This was critical to understand how consumers perceptions are created and which dimensions contribute to their creation, and therefore should be included in the survey structure for our perceptual map.
- The final phase of the interviews centered on gathering perspectives on future market trends, analyzing market development, identifying challenges, and envisioning future forecasts as perceived by the specialists.

The first interviewee was Corinna Bullo, an employee of the Lavazza Group, who initially worked in food service sales, and later transitioned to overseeing marketing efforts in international markets, covering the position “International Markets Marketing Analyst”. Her job focuses on Greece, Italy, and the Czech Republic for the Lavazza brand. Corinna provided us with a comprehensive overview of the topic, offering valuable insights into consumer preferences and emerging trends in the market. Her expertise helped illuminate the intricacies of consumer behavior and anticipate future developments in the industry.

Firstly, she highlighted that Lavazza, a renowned brand with a rich history and global presence, is celebrated for its ability to cater to a diverse range of consumers, thanks to its extensive market reach and product lineup spanning from premium to entry-level offerings. According to the industry expert, several significant factors emerge when considering the preferences of Italian consumers in the realm of coffee. The emerging generation, particularly Gen Z, exhibits a strong inclination towards sustainability, seeking out brands that provide eco-friendly options such as aluminum capsules and recyclable packaging. Conversely, the average consumer prioritizes quality and brand recognition, as exemplified by their preference for established brands like Lavazza.

Corinna highlights the growing significance of sustainability in the coffee industry, citing examples like Illy and Nespresso, which have embraced B Corp status. Numerous Italian firms are also transitioning to eco-friendly practices, including organic cultivation methods and sustainable farming practices, along with innovative packaging solutions to minimize environmental impact, like fully recyclable materials. She states that Lavazza is actively investing in research and development to incorporate sustainable practices throughout its supply chain, spanning from sourcing beans to distribution. This reflects the company's dedication to a more sustainable future, which resonates with the growing preference among consumers for responsible and sustainable consumption habits.

Looking ahead, she believes that consumer preferences in the coffee industry are expected to further evolve towards a greater emphasis on sustainability and corporate ethics. Companies will need to adapt to these trends by offering more environmentally friendly products and practices to meet the demands of an increasingly environmentally conscious consumer base. However, the coffee sector in Italy faces several challenges, including fluctuations in raw material prices and the need to find sustainable solutions that can cater to the needs of an increasingly sustainability-oriented customer base. Addressing these challenges will require ongoing efforts by companies to improve their internal practices and ensure more sustainable development in the coffee sector.

The second interviewee, Margarida Guerreiro Santos, is a Trade Marketing Trainee at Nestlé Nespresso SA, responsible for supporting the team in promotional and marketing activities for Nespresso products. With its extensive distribution in over 80 countries, Nespresso has established itself as a leading coffee brand due to its strong global presence. Apart from its focus on coffee quality, the company is renowned for its commitment to environmental and social sustainability. Nespresso achieved B Corp certification in 2019, showcasing its dedication to ethical business practices and social responsibility.

In response to the question about the most significant attributes consumers consider when buying coffee, Margarida stressed the importance of quality. She highlighted Nespresso's efforts to offer a diverse range of blends, capsules, and flavors that cater to various consumer preferences and enhance the brand's uniqueness. Margarida also noted a growing interest in sustainability among consumers, driven by increased awareness of climate change and a desire for greener options.

Discussing the role of sustainability in the coffee industry, Margarida emphasized Nespresso's proactive approach. She explained that sustainability is a core focus for Nespresso, demonstrated through its B Corp certification and various global and local initiatives. Margarida highlighted Nespresso's capsule recycling program, which supports charitable causes, as well as its use of recycled aluminum in capsule production and energy-efficient machine design. She emphasized that sustainability is becoming increasingly crucial for coffee brands to address consumer demands, citing Nespresso's initiatives in tree planting, and supporting farmers' livelihoods.

Looking ahead, Margarida shared her predictions on consumer preferences in the coffee industry, identifying sustainability and affordability as key factors. She pointed out that consumers prefer brands that embrace sustainable practices and support local farmers, driven by concerns about climate change and environmental conservation. In parallel, the demand for affordable options reflects the need to balance quality and price, as consumers seek personalized consumption experiences without overspending. However, Margarida acknowledged the challenges, such as meeting consumer expectations for quality while ensuring sustainability and environmental responsibility. She emphasized the importance of remaining sensitive to consumer needs and preferences while addressing these challenges, maintaining a balance between quality, sustainability, and affordability to meet evolving consumer demands in the coffee market.

The third interviewee, Alba Francesca Nardone, is a Nespresso Boutique Vice Manager in Verona, Italy. As such, she oversees various aspects of the boutique's operations, from sales tracking to customer service and staff training, managing a team of 8 salespersons. With her responses, she provided valuable insights into customer demands and behaviours, both within and beyond the boutique setting, given her daily contact with customers and her advanced knowledge of the industry.

When providing an overview of the coffee sector in Italy, she started by listing Nespresso’s key competitors: namely Lavazza, Illy, and Caffè Borbone, due to their production of Nespressocompatible coffee capsules and their renowned reputation in Italy. She also stated that the Italian coffee market is characterized by regional disparities in commercial demands and market movements: Lombardy exhibits distinction in terms of high volumes compared to the other regions; and in general, the market in the North moves faster than in the South of the country, in terms of new trends, dynamics, and sales volumes.

Delving deeper into the trends and intricacies of the coffee sector, the role of sustainability was soon highlighted by our interviewee as a matter of growing importance for coffee companies and their consumers. Alba explained how sustainability initiatives are integral to Nespresso's ethos, encompassing product ethics, the AAA Program (which emphasizes sustainability from sourcing to production), and long-term community engagement. Collaborating with local communities, Nespresso fosters quality improvements in both product and livelihoods, with extensive employee involvement. She positively shared how the company’s employees feel more committed to such matters and rewarded with their work, knowing they are working for a company that does good for people and for the planet. Looking at the consumers’ spectrum, instead, Alba underlined again how consumer attitudes towards sustainability vary between northern and southern regions in Italy, and between different generations. Nespresso's efforts, including capsule recycling, which is the most known Nespresso program, are well-received particularly by younger demographics; generations older than the Millennials, instead, show less sensitivity and interest to the theme. Nonetheless, although Alba shared that Nespresso customers' average age is quite high, she stated that one of the first questions asked by both acquired and potential customers at the store is how the capsules recycling program works. This shows that there is a certain sensitivity towards the initiative, also pushed by the communication and advertising made by the brand. Alba claimed that it is important to provide storytelling to the client, explaining the promoted initiatives in detail, to make sure that the client understands the value of their actions and gets involved.

Them, pointing out the fact that Nespresso gained the B Corp certification, the interviewee explained that this factor is recognized and valued only by those familiar with the certification, reflecting positively on the brand's reputation and practices; whereas the certification is not a topic of primary importance for customers that are less acquainted with it.

Regarding the most important dimensions that influence consumers' perception on coffee brands, the first one that Alba mentioned is brand reputation and recognition: with Nespresso being seen as a recognizable and prestigious brand, customers often seek the brand's visibility, even in urban centers and shopping malls, reflecting a desire for association and recognition. She claimed that customers usually like to be seen walking around with the Nespresso bag after buying at the store. Therefore, brand reputation is a dimension that influences consumers perceptions and determines purchasing decisions at the same time.

Another important factor mentioned by Alba is the price perception: while Nespresso does not represent affordability - reflecting a high price point - consumers justify Nespresso's premium through its perceived quality and long-standing market presence, which they interpret as a symbol of reliability. Therefore, what is important for the brand is to sell a story, an experience that can make the consumers understand the unique characteristics of the product: quality is portrayed through narratives, enhancing product appeal and perceived value.

Finally, according to Alba, another factor that is clearly affecting consumers' perception and will also continue to shape the industry in the next years are the marketing efforts brought forward by the different brands, with a specific attention to celebrity endorsements. Indeed, she asserted that these are a powerful tool to drive consumers towards a brand, contributing to its reputation and determining the final brand choice. She provided a few successful examples of the competitors: Illy featuring the Italian actress and singer Matilda De Angelis, and Lavazza's campaign in collaboration with the famous Italian TV-series "Mare Fuori".

Alba additionally argued about the power of social media, especially Tik Tok: in 2023, Nespresso launched a different product, a travel mug made with recycled steel, which went viral on the platform. The result, in a very fast time, was that all the consumers going to the store would look for and ask for the product, and sales plummeted.

In conclusion, the future of the coffee market depicted by the interviewee will be defined by a reaffirmed commitment to sustainability and uncompromising quality on the side of the brands. According to Alba, in order to drive long-term success and stay competitive, the players in the market will have to develop the right strategies to exploit social media, together with innovative marketing initiatives that are relevant for the consumers and are able to catch their needs and satisfy their interests.

4.2 Choice of Brands

To ensure a comprehensive representation of the Italian coffee market and consumers choices within it, encompassing various consumer segments, we identified six prominent coffee brands for our analysis. The selection includes both well-known established brands in the Italian market and relatively marginal players, aiming at representing different options to capture the multifaceted preferences of Italian coffee consumers. Both brands that are particularly involved in sustainable practices and brands that are less proactive on the subject were included. The selected brands for this study are Lavazza, Illy, Nespresso, Caffè Borbone, Segafredo Zanetti, and Kimbo. Below, we provide an explanation of the factors and reasons that led us to choose the mentioned brands.

Notable brands such as Lavazza, Illy, and Nespresso were chosen for their widespread recognition in the country, being also the largest players in the Italian coffee market (Mondor Intelligence, 2024). Indeed, as can be seen in the Statista report about Ho.Re.Ca coffee companies in Italy in 2022 (Statista, 2023), Lavazza leads the market with a market share of 42%, followed by Nestlè Italiana with 20% (which was not selected for our study since it possesses numerous coffee brands as a group), Illy Caffè with 11%, and Nespresso Italiana with 7%.

Lavazza is one of the oldest Italian coffee brands, its foundation dating back to 1895, and now competing globally. Its long history and recognition in the market make it one of the most appreciated brands in Italy. The brand increased its appeal by offering different kinds of coffee products, including its signature espresso blends, ground coffee, capsules, and coffee machines (Lavazza, 2024). Lavazza represented 41% of the Italian coffee market in 2022, and still holds the leading position in 2024 (Statista Market Insights, 2024). Furthermore, Lavazza is actively promoting important sustainable projects to take part in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (Lavazza, 2024).

Illy Caffè is an Italian family business founded in 1933. The brand is largely recognized in Italy for its premium-quality espresso, sold in different forms (blends, capsules, grains) together with Illy coffee machines. Illy is best known for its commitment to the highest standards of quality and sustainability, certified by the achievement of the B Corp certification. It was the first Italian coffee brand to achieve such certification (Illy, 2024). The inclusion of this brand in the analysis wants to represent the high-end segment of the market, as Illy largely enjoys recognition for its long-standing reputation of commitment to quality and tradition which justify the higher price point of the brand.

Nespresso was founded in 1986 with the aim of making anyone capable of creating the perfect cup of espresso at home: a true "Nespresso system" was born with innovative coffee machines and specific coffee capsules never seen before. Nespresso is the youngest brand among those selected and the most innovative one. It is also the only one which was not born in Italy: Nespresso was founded in Switzerland, even though the founder drew inspiration directly from Italy and its coffee-drinking culture (Nestlé Italia, 2024). The brand is specialized in the production of its machines and capsules. It offers an extremely wide range of blends and flavours which are all sold in the form of Nespresso portioned capsules only. Nespresso was selected for being a major player in the market, but more importantly, due to its specialization, it was chosen to gain insights into the impact of convenience-driven consumption patterns – represented by the capsules and small, space-saving coffee machines – among Italian consumers. Additionally, the inclusion of a more innovative, younger, and foreign brand can be valuable to compare brand perceptions in such a traditional market where a brand like Nespresso stands out and differentiates from the established Italian competitors. Lastly, Nespresso has been proactive in promoting sustainability initiatives and has achieved B Corp certification; its analysis can be helpful to understand the effectiveness of such initiatives on consumers' perceptions and preferences.

As mentioned, the first two brands benefit from widespread recognition and are also widely accessible – being present in almost any point of sale that sells coffee products in Italy – therefore their comparison can be insightful to understand consumers' preferences towards similarly positioned brands. Nespresso also enjoys the same benefits, but its specific characteristics make it worth it to compare it with the Italian brands to see if those characteristics are more or less important for Italian consumers and catch the nuances of this market. The comparison is also useful to understand how the brands' different efforts in sustainability are perceived by consumers, if they make the brands stand out, and if this has any effect on shaping consumers' purchasing preferences.

The brands ***Caffè Borbone***, ***Segafredo Zanetti***, and ***Kimbo*** were included in the selection as players that mostly cater to the local market, differ in distribution, and represent different regional preferences for coffee flavours.

Caffè Borbone is another Italian brand which was founded in 1997 and is mostly known for its commitment to the traditional Neapolitan coffee. They offer a variety of coffee blends focusing on espresso coffee. Differently from Illy Caffè and Lavazza, Caffè Borbone does not produce coffee machines, therefore its offer includes coffee capsules that are compatible with other brands' machines (Lavazza and Nespresso, for example). For this reason, Borbone is considered as a major competitor for them – as also stated previously in our interview by Ambra Nardone, Nespresso employee. Caffè Borbone also commits to sustainability and is notably excelling in the development of entirely recyclable packaging solutions (Caffè Borbone, 2024). This brand was selected for the analysis as it symbolizes the tradition of Neapolitan coffee, therefore its inclusion provides insights about regional preferences in Italy. Moreover, being a younger brand with a narrower offer compared to the previous selected brands, its positioning and presence in the market differ and the research can reveal how this difference influences the brand's perception.

Segafredo Zanetti is a leading Italian coffee company founded in 1973 and now competing internationally. It offers a wide variety of products ranging from espresso blends to coffee machines. Unlike the other selected brands, Segafredo's presence is majorly strong in the outof-home consumption market and large-scale distribution (Segafredo, 2024). Regarding sustainability, there is less information about the company's actions compared to the other brands; however, Segafredo proudly utilizes 100% recyclable packaging (Segafredo, 2024). This brand was selected in the analysis as it is positioned differently from the others, especially for the difference in the distribution-focus and communication style. This can be relevant to represent different consumer segments and consumption patterns in the analysis.

Finally, ***Kimbo*** also has the mission of spreading the tradition of quality Neapolitan coffee to the world. It was founded in 1963 as a family business and by 1994, it secured the second position in the retail sector of the Italian packaged coffee market, a position it still maintains today. The success is due to its rigorous commitment, tradition, and qualitative excellence, as well as its investments in communication and infrastructure (Kimbo, 2024). Kimbo was included in the analysis as a smaller player to encompass an examination of regional variations in consumer preferences and the role of cultural factors in shaping consumption behaviours.

Additionally, studying Kimbo's sustainability efforts offers perspectives into how smaller players in the market approach environmental responsibility, if this has an effect on their consumers and how these changes when compared to bigger competitors.

4.3 Perceptual Map

Perceptual maps are instrumental tools for gaining insights into consumer perceptions about brands. They provide a visual representation of brands' positions, allowing marketers to identify gaps and potential areas for innovation within the market. By using these maps, marketers can develop strategies to differentiate their brands and capitalize on competitive advantages. Moreover, perceptual maps can reveal potential partnership opportunities by highlighting brands that share similar target markets or consumer perceptions.

In the academic realm, research on coffee consumer behavior, including the use of perceptual mapping, yields valuable insights into consumer preferences and market dynamics. Researchers analyze key attributes influencing purchasing decisions and conduct surveys to gather data on consumer perceptions of different coffee brands. This data is then statistically analyzed to create perceptual maps, which illustrate the comparative positioning of brands based on consumer perceptions.

The process of developing a perceptual map involves defining important attributes that influence coffee brands' perception, gathering insights from industry experts, and surveying a diverse sample of consumers to understand their perceptions. Statistical analysis is then applied to the survey data to identify underlying factors shaping consumer perceptions. Finally, a perceptual map is constructed to visually represent brand positioning within the coffee market, providing a tangible depiction of consumer preferences and market dynamics.

4.3.1 Survey Structure and Design

To create the perceptual map, it was imperative to gather a substantial amount of well-structured data. To accomplish this, we utilized a web-based application called Qualtrics. This platform enables the development of surveys using various distribution channels and provides analysis capabilities without requiring advanced programming skills.

The first series of inquiries in the survey encompassed general aspects concerning coffee consumption habits, the so-called “Screening Questions”. The aim was to ascertain whether participants regularly consume coffee, under what circumstances they typically do so, the frequency of consumption, and details regarding their preferred coffee types. Specifically, the survey concluded upon receipt of responses to the final question labelled as “Which of the following coffee brands are you familiar with?”. To answer this question, respondents had to select one or more options among the six proposed brands: Illy, Borbone, Lavazza, Segafredo, Kimbo, and Nespresso.

The subsequent series of inquiries prompted participants to assess various dimensions associated with the six analyzed brands using a rating scale ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 denoted "Strongly Negative" and 5 signified "Strongly Positive". Seven distinct aspects were evaluated, including Brand, Price, Certification, Coffee Type, Intensity, and Packaging. Participants were then instructed to prioritize these attributes based on their significance in coffee purchasing decisions, using a scale from 1 to 6, with 1 indicating the most crucial factor and 6 representing the least significant.

Furthermore, to assess brand loyalty towards coffee brands, participants were asked to identify the brand they most frequently utilize, to express their willingness to experiment with new coffee brands versus their preference to remain loyal to familiar ones, and to state the main motivations behind their coffee purchase.

An additional query then aimed to assess participants' propensity to purchase eco-friendly products, shedding light on the impact of sustainability on coffee purchasing behavior and perceptions.

Lastly, the survey concluded with four demographic questions seeking information on the participant's country of origin, gender, age, and profession. The detailed survey structure can be consulted in Table 1, Appendix 1.

4.3.2 Choice of Attributes

At this stage, to establish a foundation for our work, we referred to the previously presented preliminary interviews with industry experts, and to the rich literature, to determine which attributes to include in our analysis. This method provided us with the opportunity to delve deeper into the topic and acquire valuable, detailed insights. The interviews, together with a study of the literature, aided in defining the primary dimensions that shape Italian coffee consumers' perceptions, enabling us to pinpoint six crucial factors in consumers' decisionmaking process: *Sustainability practices and Fair Trade, Price, Intensity, Packaging* (recyclable, not recyclable, biodegradable), *Brand reputation,* and *Offer range.*

4.3.3 Data Collection

The online survey commenced on March 23rd, 2024, and officially ended on March 29th, spanning one week. To ensure a robust response rate, a comprehensive distribution strategy was implemented, disseminating the survey extensively across personal social media channels, family connections, professional networks, university contacts, and personal relationships. Diligent efforts were made to engage individuals from diverse backgrounds, resulting in 150 responses collected. This sample size is deemed adequate for our research for capturing meaningful insights into the attitudes and preferences of Italian consumers regarding coffee.

5. Perceptual Map Analysis: Results

5.1 Sample Characteristics

As shown in the chart (Figure 1, Appendix 2a), the survey attracted a strong response from males, constituting approximately 56% of the participants, while females accounted for 44% of the total responses. Regarding age distribution (Figure 2, Appendix 2a), the survey was most popular among the younger demographic. Respondents aged 18 to 30 formed the largest portion, accounting for approximately 90% of the total. Those aged 31 to 50 comprised around 5% of respondents, indicating a lesser but still notable participation from this group. Participants over the age of 50 accounted for roughly 4%, while the under-18 category was the smallest, with only 1% of respondents falling into this age group. The survey's geographic distribution (Figure 3, Appendix 2a), overwhelmingly comprised respondents from Italy, totaling 95% of all responses, reflecting its direct focus on the Italian coffee market.

5.2 Screening Questions

The pie chart (Figure 1, Appendix 2b) illustrates the answers to the question "Do you drink coffee?". It shows that 84% of the respondents answered in the affirmative and stated that they drink coffee, while 16% stated that they do not drink coffee. Figure 2 (Appendix 2b) shows the frequency of coffee consumption of the respondents. The graph shows that 15% drink coffee once a day, 38% twice a day, 32% more than twice a day and 16% occasionally during the week. Which type of coffee do the participants prefer? Figure 3 in Appendix 2b provides relevant information on this topic. It presents a ranking of preferences for different types of coffee. Espresso machine coffee is ranked first, preferred by 46 respondents, followed by instant coffee with 54 mentions, and brewed coffee with 49 mentions.

Familiarity with the various coffee brands is shown in Figure 4 (Appendix 2b) that shows that Lavazza is the best-known brand. Around 107 respondents stated that they are very familiar with the brand and buy it. Nespresso follows closely behind, with 87 respondents indicating a high level of familiarity and purchase intention. The graph (Figure 5, Appendix 2b) shows how respondents rate the sustainability and fair-trade practices of the coffee brands presented, through specific features e.g., organic farming, environmental impact, ethical sourcing, recyclable packaging. Lavazza receives the highest average rating of 3.33, indicating a relatively positive perception, while Segafredo receives the lowest rating with an average score of 2.32. Moving to Figure 6, Appendix 2b, the perception of price competitiveness among the coffee brands visualizes Nespresso with the highest average rating of 3.04, suggesting a positive perception of its price to quality/quantity ratio, while Kimbo scores the lowest with an average rating of 2.62. Intensity, depicted in Figure 7, Appendix 2b highlights Lavazza as the brand perceived to have the highest flavor and intensity, with an average rating of 3.60. Segafredo receives the lowest average rating of 2.52 in this category. As shown in Figure 8 (Appendix 2b), participants' perception of the packaging of the different coffee brands shows that Nespresso has the highest average rating of 3.99, indicating a positive perception of the packaging forms, while Kimbo receives the lowest average rating of 2.17. With the highest average rating of 4.13, which indicates a remarkably positive reputation, Lavazza emerges as the leader in terms of brand reputation, as seen in Figure 9, Appendix 2b. On the other hand, Segafredo has the lowest average rating 2.46, indicating an overall worse standing.

Furthermore, the offer range of the coffee brands, shown in Figure 10, Appendix 2b, sees Nespresso receiving the highest average rating of 4.53, showing a wide variety of coffee types offered. Segafredo scores the lowest with an average rating of 2.34 in this category.

The significance of several factors influencing decisions to buy coffee is shown in Figure 11, Appendix 2b. Participants indicated that intensity was the most important aspect, with pricing, environmental policies, and fair-trade considerations coming in close second.
In addition, the split of the participants' preferred coffee brands is seen in Figure 12, Appendix 2b, with Lavazza being the most popular option, closely followed by Nespresso and Borbone.
When it comes to participants willingness to try new coffee brands, the pie chart in Figure 13, Appendix 2, shows of those surveyed, that 77% said they would be willing to try new brands, while 23% said they would rather remain with well-known brands.

The next questions asked in the survey was the availability to buy a new coffee from a lesserknown brand if it was more environmentally friendly. About 78% of respondents said they would be willing to buy coffee from a lesser-known company if it had better environmental credentials than competing products. This shows that consumers in the coffee market are becoming more conscious of and concerned about sustainable methods. On the other hand, about 22% of respondents said that even if a lesser-known brand claimed to be more environmentally friendly, they would not think twice about purchasing from it (Figure 14, Appendix 2b). Moving to the motivation behind the purchase of coffee (Figure 15, Appendix 2b), 42% of participants, a strong majority, stated they purchase coffee because they mainly like the flavor. This implies that flavor and sensory experience have a significant role in determining their purchase choices. The social side of coffee consumption is further highlighted by the fact that 29% of respondents stated buying coffee to enjoy coffee-time moments with friends or colleagues. Remaining awake is another noteworthy incentive that was mentioned by 25% of participants, suggesting that a lot of coffee drinkers depend on the stimulant properties of the beverage. Ultimately, 4% of the respondents, a smaller subset, indicated additional reasons not specifically addressed by the options offered.

The results just analyzed from the perceptual map analysis provide an overview of the Italian coffee market environment by illuminating consumer preferences, brand perceptions, and how purchasing actions are influenced by different factors.

Among the brands, Lavazza rises to prominence as a major company with a solid reputation for its brand and high-quality coffee. Nespresso also distinguishes itself with a broad range of products and favorable views toward price and sustainability. Moreover, a solid percentage of respondents said they would be willing to support lesser-known, eco-friendly coffee producers; suggesting that consumer behavior is moving more and more in the direction of sustainability. Furthermore, flavor preference shows up as the main factor influencing coffee sales, highlighting the significance of sensory experience in the decision-making process for consumers.

Overall, these results demonstrate how the Italian coffee market is dynamic and how consumer decisions are increasingly influenced by factors like flavor, brand reputation, and sustainability.

5.3 SPSS Perceptual Map Analysis

A complete factor analysis with SPSS Statistics was used to examine customer perceptions of coffee brands. Factor analysis is a statistical technique used to identify patterns of relationships among variables and aimed at reducing the number of variables to a smaller set of factors or components. The results of this analytical technique are detailed as follows:

5.3.1 Descriptive Statistics

The Descriptive Statistics table is a statistical summary of consumer ratings for several attributes that we believe may influence consumer preferences for coffee products. The average score for each attribute indicates a positive perception, since all attributes rank higher than the average point on a probability scale of 1 to 5, where 1 indicates a poor attribute and 5 indicates an outstanding one.

Sustainable Practices, which has been considered as one of the least important features of coffee brands, has the lowest mean score of 2.90. However, this result does not suggest that consumers are completely indifferent to the various firms' sustainable actions and policies. Instead, the very low average score for this attribute just emphasizes its modest influence on customer decisions when compared to other criteria. The standard deviation for Sustainable Practices is slightly higher than a low level, at 0.53208, indicating that customer opinions on this attribute differ, although not significantly. This reinforces its importance in coffee goods from various companies. Low means and low variability may indicate traits largely consistent or homogeneous in the sample.

Price perception scores third lowest among the tested qualities, with a mean score of 2.99. While not as highly regarded as other traits, its relevance stems from its very low standard deviation of 0.25143, the lowest of all attributes. This suggests that customers have a strong consensus on the perceived value of coffee items. Despite its relatively low rating, the consistency of price evaluations indicates that consumers have a strong and consistent perception about price. This constancy may illustrate the importance of price as a factor influencing purchasing decisions, emphasizing its continuing relevance in the context of customer preferences for coffee goods.

Intensity scores had a particularly high average of 3.1933, indicating a strong consumer impression of coffee flavor and bitterness. Furthermore, the standard deviation, at 0.59173, is like that of Sustainable Practices, indicating a consistent impression of intensity among customers. This consistency in perception emphasizes the importance of flavor and bitterness in consumer ratings of coffee goods. In the context of the SPSS factor analysis, these findings add to a better understanding of how intensity, together with sustainable practices, influences consumer preferences and decision-making processes in the coffee industry.

Packaging, which refers to the recyclability of product packaging and thus how much of a positive impact the product has on the environment during its disposal, has a mean score close to Price: 2.985. But in contrast to Price, the standard deviation in this case is much higher, scoring a result of 0.71268, indicating that there is considerable variation in how individuals perceive or rate this attribute. Despite the middle-range mean, the wide dispersion of scores suggests that opinions or preferences regarding this attribute are diverse among the selected brands.

Reputation is the attribute that scored the highest mean and at the same time the highest standard deviation, 3.3667 and 0.87617 respectively. The high mean suggests that, on average, this attribute holds high importance or relevance to consumers. However, the high standard deviation implies that while some consumers may consider it important, others may less, leading to variability in ratings. The variability in perceptions presents an opportunity for brands or businesses to differentiate themselves by emphasizing or addressing this attribute in unique ways.

Offer Range follows the same results as Reputation, just with a more middle-range mean of 3.17 and an almost equal standard deviation of 0.85755. Again, the middle-range mean shows moderate importance or relevance to customers on average. However, the substantial standard deviation indicates a wide range of perspectives about its significance among individuals. This fluctuation suggests that the feature is seen differently by different sectors of the customer population. While some consumers may perceive it as vital or desired, resulting in higher scores, others may regard it as less important, resulting in lower ratings. Despite its moderate mean, the attribute's variability suggests that it still has a significant weight on consumer perceptions and preferences, albeit to varying degrees across individuals. Although it is not generally viewed as a top priority, its variability highlights its power to impact consumer decision-making processes, emphasizing the significance of nuanced marketing techniques that recognize and accommodate varied consumer preferences.

The SPSS factor analysis revealed important insights on consumer views of numerous coffee brand features. The explained results are shown in the below table. Despite obtaining the lowest mean score, Sustainable Practices' somewhat greater standard deviation indicates significant variety in customer attitudes, emphasizing its continued value in coffee goods. In contrast, Price had a relatively low standard deviation, showing that customers agreed on its perceived value. Reputation, instead, was the highest-rated attribute, indicating its value to consumers. However, its huge standard deviation highlights the diversity of individual perceptions. Similarly, Offer Range mirrored Reputation in mean but with a milder score and a corresponding standard deviation, highlighting its variable importance among consumers. These findings emphasize the nuances of consumer preferences and potential for firms to differentiate themselves through focused marketing tactics that address varying consumer views

Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Analysis N
Sustainability	2.9033	.53208	6
Price	2.9983	.25143	6
Intensity	3.1933	.59173	6
Packaging	2.9850	.71268	6
Reputation	3.3667	.87617	6
OfferRange	3.1700	.85755	6

5.3.2 Correlation Matrix

When performing reduction of dimension component analysis with SPSS, the correlation matrix plays an important role in determining the detailed correlations between variables. This matrix is a core component, providing insights into the strength, direction, and patterns of association between variables in the dataset. By examining the correlation matrix, we determined the degree to which variables covary, revealing information on their interdependence and potential shared variance. One of the correlation matrix's key uses is to determine the strength and direction of correlations between pairs of variables. Positive correlations show a tendency for variables to covariate in the same direction, whereas negative correlations imply opposite movements. Strong correlations with preferences or purchasing behavior can indicate the importance of these factors in consumer decision-making.

The most relevant positive correlations can be found between Sustainable Practices, Intensity, and Reputation, but also between Offer Range, Packaging, and Reputation. This pattern indicates an overall effect, in which strong performance in one trait improves perception of others. For instance, a coffee brand known for its sustainable practices and eco-friendly packaging is likely to have a positive reputation among environmentally-conscious consumers.

Moreover, the variety of offerings and the quality of packaging, especially when focused on recyclability, contribute to the overall image and perceived value of the brand, further influencing its reputation.

Furthermore, the correlation matrix facilitates the detection of multicollinearity, which occurs when variables are highly correlated with one another. Multicollinearity can complicate factor analysis by inflating standard errors and making it difficult to interpret results. When a correlation matrix is not positive definite, it indicates that there could be problems with the data or the study. It could imply multicollinearity among variables, which occurs when they are significantly associated with one another. The multicollinearity could have also been deducted from the absence of negative correlation between the variables.

Correlation Matrix[a]

		Sustainability	Price	Intensity	Packaging	Reputation	OfferRange
Correlation	Sustainability	1.000	.797	.991	.979	.997	.950
	Price	.797	1.000	.839	.694	.806	.605
	Intensity	.991	.839	1.000	.968	.990	.930
	Packaging	.979	.694	.968	1.000	.973	.969
	Reputation	.997	.806	.990	.973	1.000	.953
	OfferRange	.950	.605	.930	.969	.953	1.000

a. This matrix is not positive defined

6. Discussion and Limitations

In this chapter, we discuss the implications and interpretations of our study findings, which revolve around our thesis' central question: how brand sustainability and ethical business practices influence the preferences and purchase behavior of Italian coffee consumers across generations. The Italian coffee market is a complicated combination of customs, cultural influences, and shifting consumer preferences, all impacted by Italy's long history of coffee enjoyment. Our research is a journey in the rich coffee culture, as we seek to understand the complexities of customer behavior and preferences in this dynamic business. To guarantee an accurate understanding of the Italian coffee market and consumer choices within it, we carefully analyzed a variety of factors before selecting essential coffee brands for investigation. Our goal was to portray the different preferences of Italian coffee consumers across various segments, which prompted us to include both well-known brands and smaller players. The inclusion of brands like as Caffè Borbone, Segafredo Zanetti, and Kimbo provides insights into niche market segments and a comprehensive view of the competitive landscape, supporting the market domination of Lavazza and Illy. Indeed, our study aims to provide a comprehensive insight of consumer behavior and preferences in the dynamic Italian coffee industry by selecting a varied selection of brands comprising distinct market positions and sustainability methods. Our methodology for developing the perceptual map was rigorous, beginning with the identification of key attributes that influence coffee brand perception. Following preliminary interviews with industry experts and a thorough literature analysis, we identified six major factors: sustainable practices, price, intensity, packaging, brand reputation, and offer range. The perceptual map given as a visual representation of how these components, particularly brand sustainability, influenced customer preferences, displaying evident trends over generations.

However, perceptual analysis holds some limitations. Subjective perceptions, which differ depending on personal experiences and cultural backgrounds, might contribute mistakes or omit subtleties when combined into a coherent analysis. Furthermore, reducing multidimensional data to simplified visual representations has the potential to oversimplify complicated market processes, hiding critical nuances for strategic decision making. Furthermore, focusing on existing brands or items in a market may ignore rising trends or disruptive breakthroughs, limiting relevance in dynamic markets. Despite these limitations, perceptual analysis remains a useful tool when used correctly and in conjunction with additional research methodologies. By visually depicting brand placement in the coffee market, the perceptual map provides practical insights into consumer preferences and market dynamics. Despite these limitations, perceptual analysis remains a useful tool when used correctly and in conjunction with additional research methodologies.

By visually showing brand placement in the coffee market, the perceptual map delivers practical insights into consumer preferences and market dynamics. With a thorough understanding of the methodology that supports our research, we analyzed the survey data using statistical tools to find underlying elements impacting customer views. This investigation gave us vital insights into customer preferences and market dynamics, which laid the framework for the creation of the perceptual map. The perceptual map, which physically represents brand positioning within the coffee industry, provides a tangible representation of consumer preferences and enables for a more nuanced knowledge of market dynamics. The perceptual map developed through our study provides a visual picture of well-known coffee brands' market positioning, demonstrating how overall quality and price perception influence consumer preferences and perceptions across generations. For instance, businesses like Illy and Lavazza, who are known for their commitment to sustainability, are viewed as having higher quality and are positioned positively on the map. Brands such as Nespresso, Borbone, Kimbo, and Segafredo, on the other hand, are positioned differently on the map, suggesting differences in perceived quality and pricing among Italian customers. Brands which promote sustainability and effectively communicate their ethical business practices are more likely to have an impact on consumers, especially the younger generation, as is becoming more aware of environmental and social issues. Brands that fall behind in sustainability initiatives may need to reconsider their approaches to better satisfy consumer expectations and preferences. This deep understanding of consumer behavior and tastes is critical for making educated decisions in the Italian coffee market. The perceptual map's representation emphasizes the importance of brands meeting consumer expectations for sustainability and ethical business practices.

Regarding the conjoint analysis, it is crucial to recognize that various challenges can limit its effectiveness in studying the coffee market. Firstly, the complexity of designing a conjoint survey for coffee attributes can make it difficult to manage and analyze the results efficiently. This complexity arises from the need to carefully consider multiple attributes, with multiple levels, which can overwhelm respondents.

Secondly, conducting conjoint analysis often involves presenting respondents with many coffee product combinations to evaluate. This can lead to respondent fatigue, where participants become tired or not engaged during the survey, resulting in lower response rates, and compromising the quality of the data collected, thus affecting the analysis' reliability. Furthermore, conjoint analysis' findings may not be broadly applicable if brands, attributes, or geographical area are changed. This limited generalizability restricts the broader utility of the analysis, particularly when considering different market contexts.

Finally, conjoint analysis assumes that respondents make decisions based on a rational evaluation of the choices presented to them.

However, in reality, consumer decision-making processes are influenced by various factors such as emotions, psychological biases, and time constraints. This assumption of rational decision-making may limit the accuracy of the analysis in reflecting real-world consumer behavior.

While our research throws insight into the complex interactions of factors that influence consumers behavior in the Italian coffee market, it also has limits. The perceptual and conjoint analyses utilized in this study provide a snapshot of consumer perceptions and preferences, but they may not capture all the aspects that influence decision-making processes. Future study could investigate new methods or incorporate qualitative approaches to acquire a more comprehensive picture of consumer behavior and preferences.

Finally, conjoint analysis assumes that respondents make decisions based on a rational evaluation of the choices presented to them. However, in reality, consumer decision-making processes are influenced by various factors such as emotions, psychological biases, and time constraints. This assumption of rational decision-making may limit the accuracy of the analysis in reflecting real-world consumer behavior. While our research provides valuable insights into the complex interplay of factors shaping consumer behavior in the Italian coffee market, it does have its limitations. The perceptual and conjoint analyses employed in our study offer a snapshot of consumer perceptions and preferences but may not capture the full spectrum of factors influencing decision-making processes. Future research endeavors could explore additional methodologies or incorporate qualitative approaches to gain a more holistic understanding of consumer behavior and preferences.

6.1 Implications for Managerial decision

The present research investigates how sustainable practices influence customer preferences and behavior toward coffee goods in the Italian market. This final section will provide a concise summary of how managers might effectively utilize the study findings. To be more specific, this investigation will make management recommendations about coffee product design and marketing strategies. As we delve deeper into the implications of our extensive conjoint analysis, a multifaceted landscape of opportunities and strategies emerges for coffee industry stakeholders, with a particular emphasis on sustainability and the potential for niche market positioning in the high-price segment. Our in-depth research of consumer preferences and behaviors reveals numerous crucial insights that can help inspire strategic decision-making and drive market competitiveness.

First and foremost, the critical importance of sustainable practices is emphasized throughout our investigation, highlighting a fundamental shift in consumer expectations and beliefs. With younger generations becoming more aware of environmental issues, coffee farmers and marketers must shift their focus to a more sustainable strategy. Using the findings from our Conjoint Analysis, which show a strong preference among consumers for eco-friendly coffee options, firms may capitalize on this trend by prioritizing the development and marketing of sustainable practices.

This could include obtaining and displaying applicable certifications, using environmentally friendly production practices, and clearly explaining sustainability initiatives to customers. Furthermore, our results demonstrate a significant gap between the perceived importance of sustainability traits and typical pricing concerns.

While price remains an important component in consumer decision-making, our data indicate that sustainability has a stronger influence on purchase behavior, particularly among environmentally concerned groups.

As a result, coffee makers must adjust their marketing methods to emphasize their products' sustainability credentials, resonating more profoundly with conscientious customers and potentially fetching premium pricing in the market.

Furthermore, our research demonstrates how businesses may carve out a place in the high-end price sector by stressing sustainability and providing premium coffee experiences. The desire for premium coffee brands, as evidenced by the strong affection for brands like Illy, indicates a growing demand for excellent coffee experiences. Brands may strategically position themselves as purveyors of ethically sourced, sustainably produced coffee, attracting discriminating customers prepared to pay a premium for quality and sustainability. By building a premium brand image and providing outstanding quality coffee goods, firms may effectively differentiate themselves in the market and build better relationships with conscientious consumers.

In addition to brand-centric strategies, our analysis implies detailed demographic trends that should be considered when segmenting and targeting markets. Younger consumers' increased sustainability awareness suggests the need for tailored marketing campaigns that connect with their values and priorities, while preferences for specific coffee attributes across age groups highlight the importance of understanding and catering to the diverse needs of distinct consumer segments.

The findings from both the Perceptual Map study and the Descriptive Statistics table have numerous implications for managerial decision-making in the coffee sector.

Firstly, the positive perception of attributes such as intensity, offer range, and reputation among consumers underscores areas of inherent strength that brands can leverage to solidify their market positioning. However, the noticeable disparity in price perception, despite other attributes receiving high ratings, highlights a critical challenge for brands to address. This indicates a disconnect between perceived value and pricing strategies, suggesting a need for careful evaluation and potential adjustments in pricing approaches. Implementing independent pricing tactics, such as promotional offers and loyalty programs, could help alleviate the perceived discrepancy between price and product quality, thereby enhancing overall customer satisfaction.

Furthermore, the market segmentation based on customer preferences defined by the analysis provides a chance for firms to implement customized marketing tactics. Understanding the various goals of different consumer segments enables brands to modify their messaging and product offerings to better meet the diverse demands of their customers. This nuanced approach not only develops greater consumer connections, but it also allows for the creation of more effective marketing campaigns that promote engagement and loyalty.

Meanwhile, the findings from the SPSS factor analysis provide valuable recommendations for product development and marketing initiatives. By recognizing the underlying reasons that influence consumer preferences, brands may strategically match their offers with these key drivers, better meeting customer requirements and preferences. For example, focusing on features with high customer ratings, such as intensity and offer range, can help businesses stand out in the market and attract discerning consumers looking for high-quality coffee goods. Furthermore, the analysis emphasizes the need of continual efforts to maintain product quality and uniformity across qualities such as packaging and environmental standards. Maintaining high standards in these areas allows brands to maintain positive consumer views while also reinforcing their market advantage.

This underscores the significance of investing in quality assurance measures and continuous improvement initiatives to sustain consumer trust and loyalty over time. By addressing pricing discrepancies, adopting targeted marketing strategies, leveraging consumer preferences, and prioritizing product quality and sustainability, brands can effectively navigate the dynamic landscape of consumer preferences and drive growth and profitability in the market. This illustrates the importance of investing in quality assurance and continuous improvement programs to maintain consumer confidence and loyalty over time. In conclusion, the Perceptual Map analysis and Descriptive Statistics table give useful information for managerial decisionmaking in the coffee sector. Brands can effectively navigate the shifting terrain of customer preferences and promote market development and profitability by addressing pricing differences, implementing focused marketing tactics, capitalizing on consumer preferences, and prioritizing product quality and sustainability.

7. Conclusion

This comprehensive study of the Italian coffee market revealed a complex set of findings that provide a detailed overview of consumer perceptions, product preferences, and market dynamics. Through the strategic application of a careful combination of qualitative interviews, quantitative surveys, and analytical techniques, we have delved deep into the complexities of this industry.

Our qualitative research, enriched by interviews with professionals from industry giants such as Lavazza and Nespresso, has allowed us to set the context for our study, highlighting shifting consumer inclinations and evolving trends of the market. These experts-led conversations, indeed, have underscored the importance of premiumization strategies for brands like Illy, while also highlighting the potential for brands like Segafredo and Kimbo to carve out a niche in the market by striking a delicate balance between competitive pricing and quality offerings. Such insights have not only contributed to a deeper understanding of the industry's past and present but have also provided strategic foresight for the development of our research. A prominent trend that emerged from our research regarding consumer behavior is the inclination towards the choice of sustainable and ethically responsible products. Nonetheless, it has been noted that Italian consumers are still very attached to their tradition regarding the consumption of coffee and recognize large importance to factors like brand reputation and product quality.

These findings were mostly confirmed by the results of our quantitative surveys, which explored consumer perceptions and preferences across a set of dimensions and attributes, ranging from brand reputation and packaging eco-friendliness to flavor intensity and sustainability standards. This consistent quantitative analysis has provided empirical evidence to support and complement the qualitative narratives.

Firstly, a perceptual map was created to comprehend how consumers discern different coffee brands, basing the analysis on six key attributes and performing a SPSS analysis.

The SPSS analysis has unveiled patterns and correlations within the dataset, providing useful information about the underlying forces that shape consumer perceptions. The perceptual analysis results are extremely important to our research into how sustainable practices influence consumer behavior. They present actual proof of how sustainability perceptions affect customer preferences in the coffee business. Specifically, the perceptual map shows how brands considered to prioritize sustainability - like Illy, Lavazza, and Nespresso - are positioned favorably among consumers, particularly the younger generation. This strong link between sustainability perceptions and brand positioning emphasizes the importance of ethical business practices in influencing consumer behavior. Furthermore, the perceptual map uncovers the potential implications for brands who do not value sustainability, including the risk of falling behind in the competitive market scenario.

Secondly, conjoint analysis was performed to understand consumers' preferences regarding five key attributes. Significant differences were highlighted when comparing different generations, showing that younger ones have a heightened sensitivity to current trends, while older generations might value other dimensions more and have less knowledge about the sustainability efforts of the brands. Indeed, attributes such as coffee Intensity and Coffee Type still play a very important role in determining Italian consumers' product choices, as evidenced in the results of the conjoint analysis.

By overlooking both analyses, results demonstrate that Italian consumers' perceptions are generally aligned with their preferences, with brand association and product quality holding particular relevance for consumers. Illy emerged as the most preferred brand for the surveys' participants, coherently with the perceptions associated with it about its overall quality and price.

Although the analysis is subject to some limitations, like the rational nature of the employed tools and the limited sample size which could lead to biased results, our study offers valuable insights for stakeholders in the Italian coffee industry, setting the base for more exploration in order to better comprehend the evolving trends and behaviors.

This research also provides a base for implications for managerial decisions, suggesting how businesses could develop tailored strategies to drive sustainable growth, identifying areas of improvement in product design or marketing tactics, following the results obtained with the conjoint analysis about product preferences.

Specifically, by underscoring the increasing role of sustainability practices in shaping consumer perceptions and preferences, our research accentuates the need for brands to align with ecofriendly initiatives to resonate with increasingly environmentally conscious consumers, without compromising quality and taste.

To conclude, it must be highlighted that the coffee market is undergoing relevant changes which require constant analysis on consumers' perceptions and preferences. Henceforth, this study can serve as a foundation for future research and deeper analysis

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APPENDIX

Appendix 1

Table 1. Perceptual Map Survey Questions.

1 – Survey Introduction	Welcome to our Coffee Consumption Survey, an essential part of our Marketing Research at Nova School of Business and Economics. The purpose of this survey is to capture your opinions on coffee brands and the key factors influencing your choice of coffee products. Your participation is highly valued and will contribute to enhancing our research. Rest assured; your responses will remain anonymous. Thank you for dedicating your time to share your valuable insights with us!
2 – Screening Questions	• Do you drink coffee? (Yes/No) • If YES, how often do you drink it? (Once a day, twice a day, more than twice a day, randomly on a weekly basis) • Which type of coffee do you prefer? (Espresso-machine coffe, Instant Coffee (caffè solubile), brewed coffee) • Which of the following coffee brands are you familiar with? Please select one or more options. (Illy; Borbone; Lavazza; Segafredo; Kimbo; Nespresso)
3 – Block of Perceptual Questions	• For each of the following features, please rate your perception about the presented brands using a scale from 1 (Strongly Negative) to 5 (Strongly Positive). - **Sustainability practices and Fair Trade** (Please rate the following brands based on their sustainability and fair-trade commitments (e.g., organic farming, environmental impact, ethical sourcing, recyclable packaging) - **Price** (Please rate how the following brands perform on their price to quality/quantity ratio.) - **Intensity** (Please rate the brands based on their products' flavour and intensity). - **Packaging** (Please rate the packaging used by the following brands based on their convenience and environmental sustainability.) - **Brand reputation** (Please rate the reputation of the following brands.) - **Offer range** (Please rate the variety of the coffee types offered by the following brands.) • Rank the following features in order of importance to you when purchasing Coffee. (1 is the most important feature, 6 is the least important one)
	• Which coffee brand do you buy most often? (Illy; Borbone; Lavazza; Segafredo; Kimbo; Nespresso; Others: please specify)

4 – Brand Loyalty and Behavioural Questions	• Are you open to trying new coffee brands or prefer sticking with familiar ones? (Yes/No) • Would you be open to buying a coffee from a lesser-known brand if it were more environmentally friendly compared to other options? (Yes/No) • Which are the main motivations behind your coffee purchase? (To Stay Awake, I like coffee, Coffee-time with friends/colleagues, Other: please specify)
5 – Demographic Questions	• Are you Italian or have lived in Italy for more than 3 years? • What is your gender? (Male, female, prefer not to say) • What is your age? <18; 18-30; 31-50; >50 • What is your occupation? Student; Worker; Both; Other
Survey Closing	We thank you for the time spent taking this survey. Your responses have been recorded.

Table 4. Conjoint Analysis Survey Questions

1 – Survey Introduction	Greetings and thank you for joining our research on Coffee Consumption in Italy. As part of our master's degree program at Nova School of Business and Economics, we are conducting a comprehensive Marketing Research on the Italian Coffee market. Our main aim is to delve into the intricacies of coffee consumption, aiming to gain deeper insights into consumer perceptions and decisionmaking factors regarding its selection. We are particularly interested in understanding how consumers choose their coffee brands and which features they prioritize. Completing this survey will only require about 10 minutes of your time. Rest assured; your responses will be kept anonymous. We appreciate your contribution, which will significantly influence the success of this research. For the best user experience, we recommend taking this survey on a desktop computer.
2 – Screening Questions	• Do you drink coffee? (Yes/No) • If YES, how often do you drink it? (Once a day, twice a day, more than twice a day Randomly on a weekly basis) • Which of the following coffee brands are you familiar with? Please select one or more options. (Illy; Borbone; Lavazza; Segafredo; Kimbo; Nespresso)

3 – Certifications	Brief explanation of the Fair Trade and B Corp certifications: Fairtrade is the most recognized and trusted sustainability label in the world. Fairtrade changes the way trade works through
	better prices, **decent working conditions** and a **fairer deal for farmers and workers** in developing countries. B Corp Certification, released by the B Lab, ensures that a business is **meeting high standards of verified social and environmental performance, accountability to all stakeholders, and transparency** on a variety of factors by **allowing information about their performance** to be measured against B Lab's standards and to **be publicly available.** Certified companies are leaders in the global movement for an **inclusive**, **equitable**, and **regenerative economy**.
4 – Block of Conjoint Questions	Block of Conjoint Questions with following Attributes and respective Levels: - **Brand**: Illy; Borbone; Lavazza; Segafredo; Kimbo; Nespresso - **Price (€/kg):** <€10; €11-15; €16-20; >€20 - **Certification**: Fair Trade certified, Not Fair Trade certified, B Corp Certified - **Coffee type**: Capsules/Pods, Instant Coffee, Ground Coffee (espresso moka) - **Intensity**: low, medium, high - **Packaging**: Recyclable, Non-recyclable, Biodegradable
5 – Additional Questions & Demographics	• Would you be willing to pay a higher price for an eco-friendly coffee product? (Yes/No) • Please indicate the level of agreement for the following statement: 'Brand loyalty influence my purchase decisions' • Are you Italian or have lived in Italy for more than 3 years? • What is your gender? (Male, female, prefer not to say) • What is your age? <18; 18-30; 31-50; >50 • What is your occupation? Student; Worker; Both; Other
Survey closing	We thank you for the time spent taking this survey. Your responses have been recorded.

Appendix 2a

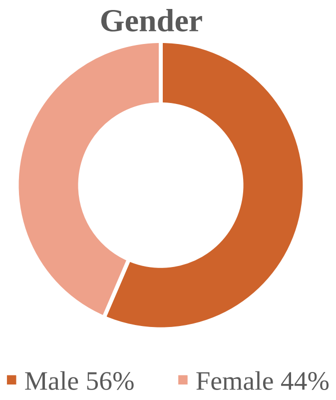


Figure 1.

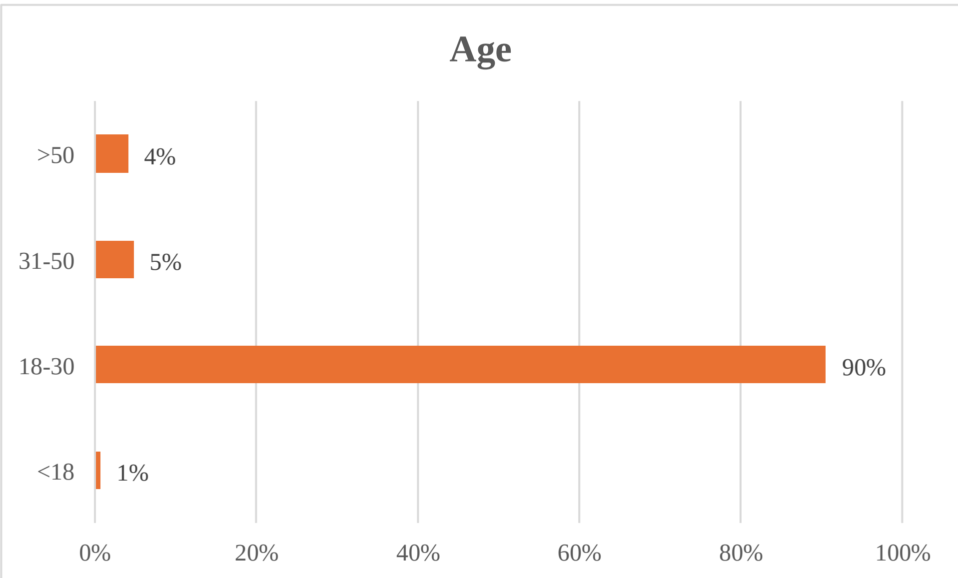


Figure 2.

Italian Origin

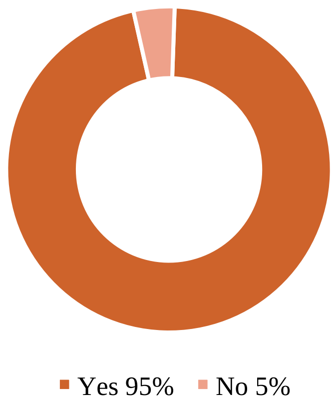


Figure 3.

Appendix 2b

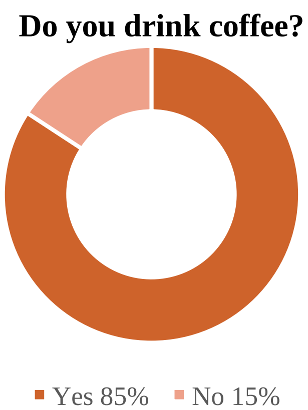


Figure 2.

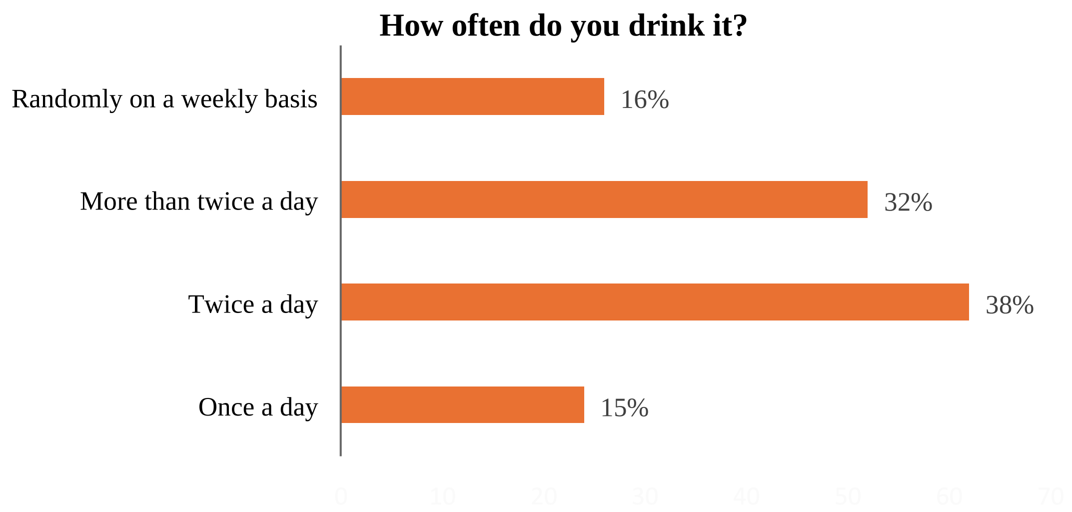


Figure 3.

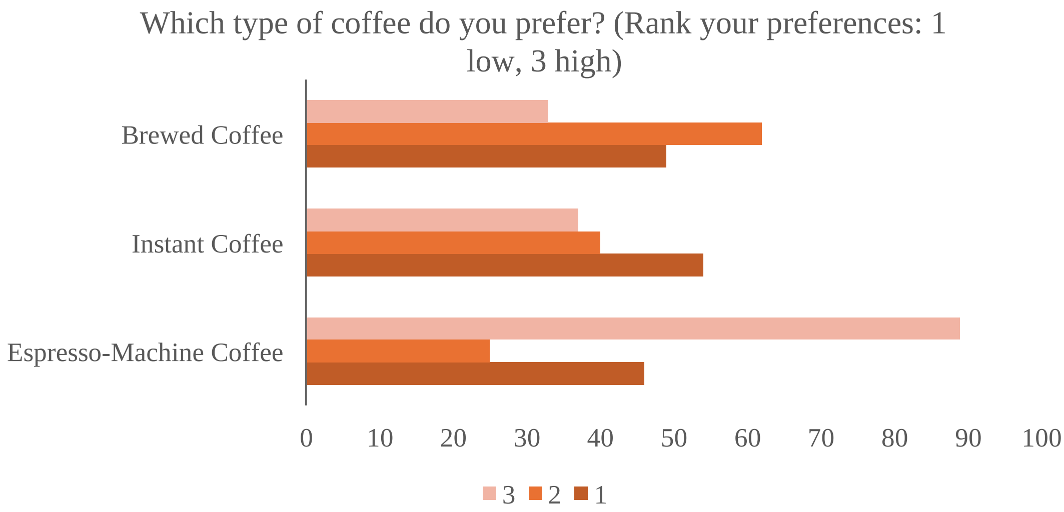


Figure 4.

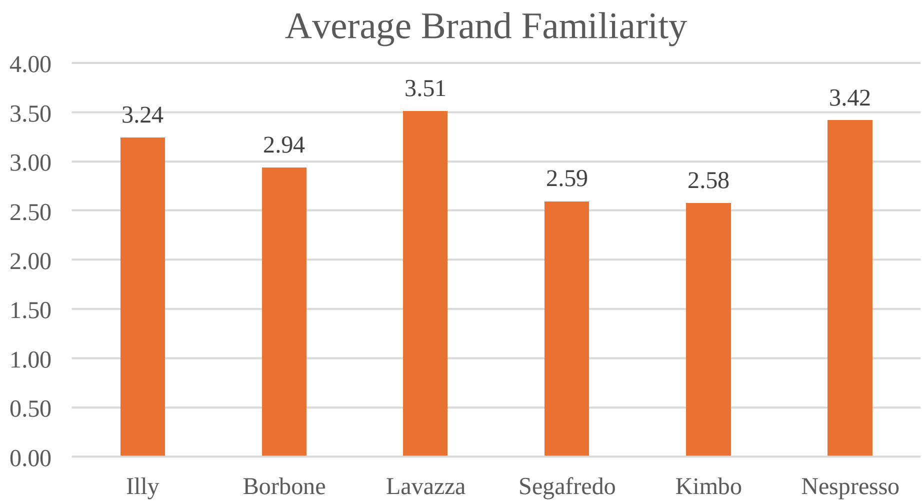


Figure 5.

Perception about Sustainability practices and Fair

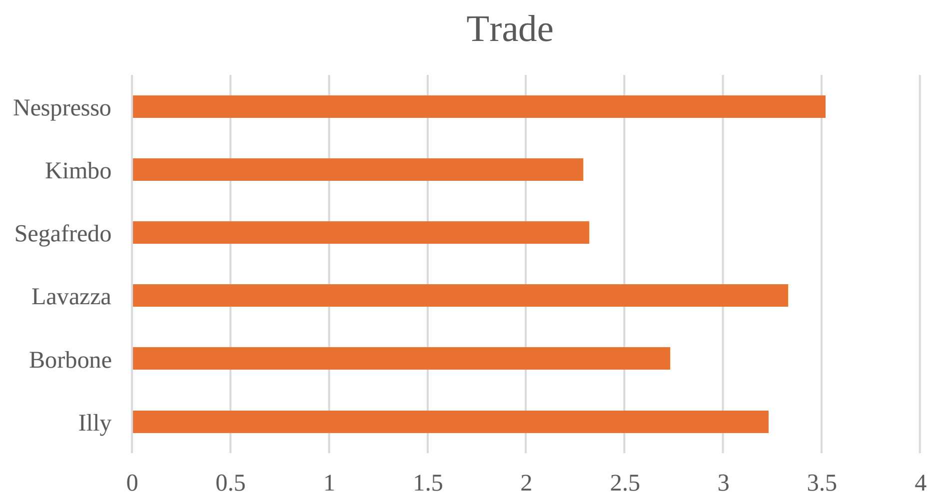

Trade
Nespresso
Kimbo
Segafredo
Lavazza
Borbone
Illy
0
0.5
1
1.5
2
2.5
3
3.5
4

Figure 6.

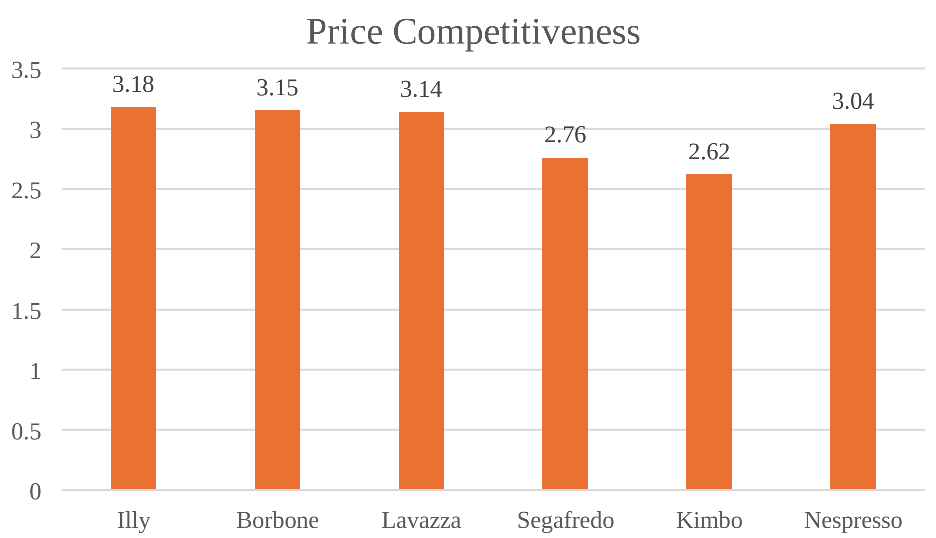

Price Competitiveness
3.5
3
2.5
2
1.5
1
0.5
0
3.18
3.15
3.14
2.76
2.62
3.04
Illy
Borbone
Lavazza
Segafredo
Kimbo
Nespresso

Figure 7.

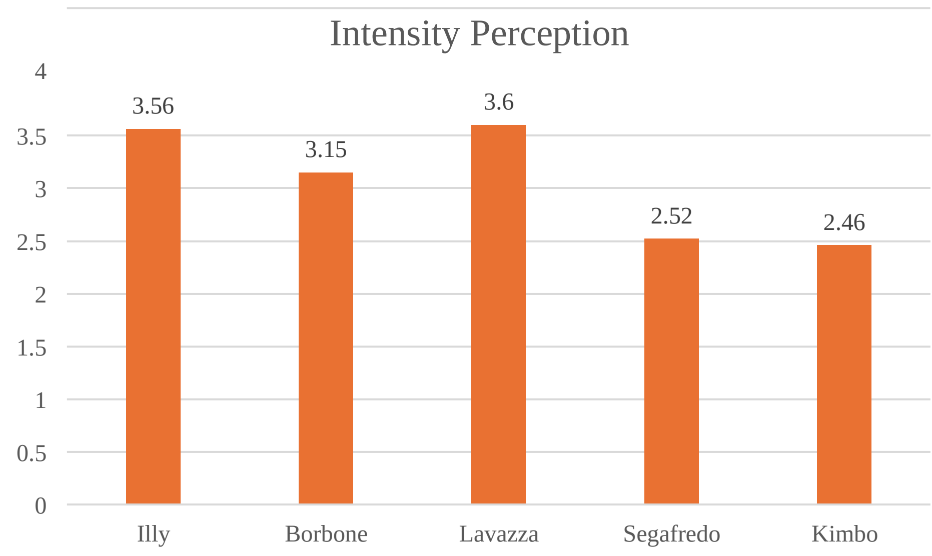
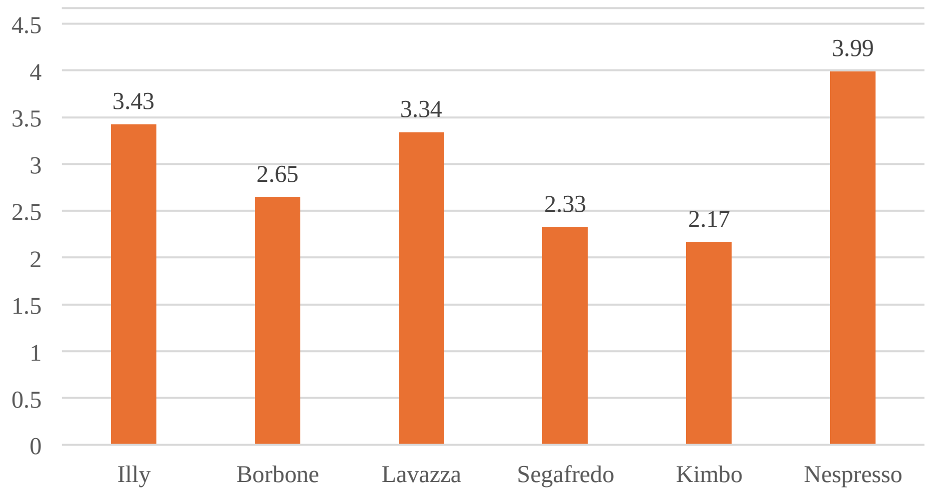


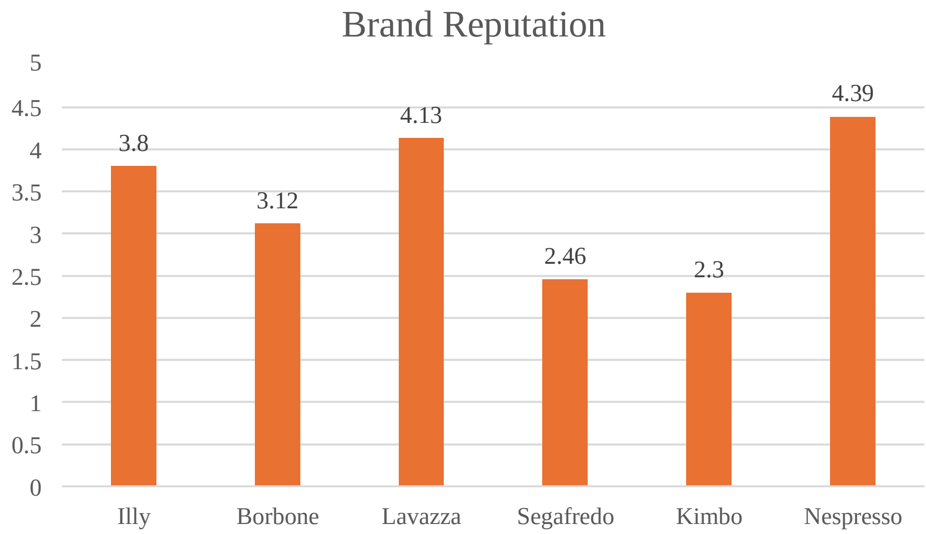
Figure 8.

Packaging Perception



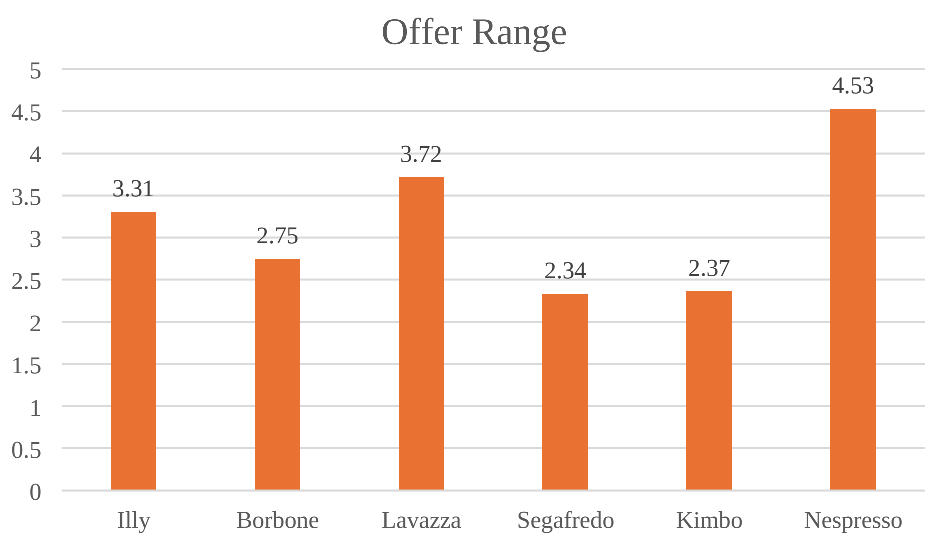
4.5
4
3.5
3
2.5
2
1.5
1
0.5
0
3.43
2.65
3.34
2.33
2.17
3.99
Illy
Borbone
Lavazza
Segafredo
Kimbo
Nespresso

Figure 9.



Brand Reputation
5
4.5
4
3.5
3
2.5
2
1.5
1
0.5
0
3.8
3.12
4.13
2.46
2.3
4.39
Illy
Borbone
Lavazza
Segafredo
Kimbo
Nespresso

Figure 10.



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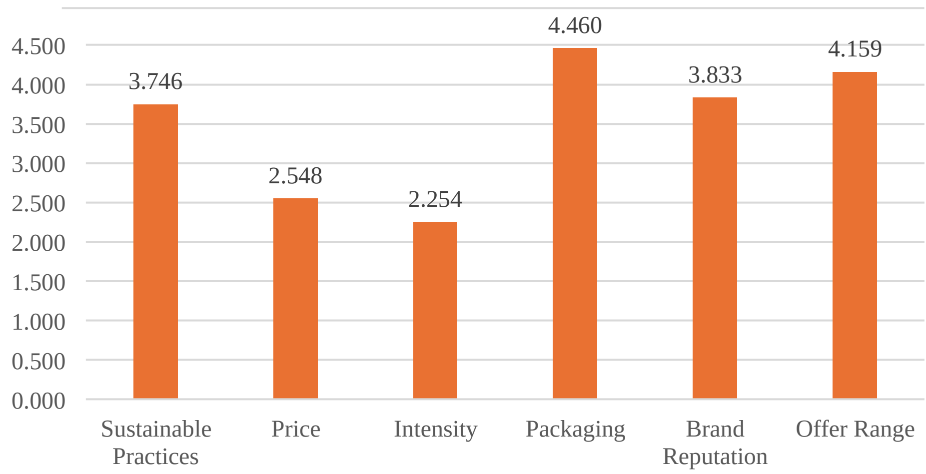

4.500
4.000
3.500
3.000
2.500
2.000
1.500
1.000
0.500
0.000
3.746
2.548
2.254
4.460
3.833
4.159
Sustainable Practices
Price
Intensity
Packaging
Brand Reputation
Offer Range

Figure 12.

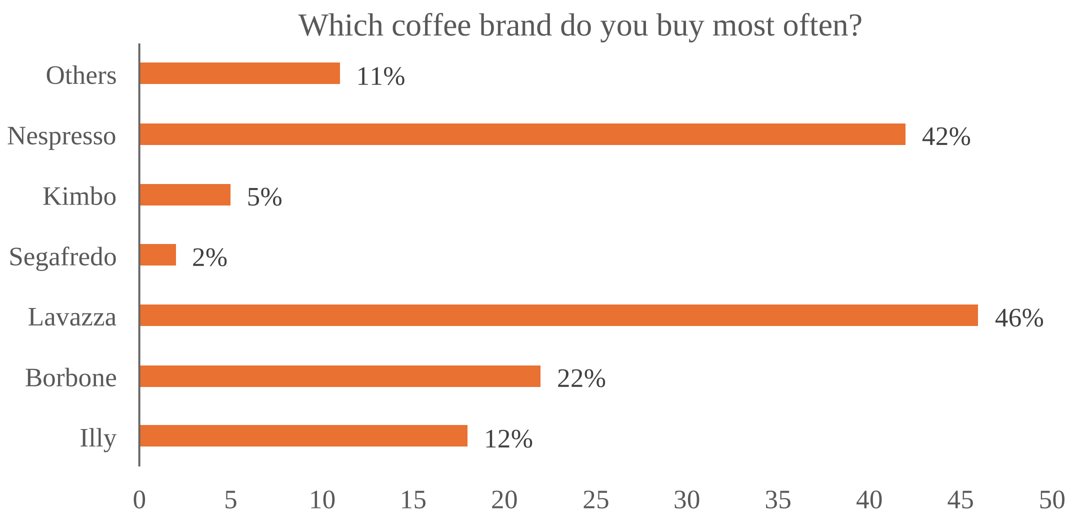

Which coffee brand do you buy most often?
Others
11%
Nespresso
42%
Kimbo
5%
Segafredo
2%
Lavazza
46%
Borbone
22%
Illy
12%
0
5
10
15
20
25
30
35
40
45
50

Figure 13.

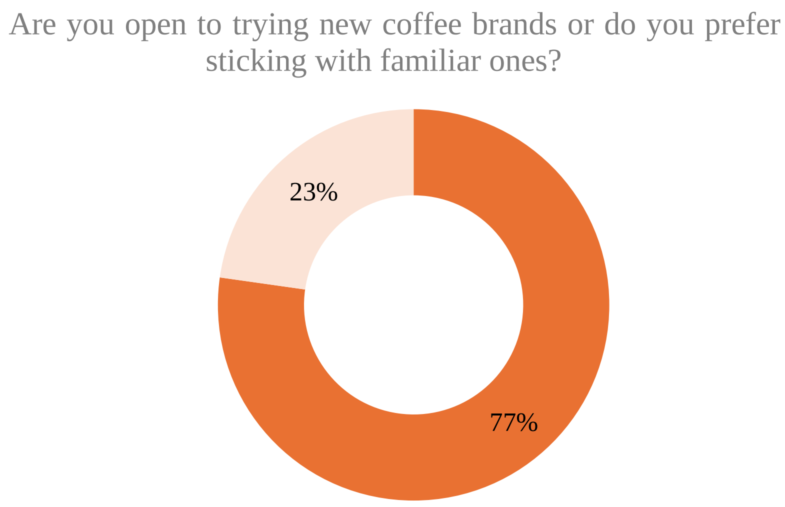


Figure 14.

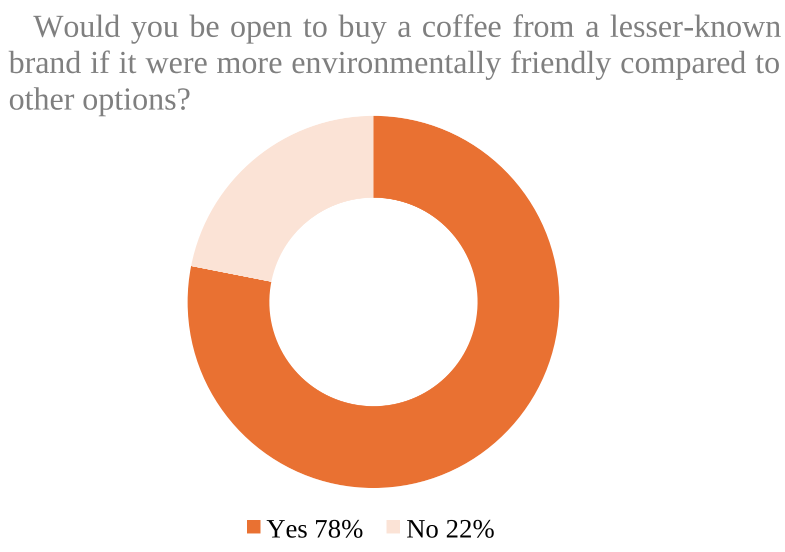
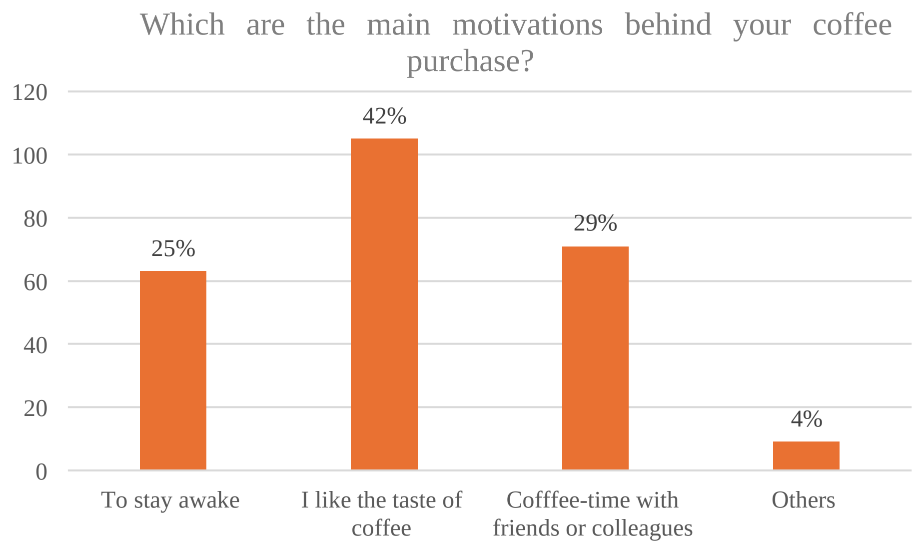


Figure 15.


Which are the main motivations behind your coffee purchase?
120
100
80
60
40
20
0
25%
42%
29%
4%
To stay awake
I like the taste of coffee
Cofffee-time with friends or colleagues
Others

Appendix 3

Figure 1. Gender of respondents.

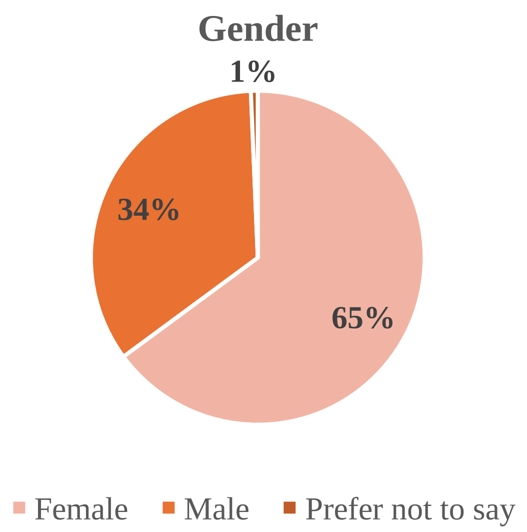
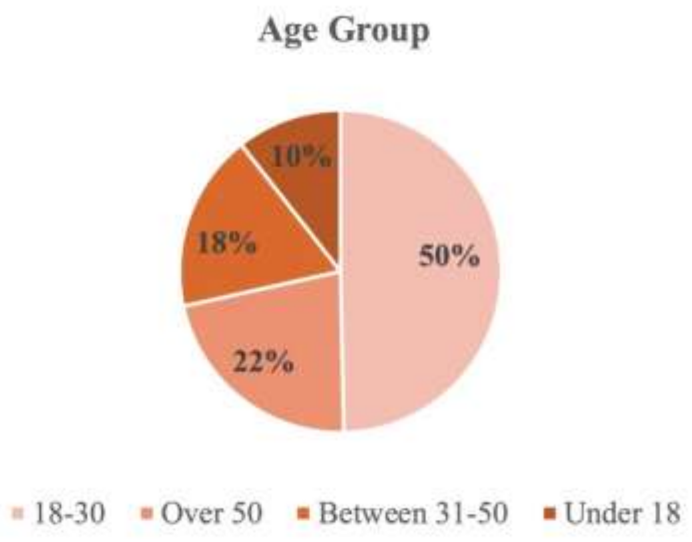


Figure 2. Age distribution of respondents.



Figure

3. Country of origin of respondents.

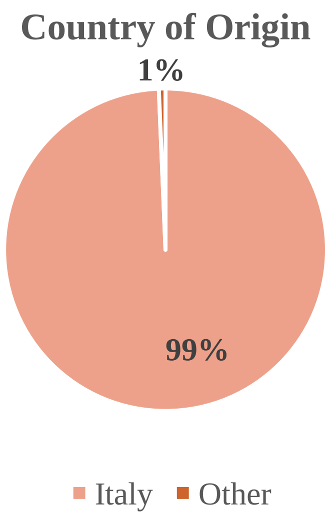
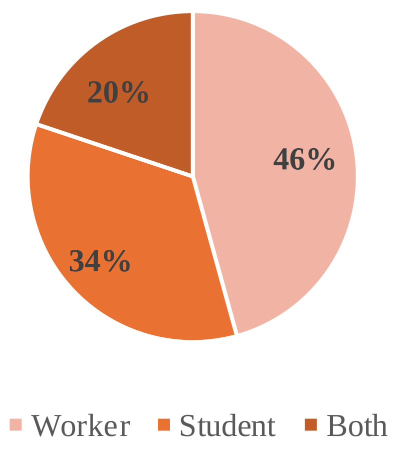


Figure 4. Occupation of respondents.

Occupation

Figure



5. Coffee Consumption Frequency.

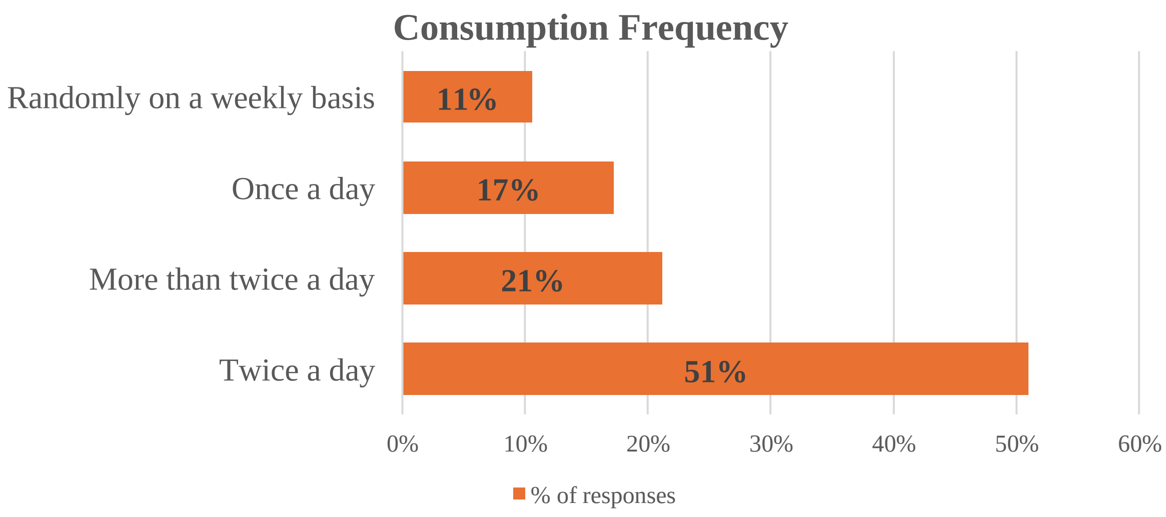
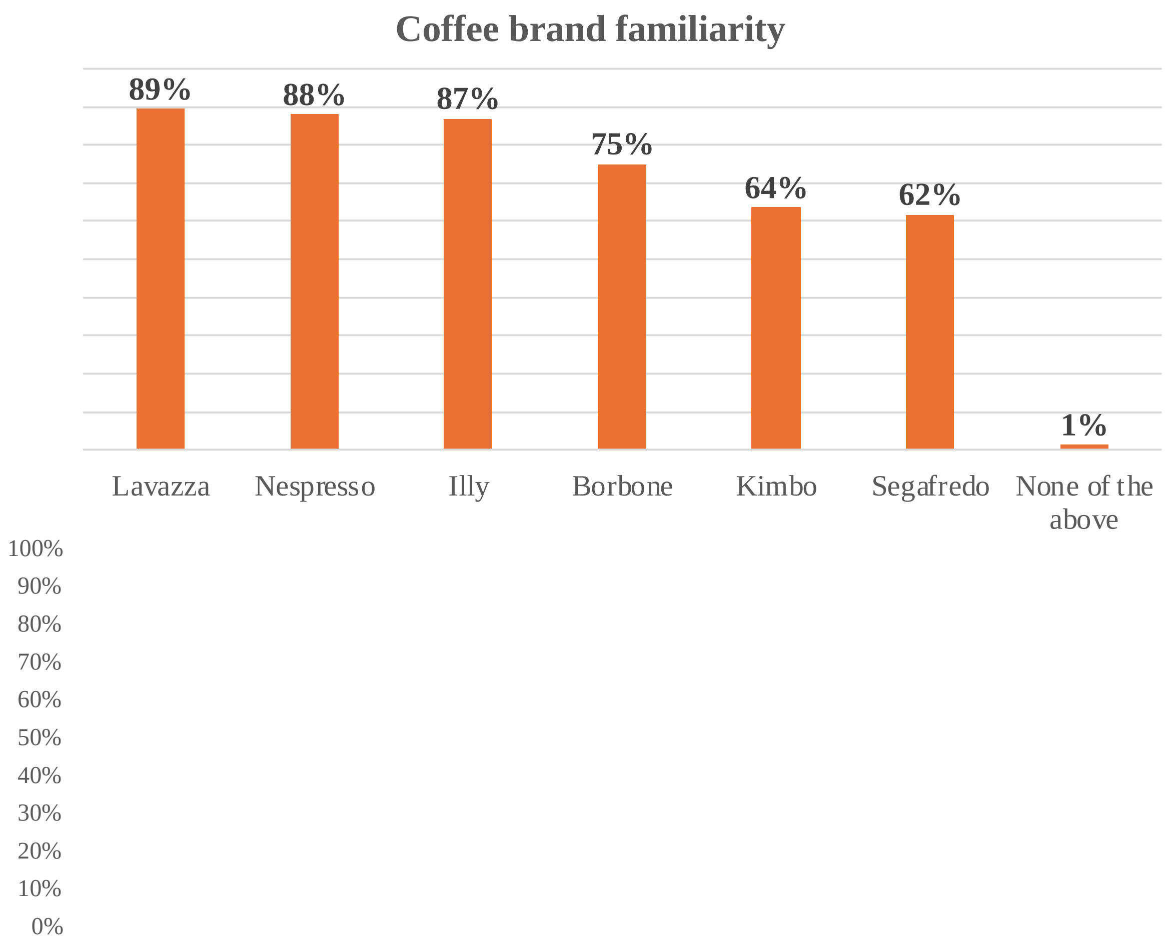


Figure 6. Percentage of respondents who are familiar with the selected coffee brands.

Figure



7. Number of options (brands) chosen by respondents.

Number of options chosen by respondents

F

i

g

u

r

e

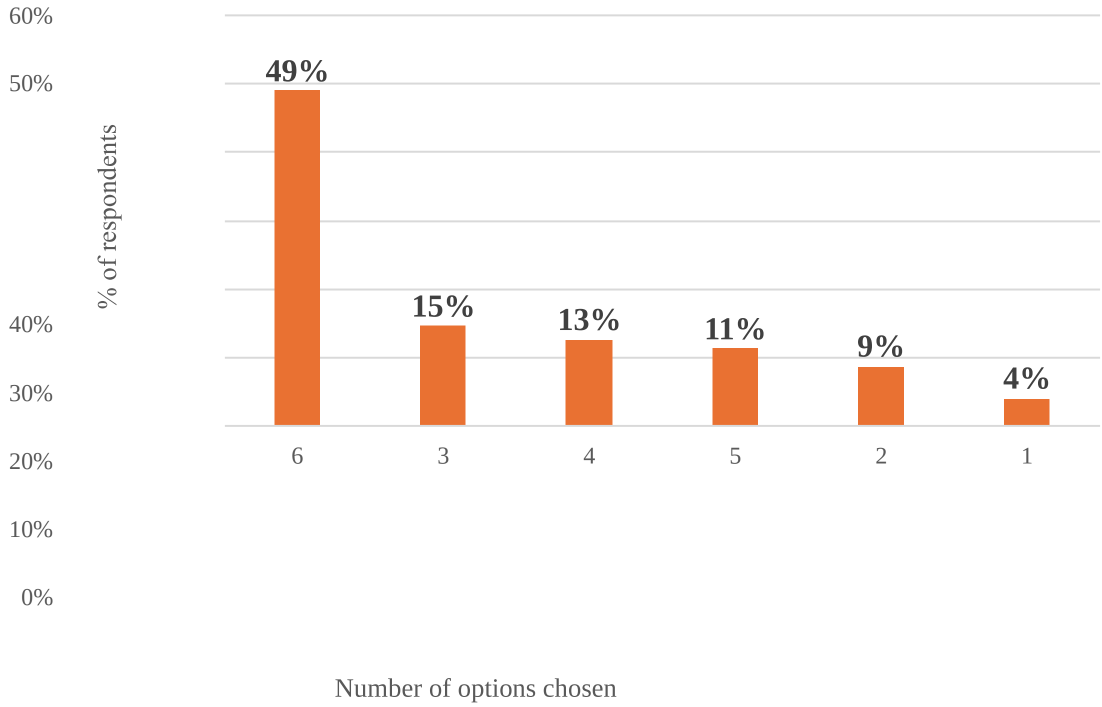


Figure 8. Willingness to pay a higher price for an eco-friendly coffee product.

F

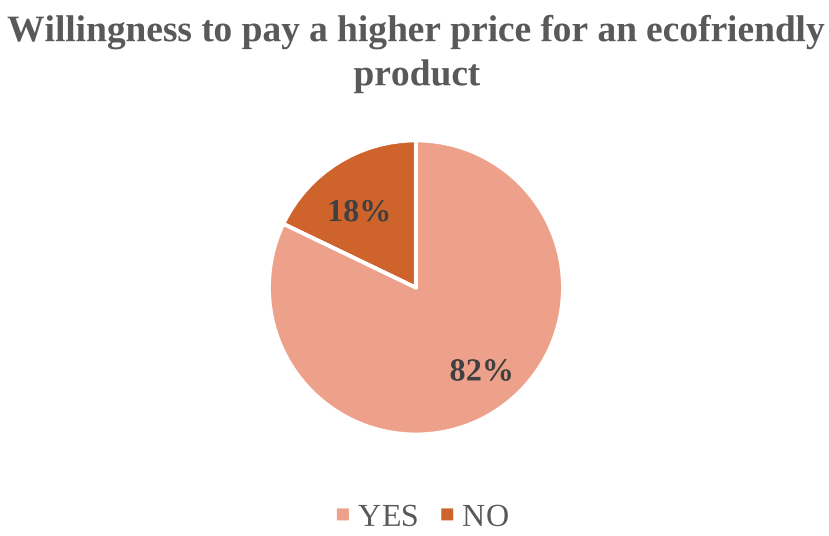
i

g

u

r

e



9. Ratings of brand loyalty influence on the respondents' purchase decisions.

Brand loyalty influence on coffee purchases

F

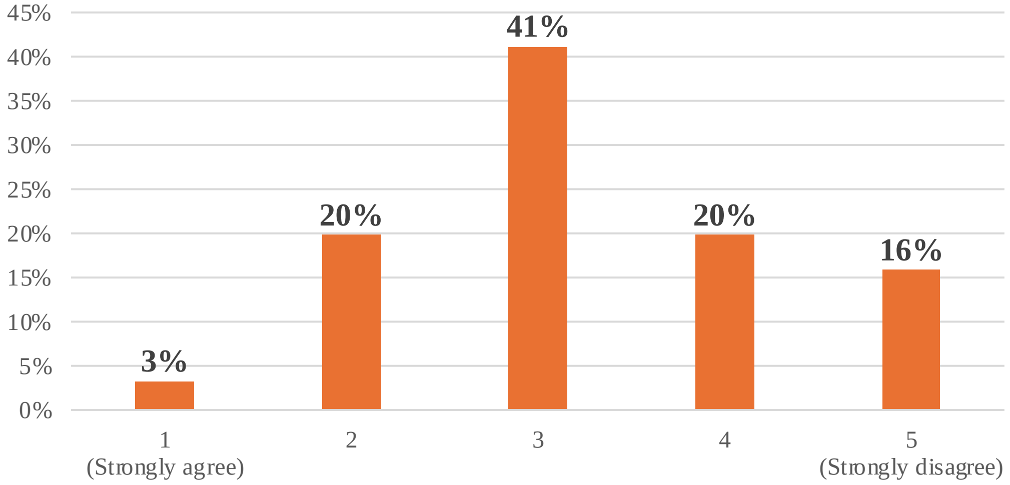
i

g

u

r

e


45%
40%
35%
30%
25%
20%
15%
10%
5%
0%
3%
20%
41%
20%
16%
1
(Strongly agree)
2
3
4
5
(Strongly disagree)