A Comparative Study of Coffee Culture between Italy and South Korea: An Exploratory Study*

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Abstract

This exploratory research compares two particular features of coffee culture, namely the reason why a particular coffee shop is frequented and the reason for going to the chosen coffee shop in Italy and South Korea. A survey was carried out targeted at current undergraduate university students in both countries with data being collected in the late spring and early summer of 2017. The main impetus for this research was to investigate the aforementioned areas given the fact that Italy has such a long standing coffee culture that dates back centuries and is still an industry dominated by independent coffee houses while the Korean coffee industry started developing in the early 1980s and taking off after the 1988 Olympic Games. The Korean coffee industry, in contrast, is driven by the franchise coffee shops such as Starbucks, Café Benne, and The Coffee Bean among others. While both countries have well developed coffee cultures, they developed along very different lines. Data collected from respondents are tabulated and presented followed by an analysis and interpretation of the data. Finally, some suggestions on how to conduct further research in order to better understanding the underpinnings and contributing factors in understanding consumer choice and coffee culture in both Italian and Korea are suggested.

Ⅰ. Introduction

The first credible mentions of coffee consumption dates back to somewhere in the middle of the 15th century traced from Karachi to the Sufi monasteries of Yemen (Weinberg and Bealer, 2001), although some legends place the origin as far back as the 10th century in Ethiopia. From there it traced a path across the Middle East into northern Africa, the East Indies, north into Europe, and the Americas. In some temperate regions it was grown and in others it was a valued commodity that was imported or traded. In the 1800s, coffee was primarily grown in the temperate regions of central and South America especially in the Caribbean island of Haiti as well

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as in the central regions of Africa including Rwanda and Ethiopia. The two main species of coffee bean sold commercially are 'robusta' and 'arabica' with the latter being considered the more highly regarded variety due to its less bitter and stronger flavor. Robusta on the other hand is considered to have a more full-bodied taste and is used in the traditional Italian espresso

The processing of the coffee berries is traditionally a very labor intensive practice as they are usually picked by hand. After being washed and separated by ripeness and color, the seeds are dried. At this stage the coffee beans are roasted which is the form in which it is mostly sold and consumed. Preparation also varies from brewing with hot or cold water, filtered, or pressurized with boiling water. Serving as is or with the addition of dairy products such as milk or cream as well as sugar-based sweeteners and in some cases even with alcohol were tailored to the specific tastes in different cultures. Coffee's universal appeal spanned not only the globe but also the social classes. While it is not necessary to go into details of the evolution of coffee across the world, there is significant literature on the pervasiveness of coffee in social culture across cultures and how coffee was a focal point in social circles, the arts, religion, medicine, and economic development. Additionally, there is much research on the production of coffee and its movement from growth to its final sale. (Luttinger, 2011).

While there are many directions in which coffee has been examined from an economic perspective, the purpose of this paper is to re-examine the reasons why consumers go to coffee shops and what activities do they engage in at the coffee shop. As in the past, coffee today is also consumed for its stimulating effects and ability to sharpen one's

concentration as well as its connection with lowering mortality rates when consumed in moderation, as well as having beneficial effects on mental health, diabetes, and some forms of cancer (Zhao et al., 2015).

As a result, coffee houses have popped up all over the world as places where philosophical, religious, and political discussions occurred among citizens (Cowan, 2005). In South Korea, the first significant consumption occurred in the 19th century during the reigns of emperors Sunjong and Gojong (Gray, 2015), and by the 1980, instant and canned coffees became the norm and towards the end of the 20th century franchises such as Starbucks and Caffe Bene became omnipresent (Lee, 2012). Italy, on the other hand, was originally introduced to the coffee bean through trading with Arabs through Egypt and into the port city of Venice with the first café opening in the city in 1863 (Ufficio Studi Fipe ,2013). While coffee has evolved in different ways in different countries, this study looks at Italy and South Korea in particular because of the vastly different coffee environments that currently exist from this singular commodity and how they have taken different paths to success.

II. Review of Related Literature

2.1 Prevalence of Coffee Shops

It is a fair assessment that coffee shops have become so prevalent across the world that they have had a fairly significant impact on global culture (Clark 2007). It is estimated that the worldwide consumption of coffee that has been consumed worldwide since 2010 exceeds 400 billion cups of coffee per year

(Coffee Statistics Online, 2010). Some estimates put this number higher due to the fact that in some cultures at least a portion (and in the case of Italy a large portion) of coffee is consumed at home and therefore more difficult to estimate. Coffee shops have seen consistent growth of about 10% annually over the past decade, while fast food chains, by comparison, have seen an average of 2% growth annually over the same period (Holmes, 2004). To translate this into per capita consumption, South Korea in 2015 consumed an average of 2.3 kilograms of coffee per year while Italy consumed 5.6 kilograms of coffee in the same year. While these consumption levels are far below many other European countries, the overall increases in global coffee consumption keep rising on a yearly basis. Additionally, the composition of coffee shops worldwide has evolved along a number of different lines. First, are the complementary menu items which often include pastries, sandwiches, desserts and other bakery items. The second is the variety with which the coffee itself can be served from the instant variety, to the barista prepared specialty beverages including cappuccino and macchiato. Third, is the accessibility of the coffee shop to pedestrian as well as drive-thru traffic and finally the availability of coffee as a commodity to consumers to be consumed outside of a coffee shop (First Research Industry Profiles, 2016).

2.2 Cultural Context

Another interesting component of coffee consumption is associated with the cultural context. Usually when we think of culture, themes that bind a particular group of people through activities affirming identity, common values, social groups, games, etc., come to mind. Coffee has become one of those components, as with many other foods and beverages that has inserted itself as a variable and adaptable aspect in different cultural contexts. In essence, coffee has become a type of "binder" that helps connect similar or disparate cultural situations. Walking into a coffee shop and looking around at patrons who are casually talking with friends, talking business over a coffee, or typing away furiously on a laptop, it is easy to imagine that scene being repeated all over the world. Coffee has become such a hub that it is becoming less and less evident that people go to a coffee shop just to have a cup of coffee. Interestingly, even in the seventeenth century in the Ottoman Empire, coffee houses were centers of important social rituals ranging from scholarly discussions to challenging the social order and hierarchy, and became more important than the coffee itself (Sajdi, 2014). In our modern world, while the topics may have varied and progress and technology have greatly changed the world, coffee has become the 'social lubricant' that mediates the social interactions of our day.

2.3 How it's Served

Coffee while being ubiquitous, has at the same time created a unique cultural attachment in terms of how it is prepared and served. Italians, for example revolve around the espresso, cappuccino, and café latte while the US and South Korea have a variety of different flavors with a variety of ingredients and consistencies to provide many more options for the consumer. Italy, for example, is synonymous with espresso in variant forms which include single shot, double shot, short,

long, with liquor cognac, whiskey, Sambuca, grappa, baileys, among other choices. Whether being served in the cosmopolitan city of Milan or in a remote mountain town, the quality that is expected from patrons is high and the skill of the baristas doesn't disappoint. In Ethiopia, coffee (called buna) is still made and served in a traditional ceremony that can take more than an hour from transforming the raw beans to the finished product (Bland, 2013). In South Korea, the big names including Starbucks, Caffe Bene, and Coffee Bean and Tea Leaf accounted for more than 12,000 stores in 2014 and have an annual growth rate of around 10%. In this market, however, there is a stark difference on how the coffee is served. While some serving techniques are founded in tradition that date back well over a century, country's where the coffee culture is relatively young, like in South Korea, the methods and menus offered and served vary greatly and are most aimed at being experiential encompassing more than just the coffee consumption. This can be seen through the large number of theme coffee shops that are found throughout Seoul as well as other parts of the country. Some coffee shops are designed around music, the arts, cartoon characters or a host of other unique themes around which coffee is served.

2.4 Situational Context

The context under which coffee is consumed has also evolved along a number of different tracks. Some coffee shops retain a reputation as social meeting places, where people gather to casually enjoy their brew over casual conversation detached from the stresses of the outside world. Depending on their location and clientele though, some

coffee shops, especially around universities provide places for study, relaxation, or simply to get away for a moment to refresh oneself with a boost of caffeine. While consumers are much more discerning in Italy, including many parts of Europe, as well as in South America, Asian consumers direct their coffee consumption much more in conjunction with their daily schedules such as study, conducting business, or sitting with friends for an extended period of time chatting or just relaxing. In Italy, the consumption of coffee is much quicker and because quality is expected to be high, location is more of a factor of distance as a time saving measure as opposed to seeking better coffee. Espresso, for example, is primarily consumed at breakfast in Italy or during a break time during the day whereas in other parts of the world, it is part of the meal, regardless of the type of food being served (Ubbidiente, 2012). In South Korea, on the other hand, mood is often sought out and as a result large coffee chains exist side by side with independent coffee shops who strive more for mood and atmosphere than strictly for providing convenience and a variety of menus. These can be easily identified through a variety of themes both in architecture as well as the decorations and furnishings in the coffee shop.

2.5 Coffee and the Internet

For travelers, coffeehouses have become a sort of oasis where free wi-fi is almost always available and affords connectivity to family, friends or business associates to keep in contact with when needed. Especially in South Korea, you would be hard pressed to find a coffee shop that does not have free wi-fi. Starbucks (with over 27,000 stores

worldwide), for example, which has the largest presence in South Korea (over 300 stores in Seoul alone), provides free wi-fi to its customers which goes hand-in-hand with the culture of the most connected countries on the planet. In Italy on the other hand, coffee shops (of which there are zero Starbucks and over 172 thousand independent Italian coffee shops country-wide), (Statista, 2017), often do not provide wi-fi service, unless located around universities, primarily because the speed with which Italians consume coffee. As mentioned earlier, for Italians, coffee is consumed during a brief respite from the day's activities. The reason for consumption may be for an energy boost, or just to enjoy the taste of the coffee. Around the universities, however, especially the larger coffee shops do provide wi-fi service as the clientele is largely people in their 20s who are also interested in connectivity with their coffee experience. In some smaller cities in Italy, wi-fi service is provided to an area as opposed to a particular coffee shop or restaurant. The reasoning behind this is that Italians will often sit in a public area such as around a fountain, park, or other outdoor place of which there would often be restaurants, coffee shops, ice cream stores etc., to chat with friends or wanting to have connectivity to surf social networking sites so a municipality will install free wi-fi across this entire area for easy access.

III. Methodology

3.1 Sources of Data

Surveys were distributed in Italy and South Korea among university age students. Survey questions were translated from English into Korean for the Korean respondents. The survey was then translated from English into Italian and back translated into English for accuracy. There were a total of 154 Italian surveys collected and 341 Korean surveys. Surveys in Korea were done face-to-face in or around campus on paper surveys during the spring-summer of 2017. Surveys in Italy were also conducted face-to-face by two PhD candidates from the University of Palermo in Sicily during the same period.

3.2 Demographic Data

Table 1 below shows the number of Korean and Italian respondents, respectively. The division by gender is also presented. Effort was made to achieve an equal number of male and female respondents.

All Korean respondents were current

Table 1. Survey Respondent's Demographic Data

Korean Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Male	160	47%
Female	181	53%
Italian Respondents		
Male	66	43%
Female	88	57%
Total Respondents	495	

Table 2. Italian and Korean Survey Respondent's Reason for Choosing the Coffee Shop they Frequent Most

	,Frequency (It)	Frequency (Ko)	Percentage (It)	Percentage (Ko)
Price	17	94	11%	27.5%
Taste	14	112	9.1%	32.8%
Atmosphere	48	84	31.1%	24.6%
Kindness	19	9	12.3%	2.6%
Distance	53	40	34.4%	11.7%
Quality	2	-	<1%	-
Cleanliness	1	-	<1%	<1%
Open 24 hours	-	2		<1%
Total	154	341		

undergraduate students at a South Korean university. All Italian students, as well, were current university students at two universities on the island of Sicily in Italy. University age students were chosen first due to the concentration of respondents that could be approached either on campus or at nearby coffee shops. Surveying university students also gave a wider range of possible responses given that students have more flexible timetables and might have different reasons for going to coffee shops at different times of the day. In the following sections are data and analyses on the two focal questions of this exploratory research. The first being the reasons for respondents choosing the coffee shop that they frequent most often. The response choices were price, taste, atmosphere, kindness, and an 'other' option where respondents could write in a separate answer. The results are compiled in Table 2 for easier comparison. The second focal question focuses on the reason for which respondents went to the coffee shop they alluded to in the first question. The response options for this question consisted of work related, family/friends, study, rest, and also an

'other' option where respondents could write in a different answer. The rationale for these response choices was first and foremost to determine if there were similarities or differences between the two groups of respondents. One point in particular to examine is the fact that in South Korea there are established franchise coffee shops as well as independent coffee shops while in Italy the most well-known franchises such as Starbucks, Caffe Benne, etc., do not exist but instead are dominated by independently owned coffee shops. These responses are also tabulated in Table 3 for easier comparison.

3.3 Data on Most Frequented Coffee Shop

The responses between Italian and Korean students on the reasons for choosing their most frequented coffee shop have significant differences. While the majority of Italian respondents selected distance (34.4%) and atmosphere (31.1%) as their primary choices, Korean students chose taste (32.8%), price (27.5%), and atmosphere (24.6%) as the most important factors affecting their choice of

most frequented coffee shop. In terms of distance for the Italian consumers, while a third of students chose this as the most relevant factor, we have to remember that in Italy, the expectation of coffee quality is very high across all coffee shops. This would suggest that consumers don't need to travel a longer distance in order to find a better cup of coffee so distance becomes relevant only terms of the coffee shop that is closest to me at the time. In Korea, on the other hand where only 11% of respondents chose distance as the most important factor, we can interpret this in a different way. Due to the small size of the country and a dense population, South Korea has one of the highest numbers of coffee shops which essentially makes distance a sort of irrelevant factor due to the pervasiveness of coffee shops. Therefore, we can infer a very different set of reasons for consumers choosing distance as a relevant factor. A second difference in results is the atmosphere dimension. Here also a third of Italian consumers chose this factor as the most relevant while a quarter of Korean consumers chose the same factor. One stark difference here comes from the design and consumption patterns between the two groups. Italian coffee shops, for the most part, are designed with either a counter or very small tables with no chairs where consumers have their espresso, sometimes with a small pastry and then leave the establishment. Korea, on the other hand, consumers either pick up their coffee to take out or they stay in the coffee shop for an extended period of time. This is a significant difference, the latter consumers which would relate atmosphere with the comfort of the furnishings, décor, temperature, lighting, etc., which would be of much less importance due to the fact that oftentimes

consumers spend but a mere few minutes in the coffee shop only to consume their coffee and continue on with their day. Price shows another significant difference with Italians choosing this 11% of the time while Koreans chose this 27%. One likely interpretation of this is the limited menu offered in Italian coffee shops. Italians coffee of choice is the espresso, often black, or sometimes with an added ingredient such as milk, sugar, or alcohol. Therefore, there wouldn't be any significant price variations from one coffee shop to the next due to the limited menu options. Coffee shops in Korea, especially the franchises, offer a large variety of coffee options with new varieties coming out on a regular basis especially during holiday seasons such as Christmas, New Years, Thanksgiving, and Halloween even though some of these holidays are not strictly South Korean holidays but still cross cultural boundaries and are offered in South Korea. Another interesting difference is the taste dimension where a third of Korean consumers chose this dimension as compared to only 9% by Italian consumers. Again, as mentioned previously for Italian consumers, their expectation of high quality coffee would suggest that no matter where you go to get your coffee, the taste would be expected to be consistently of high quality whether you are in a large city or a small town. For Korea consumers, on the other hand, there could be two issues at work here. The first being associated with the larger number of menu items offered which would range from a very simple and uncomplicated 'americano' to other menu items that contain cream, foams, powders, and a number of other ingredients. A second factor could be the tailoring that incorporated into the coffee drinks to suit the Korean palate. Green tea, and

Table 3. Italian and Korean Survey Respondent's Reason for Going to the Coffee Shop they Frequent Most

		Frequency (It)	Frequency (Ko)	Percentage (It)	Percentage (Ko)
Work		8	10	5.2%	2.9%
Family	/ Friends	9	104	5.8%	30.5%
Study		94	83	61%	24.3%
Rest		31	114	20%	33.4%
Drink	Coffee	-	25	-	7.3%
Drink	Juice		2	-	<1%
Have	Dessert		2	-	<1%
Charge	Phone		1	-	<1%
Location			-	3.9%	-
Lunch		1	-	<1%	-
Habit		1	-	<1%	-
Quality		4	-	2.6%	-
Total		154	341		

sweet potato flavors, for example, can readily be found in coffee creating in South Korea. The baristas ability to incorporate these flavors would be important factors that contribute to Korean consumer's satisfaction with the taste of the coffee product. The final interesting difference in responses to the coffee shop frequented is the 'kindness' variable. The Italian respondents chose this dimension 12% while the Korean consumers a mere 2.6% of the time. Once again, for the Italian respondents, this relatively low number could be attributed to the fact that consumers spend such little time in the coffee shop to make this dimension significant. But for Koreans, this dimension is almost non-existent. Here lies another interesting cultural component that may help explain this difference. Anyone who has spent any amount of time in Korea has come across the word "bballi bballi" which translates into "hurry up." It is probably one of the most pervasive words in the Korean lexicon. Wherever you travel in South Korea, you will see people rushing about no matter if they are working or enjoying their leisure time. Korea is a fast culture that expects everything to be done at an above average speed. This can easily be applied to the food and services industry of which the coffee shop is a major player. Therefore, consumers are much more concerned with getting their coffee in a timely manner than with any uniquely kind attitude of the server. AS long as the service person is not impolite, then that is an appropriate level of kindness which is expected from any coffee shop a person might frequent.

3.4 Data of Reason for Going to the Coffee Shop

In the area of the reason why Italian and Korean students went to their chosen coffee shop, Italian respondents listed study by a resounding 61% while Korean students selected rest (33.4%), family/friends (30.5%), and study (24.3%). At a glance, there is a stark difference between Korean and Italian university students. First, in regards to the first question of why a particular coffee shop

was chosen, the most significant factor for Italians was not even one of the offered choices but one that was written in (distance) by respondents. For the Koreans, the most significant answer was taste. On its face, this is a perplexing difference because Italian coffee is considered anecdotally to be some of the best coffee in the world. One possible explanation of that could be that because Italians already expect a very high level of quality in the taste of their coffee, that option becomes a less important issue. In regards to the second question of the reason why a coffee shop was frequented, Italians responded overwhelmingly for the reason of study and for Koreans the most significant responses were for rest and for family and friends. This also points to very different attitudes for going to a coffee shop in the first place. For Italians, a mere 5% percent of respondents chose 'family/friends' as their reason for going to their chosen coffee shop while Koreans responded with 30%. In line with previous reasoning, Italians spend very little time in coffee shops, whether they go alone, with friends or family members. The primary reason is to get their coffee fix and continue on with the daily activities. Koreans, on the other hand, spend a significantly longer amount of time in coffee shops as part of their social activities. The time they spend in the coffee shop is not just for the consumption of coffee but to engage in discussions with and spend time with family members and friends. Another interesting cultural component of this is the fact that Korean generally to not visit friends' homes. It is much more common to meet people outside. Part of this reason is that inviting someone to your home requires something to be prepared by the person who is playing host as well as to prepare a gift for the person whose home you are visiting. For Korean this can be very burdensome and as a result it is easier and more convenient to meet in a neighborhood coffee shop. For Italians, on the other hand, while the gift preparation is consistent with that in Korea, they much more prefer to have guests (family/friends) over to their home for a coffee and pastries. It is an atmosphere which encompasses the closeness and warmth with which Italians share their daily lives. For this reason, the low score in meeting family/ friends at coffee shops can be interpreted. Another interesting comparison is the percentages of 'rest' shown as the reason for going to the coffee as 20% for Italians and 33% for Koreans. In this particular dimension, the most likely explanation in both cultures come simply from the desire to not want to prepare the home to receive guests as both cultures require a certain amount of preparation in order to get ready for guests. It is very unusual in both Italian and Korean culture to spontaneously invite guests to one's home without any forethought or preparation. It is with this in mind that many people would choose 'rest' as a reason for wanting to meet others outside of home in a coffee shop or some other place. The most significant difference found in these results, however, lies in the choice of 'study' for the two responding groups. For Koreans, 24% of students stated the coffee shop as a place to study. There can be several reasons for this. First, and most obvious is that the coffee shop provides food, drink, and a place to study in one location which is more convenient than a library where personal items can be lost or taken if a student has to leave their chair to get something to eat or drink. Another advantage is that a number of coffee shops are open 24 hours

which provides a climate controlled place to study. Third, the coffee shop can be location convenient if study needs to be conducted by more than one student. The Italian student's response of 61% percent for 'study' provides a much less clear explanation. While there are also library facilities for students to conduct their studies, there is no clear reasoning why coffee shops would consist of such a high percentage of 'study' responses. The only speculation I could offer at this time would be the prevalence of free wi-fi offered at coffee shops that immediately surround university campuses in Italy. This is a question, however, that should be explored in more detail to find out why a disproportionate number of students responded this way. That being said, one additional question that I believe should be inquired into is to determine what role, if any, the technology aspect (in particular wi-fi) plays into the dynamic of the coffee shop and if it has an impact either on the social dimension of its use or in terms of study or other academic pursuits. Especially in Korea, wi-fi is considered a given. It is unusual, even in smaller cities to find a coffee shop that does not have wi-fi service so it has sort of become an expected service provided by the coffee shop. It would be interesting to see if Italian consumers view wi-fi services in line with Korean students.

IV. Areas of Exploration and Discussion

Based on these answers, there are a number of areas that should be investigated in order to try to understand what interactions there are among culture, lifestyle, technology, and coffee culture in Italy and Korea. Although there is already much research on consumer choice, consumer satisfaction, etc., I believe a step back needs to be taken in order to re-examine what factors affect the current situation surrounding coffee shops and their patronage. As we can see from the differences in responses to the two questions above, there can be significantly different reasons for similar levels of responses as well as very distinct level of responses. Focus groups and interviews could yield more accurate dimensions that fit the current environment of coffee shop choice and patronage.

4.1 Consumer Choice

Traditionally in Italy, choices for consumers in the realm of coffee were independent "bars" as they are called with small high tables where customers would consume a quick espresso and leave akin to a gasoline station for humans (Sbraga and Erba, 2014). Since 2011, coffee shops have taken a number of different forms including serving coffee with desserts, coffee with snacks such as small sandwiches, coffee and ice cream, or a combination of the previous choices. While the menus had many consistencies in terms of the quality of the coffee and the tastes of the foods offered, coffee shops still remain primarily independent ventures that encompass the cultural components of the region they inhabit, whether that is a large city or the smallest of towns. In Korea, on the other hand, consumer choice, as shown by the Starbucks example, was led by integrating cultural aspects into its organizational structure and by using social media as its driving force for expansion (Lemus et. al, 2015). Brand image, convenience, and innovative new combin-

ations of coffee products have been the primary vehicles used to appeal to consumers especially the younger generation. Given that approach, however, small independent coffee shops have also succeeded alongside the large franchises. What has contributed to that phenomenon? What are the choice distinctions that draw consumers to large franchise coffee shops like Starbucks, Caffe Bene, and The Coffee Bean? Is consumer choice based solely on the menu offerings, atmosphere, or environment? There appear to be many more choice options than just menu, location, or price that drive consumer's choices but given how much the coffee shop environment has changed in recent years, an exploratory approach to get a 'lay of the land' as it were, might be in order.

4.2 Service Quality and Consumer Satisfaction

Alfalah (2017) states that re-designing both the product and service delivery process are critical to meeting customer's exacting standards. This philosophy can be applied to any industry and has been a common theme across product-based and well as service-based industries. As technology and tastes change, consumer needs also need to be addressed. However, how does this process take place? In the case of Korean and Italian coffee cultures, each one has evolved across very different lines yet the reasons underlying those tracks are constantly evolving. Parasuraman et al. (1994) defines service quality as the gap that exists between a consumer's expectations of the service that is provided and the expected quality of service. In this case, how can expectations be determined? In the case of the response as to why Korean and

Italian students chose "study" as their response to going to the coffee shop, how can we interpret the result of 61% of Italians but only 24% of Koreans going to the coffee shop for this reason? Korea being a country where studies are very highly valued and extolled and Italy being on the other end of the spectrum in terms of the pursuit of academic excellence, there exists a substantial gap here. Additionally, for the Italian respondents, study and rest account for 81% for the reason of going to the coffee shop. On the other hand, for the Korean respondents, family/friends (30.5%), study (24.3%), and rest (33.4%) total up to the majority of 88.2%. The first thing to notice here is the vast discrepancy in percentages in each category. The second point is that of the majority chosen in each category which also has significant differences. In this case, is it the coffee shop that has done something to affect the desire of students to go (or not) to the coffee shop to study? A better understanding of the interaction between study and coffee shops is required before it is possible to make assertions or analyses as to why the choices are made.

4.3 Cultural Relevance

According to Tucker (2011), coffee has become such an integral part of life that it has become part of the national identity. It is not only gauged by how it is made or served, which are also important concepts, but has become an a central component of people's lives so much so that people themselves may not be fully aware of what it means to them. Add that to the fact that coffee is one of the most consumed beverages as well as one of the most internationally traded commodities in the world (Topik, 2009), coffee has even

been referred to as the world's most popular legal drug (Weinberg and Bealer, 2001). What can we do with this insight then? Looking at the previous two questions asked of Korean and Italian respondents, there can be a multitude of reasons even within one answer choice. For example, choosing 'rest' as an option for the reason as to why a coffee shop was chosen can yield a number of different reasons for requiring rest. As it was students who were surveyed, it is the logical assumption that students chose 'rest' due to wanting a respite from their studies. That, however, could be an inaccurate conclusion as there could be a number of different reasons for requiring or needing rest.

V. Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Track Over Time

The first recommendation I would suggest is to survey students but to track, say for example, the next ten times they go to a coffee shop. There are several reasons for this suggestion. First, people would generally associate a positive experience when recalling the last reason for going to a coffee shop. Second, since the most recent recall is the easiest to retrieve, that would not necessarily be an accurate representation of why a person chooses a particular coffee shop or the reason why that coffee shop was chosen. Tracking a number (in this case 10) would give a more overall picture of coffee shop patronage in terms of how it was chosen and why. This approach could also allow for comparisons at different period of time, in the case of

students, during the course of a semester. Respondents should additionally be asked more detailed questions surrounding the specific details about each visit to the coffee shop. This will allow subsequent research to write more detailed question in future research that will hopefully yield more accurate and generalizable results. The more accurate and significant the questions are when collecting data, the more accurate and the significant results will be. While there are some logistical challenges in keeping in contact with a larger sample size of students over the course of ten coffee shop visits, which could take place over a relatively short or longer period of time, I believe the results would be worth the wait. While of course there could be many interactive effects in a person's daily life that could affect why or when they would frequent a coffee, there would likely be some patterns that could be drawn from such data gathering. I believe this would be useful from an academic perspective in that it would provide a more up-to-date understanding of why consumers go to coffee shops and what role coffee shops play in consumer's daily life. In organizational behavior research, development has evolved from the classical period where productivity was the only goal, to the humanistic period where employee behavior became a more focal point of study to modern organizational behavior which has sought to incorporate the fields of psychology, sociology, anthropology, and political science into a better understanding of how an organization is understood both internally but also how it interacts with external business entities as well as consumers (Nahavandi et al., 2015). With this in mind, it would be helpful to delve deeper into current insights into understanding why

students, as well as other consumer groups, frequent coffee shops in order to understand how individual cultures address their unique coffee culture. From a practical perspective, the significant difference in the existence of coffee franchises in South Korea and the significant absence of such franchises in Italy should be understood. While both countries have a highly successful coffee industry, understanding the components that define the coffee culture in each country can lend insight into how coffee shops can tailor their products and services in order to enter this highly competitive market but also to detect possible opportunities in the coffee market. In South Korea, for example, a well-known Italian coffee Illy is making inroads into the Korean market not in the fast paced franchise model that has permeated the country but imitating the high quality taste of Italian coffee with a fusion of Korean's penchant for new flavors and varieties of coffee that keeps Korean consumers wanting for more.

5.2 A Combination Approach

A second suggestion would be to ask a respondent to answer a series of survey questions and then, with the same respondents, track them over say, the next ten coffee shop trips, which would give a way to compare and contrast similarities and differences between the answers given on a survey at one time and then on the collated data over the next ten trips to the coffee shop. If there are significant differences, then that would provide some useful insight into how coffee shops, the coffee itself and associated menu items, or other factors such as those stated above like price, distance, study, rest, etc., fit into a person's decision making

process. Instead of just blindly throwing price discounts or events to draw in consumers, coffee shops can get a better handle on what drives consumers to go to coffee shops and therefore create more value for the customer. As has been shown in industry and after industry, the successful firm becomes part of the consumer's life as opposed to just getting money for providing a product or service. As mentioned in the previous section, understanding the organizational behavior environment not only from a sales/profit perspective but also from a sociological perspective can provide insight into the coffee industry, how it has developed over time as well as what opportunities lie ahead. It is the hope of this exploratory paper to present a slightly different approach to a well-established industry in order to gain a fresh perspective and possibly new insight that could be ascertained to later be able to empirically test and apply new strategies and find new opportunities within the coffee industry.

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