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Beyond Stimulation: A Motivation-Based Segmentation of Coffee Purchasing and Drinking Behaviour

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to segment Turkish coffee consumers residing in Northern Cyprus by their motivations for coffee consumption and to examine how these segments differ in coffee attributes, information sources, consumption and purchasing behaviours, and socio-demographic characteristics. Data were collected using a structured online questionnaire and purposive sampling between April 2025 and June 2025. A total of 649 valid responses were analysed. Exploratory factor analysis was employed to identify underlying motivational dimensions of coffee consumption, followed by hierarchical and K-means cluster analysis to classify consumers into homogeneous segments. Five distinct motivational consumer segments were identified. Chi-square tests and ANOVA results revealed significant differences among these segments in preferred coffee attributes, information sources, consumption occasions, purchasing behaviour, consumption frequency, and socio-demographic characteristics. The findings demonstrated that motivations for coffee consumption in Northern Cyprus are multidimensional and strongly associated with behavioural and demographic profiles. Although coffee consumption has been widely examined in global literature, limited research has addressed it from a motivational segmentation perspective within a Mediterranean cultural context. By providing a comprehensive characterisation of consumer segments, this study contributes to the literature on coffee consumption and purchasing behaviour from a consumer psychology perspective.

Keywords: Consumer Behaviour, Coffee Consumption, Consumption Motivations, Consumer Segmentation, Cluster Analysis, Northern Cyprus
JEL Classifications: M10, M30, M31, M39

1. INTRODUCTION

Coffee has become the world's most-traded commodity after crude oil and is one of the most widely consumed beverages, with more than 2 billion cups consumed daily (Giovane da Silva et al., 2023; Spence and Carvalho, 2020; Samoggia and Riedel, 2018; Poole et al., 2019). As a complex product, coffee cannot be fully evaluated before consumption, as its sensory attributes, experiential value, and symbolic meanings emerge during use. In addition to its nutritional and stimulant properties, coffee holds considerable social and cultural significance, shaping interpersonal interactions and cultural identity across communities.

Over the past decades, the coffee industry has undergone substantial transformations in production systems, processing techniques, quality standards, product differentiation strategies, and consumption philosophies (Guimaraes et al., 2019; Boaventura et al., 2018). These developments are commonly conceptualised through the "three waves of coffee," which reflect shifts from mass consumption and standardisation to specialty coffee, artisanal production, and experience-oriented consumption (Santos et al., 2021; Samoggia et al., 2020; Teles and Behrens, 2020).

As the industry has evolved, market competition has intensified, and consumer preferences have grown more diverse (Lima et al., 2020). Contemporary coffee consumers demonstrate growing interest in product quality, origin, variety, and experiential aspects of consumption (Maciejewski and Mokrysz, 2019; Farah, 2009). Furthermore, issues related to sustainability—such as the protection of the environment, fair trade practices, ethical sourcing,

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and certification—have emerged as significant factors influencing purchasing decisions, especially in Western markets (Dragusanu et al., 2022; Santos et al., 2021; Liu et al., 2019; Chen and Lee, 2015). This diversification of preferences has contributed to a more fragmented and complex market structure, presenting both challenges and opportunities for industry stakeholders.

Previous research has examined coffee consumers in terms of demographic characteristics, consumption patterns, lifestyle factors, and sustainability orientation (Czarniecka-Skubina et al., 2021; Maciejewski et al., 2019; Carvalho et al., 2015). However, relatively few studies have explicitly segmented coffee consumers based on underlying motivations and examined how these segments differ in purchasing behaviour and consumption contexts. Given the pivotal role of motivation in shaping consumer decisions, motivation-based segmentation offers significant theoretical and managerial insights (Lone et al., 2023; Castillo-Canalejo et al., 2020; Bieger and Laesser, 2002).

Northern Cyprus provides a particularly relevant context for examining motivations for coffee consumption, given its dynamic and historically rooted coffee culture. Situated in the Eastern Mediterranean and shaped by Ottoman and regional influences, the region maintains a strong coffee tradition in which Turkish coffee coexists with specialty formats and international coffee shop chains. Historically, coffeehouses have functioned as important social spaces, reinforcing coffee's role in daily interaction, family rituals, and community life. At the same time, increasing market diversification and exposure to global consumption trends have introduced new consumption patterns and experiential formats. This coexistence of tradition and modernisation makes Northern Cyprus a culturally embedded yet dynamically evolving coffee market, offering a rich context for examining how functional, sensory, habitual, and socio-cultural motivations translate into distinct consumer segments and behavioural patterns.

Consumer preferences and motivations vary across cultural and national contexts; thus, analysing coffee consumption in a specific regional context enhances our understanding of global coffee markets. Accordingly, this study aims to segment coffee consumers in Northern Cyprus based on their motivations for drinking coffee. Furthermore, it seeks to characterise the identified segments in terms of consumption situations, purchasing behaviour, and socio-demographic characteristics. By adopting a motivation-based segmentation approach, this study contributes to the literature on consumer behavior in coffee markets. It provides practical implications for marketers and policymakers operating in emerging, culturally distinctive contexts.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Consumer Coffee Drinking Motivations

Consumer motivation plays a crucial role in influencing food selection and buying habits. Within the realm of food consumption, motivation encompasses both internal and external drives that prompt individuals to choose specific products to fulfil their physiological, psychological, and social needs (Ngugi et al., 2020; Sharpley, 2018). Food choice is a multidimensional process affected by sensory preferences, health beliefs, habitual behaviours, convenience, economic considerations, and socio-cultural elements (Marty et al., 2021; Steptoe et al., 1995; Tobler et al., 2011).

In the food and beverage industry, coffee holds a unique position. While it has historically been viewed as a standard commodity, it is increasingly being repositioned as a premium, experience-oriented product, like wine. This shift reflects not only functional needs, such as stimulation, but also hedonic, symbolic, and social motivations.

Sensory attributes consistently emerge as key determinants of coffee preference and consumption patterns. Specifically, taste and aroma are highly influential, as they significantly affect overall product assessment and customer satisfaction (Czarniecka-Skubina et al., 2021; Harith et al., 2014; Sousa et al., 2016). The sensory characteristics of coffee, which encompass bitterness, acidity, body, and aromatic complexity, play a significant role in eliciting emotional responses such as pleasure, comfort, and relaxation (Labbe et al., 2015). Empirical evidence confirms that taste is a decisive quality attribute in coffee purchasing decisions (Ágoston et al., 2018; Bento de Sá et al., 2017; van der Merwe and Maree, 2016). Nonetheless, sensory perception can also pose an obstacle, since bitterness—often associated with caffeine and certain roasting characteristics—may deter non-coffee drinkers from consuming coffee (Harith et al., 2014; Sousa et al., 2016). These results suggest that sensory acceptance is not universal but is moderated by individual taste sensitivity, cultural exposure, and prior consumption experience.

Health considerations represent another important motivational dimension. Coffee contains caffeine and several bioactive compounds, such as chlorogenic acids and polyphenols, which have been associated with both positive and negative health effects. Consuming in moderation has been associated with improved alertness, concentration, and physical performance, as well as an uplifted mood. Epidemiological studies further suggest associations between coffee consumption and reduced risks of type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, neurodegenerative disorders, and certain cancers (Nieber, 2017; Makiso et al., 2023). Proposed mechanisms encompass improved lipid and glucose metabolism, anti-inflammatory effects, and antioxidant activity. However, excessive caffeine intake may lead to adverse health outcomes.

Habitual behaviour is commonly acknowledged as a key driver of coffee consumption (Alsafra et al., 2022; Ágoston et al., 2018; Czarniecka-Skubina et al., 2021; Sousa et al., 2016). For many consumers, coffee consumption is ingrained in daily routines and requires minimal cognitive consideration. The strength of this habit may grow with age, as older consumers generally favour traditional coffee varieties and well-known brands. In contrast, younger consumers are more willing to explore new flavours and innovative formats (Aguirre, 2016).

In addition to habitual behaviour, cultural tradition significantly affects coffee consumption. Coffee drinking in households is

frequently integrated into cultural practices and family routines (Tucker, 2011). Several studies highlight tradition as a significant motivational factor (Alnafissa et al., 2024; Cruz-Flores et al., 2020; Sousa et al., 2016), whereas the intergenerational transfer of coffee culture—typically supported by family members—strengthens the persistence of consumption patterns (Samoggia and Riedel, 2018).

Coffee consumption is deeply rooted in social settings. Coffeehouses serve as venues that promote interaction, communication, and community building (Oniku and Akintimokin, 2022; Tucker, 2011). Social motivations encompass the need for belonging, the maintenance of relationships, and engagement in shared cultural practices. Recent research indicates that repeated visits to coffeehouses are driven by social and cultural motives (Haktanir and Gullu, 2023). In this sense, coffee consumption transcends its role as a mere functional beverage and becomes a more comprehensive, experiential, lifestyle-oriented practice.

2.2. Coffee Purchasing and Consumption Behaviour

Previous studies have shown that the behaviour surrounding coffee purchasing and consumption varies significantly among different consumers and markets. The decisions regarding purchasing and consumption are shaped by both intrinsic attributes, such as taste and aroma, and extrinsic attributes, including price, branding, packaging, certification, and country of origin (Barahona et al., 2020; Czarniecka-Skubina et al., 2021; Sabio and Spers, 2020; Lima et al., 2020). Additionally, consumer preferences vary across coffee formats, purchase channels, information sources, and consumption frequency (Asik, 2017; Guimaraes et al., 2019; Maciejewski et al., 2019; Lanfranchi et al., 2016; Lui et al., 2019; Giacalone et al., 2016; Ahmed et al., 2004; Aguirre, 2017).

Research conducted in various countries has revealed significant differences in coffee consumption trends and buying behaviours, which are indicative of cultural traditions, lifestyles, and market conditions (Czarniecka-Skubina et al., 2021; Lone et al., 2023; van der Merwe and Maree, 2016). These findings imply that coffee consumers are not a unified group and that behavioural characteristics may differ across consumer segments.

While earlier studies have focused on specific aspects of coffee purchasing and consumption behaviour, there is a scarcity of studies investigating how these behaviours vary among consumer segments based on underlying motivational frameworks. Analysing behavioural differences between these segments can yield deeper insight into the diversity of consumers in the coffee market.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Data Collection Method and Research Sample

This study employed a quantitative research design utilising an online survey approach chosen for its cost-effectiveness, time efficiency, and accessibility for respondents. An initial questionnaire was pretested with 27 MBA students and faculty members to pinpoint unclear phrasing and enhance the clarity of technical terminology. Following the feedback received, minor adjustments were made before finalising the instrument, which was developed in Google Forms and disseminated via an email link.

The estimated population of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus stands at around 390,000. Based on the sample size determination table by Krejcie and Morgan (1970), at least 384 respondents are necessary to attain a 95% confidence level. Ethical approval was granted by the Ethics Committee of Eastern Mediterranean University (Ref. No: ETK00-2023-121).

A purposive sampling method was utilised to select participants aged 18 years and above, ensuring that only those who consume coffee were part of the study. This approach was deemed suitable given the study's emphasis on the motivations behind coffee consumption, as respondents needed prior experience with coffee to provide valid responses. Participants were recruited from various major districts to improve geographic coverage.

Data collection occurred from April 2025 to June 2025. A screening question was used to ensure that only individuals who consume coffee participated in the survey. Of the 687 gathered, 649 were fully completed and deemed appropriate for analysis, exceeding the minimum sample size requirement. The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents are presented in Table 1.

3.2. Research variables

The questionnaire was divided into six sections. The initial section collected socio-demographic data, including gender, age, marital status, education level, occupation, and income. The second section assessed the motivations behind coffee consumption, referencing existing literature on coffee and caffeine consumption (e.g., Kucukkasap and Uslu, 2024; Choi, 2020; Samoggia et al., 2020; Ágoston et al., 2018; Labbe et al., 2015), utilising a five-point Likert scale. The following sections evaluated enjoyment across various consumption contexts and the perceived significance of coffee types, information sources, and coffee attributes (e.g., type, price, origin, and availability). These items were also measured using a five-point Likert scale. The final section examined coffee consumption and purchasing patterns, including daily consumption frequency, weekly coffee spending, and preferred purchase outlets.

4. RESULTS

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 30 to address the study objectives. A range of statistical techniques was applied to examine underlying patterns in coffee consumption behaviour.

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with Varimax rotation was performed on 19 items measuring motivations for coffee consumption. One item ("it reduces my blood pressure") was removed because its factor loading was below 0.50 (Hair et al., 2019). The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy was 0.90, indicating an excellent level of suitability for factor analysis (Kaiser, 1974). Bartlett's test of sphericity confirmed that correlations among items were sufficient for factor analysis (χ^2 (153) = 4678.684, P < 0.001). The factor analysis revealed four distinct motivational dimensions: (1) perceived functional benefits, (2) sensory enjoyment and daily ritual, (3) cultural and familial tradition, and (4) social interaction. These factors collectively explained 60.9% of the total variance.

Internal consistency was assessed using Cronbach's alpha. The values ranged from 0.63 to 0.86, indicating acceptable reliability, particularly given the study's exploratory nature and the construct's multidimensional structure. Common method bias was assessed using the Harman single-factor test. The first factor accounted for 37.19% of the total variance, which is below the commonly accepted threshold of 50%, suggesting that common method bias is unlikely to be a serious concern in this study (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The results of the factor analysis are presented in Table 2.

A two-stage cluster analysis was conducted to segment consumers based on their motivations for coffee consumption. In the first stage, hierarchical cluster analysis using Ward's method and squared Euclidean distance was employed to determine the optimal number of clusters. The agglomeration schedule and changes in fusion coefficients were examined, indicating that a five-cluster solution provided the most appropriate and interpretable segmentation.

In the second stage, K-means clustering was applied using the five-cluster solution derived from the hierarchical analysis to refine cluster membership. Clustering was performed on Z-standardised factor scores of the identified motivational dimensions to ensure comparability across variables and to minimise the influence of scale differences.

Based on these analyses, the consumer segments (clusters) were clearly differentiated by functional benefits ($F[4, 648] = 182.299$, $P < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.531$), sensory enjoyment ($F[4, 648] = 228.571$, $P < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.586$), cultural/familial tradition ($F=[4, 648] = 159.671$, $P < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.4970$), and social interaction ($F[4, 648] = 166.328$, $P < 0.001$, $\eta^2 = 0.508$). Subsequently, five consumer segments were defined: Indifferent consumers (14.8%, n = 96) reported the lowest rankings across most motivational dimensions. Balanced consumers (15.4%, n = 100) demonstrate moderate rankings across all four dimensions, indicating a balanced but not strongly differentiated motivational profile. Members of this segment appear to value multiple benefits, though none emerge

Table 1: Socio-demographic characteristics of the sample

Gender	n	Percentage	Age	n	Percentage
Female	318	48.9	18-24	198	30.5
Male	331	51.1	25-34	123	19.0
Total	649	100.0	35-44	119	18.3
Education			45-54	139	21.4
Primary	47	7.3	55-64	46	7.1
Secondary/diploma	259	39.9	65 and older	24	3.7
University	241	37.1	Total	649	100.0
Master's or PhD	102	15.7	Income		
Total	649	100.0	220$ and less	102	15.7
Occupation			221-460$	188	29.0
Public and private sector employees	302	46.5	461-780$	123	19.0
Self-employed	112	17.3	781-1250$	95	14.6
Student	151	23.3	Higher than 1250$	58	8.9
Retired, housewife, unemployed	84	12.9	Missing	83	12.8
Total	649	100.0	Total	649	100.0

Table 2: The results of the factor analysis

Motivations	Mean	Standard deviation	Factor loading	Variance explained %	Cronbach's alpha
Perceived functional benefits				37.191	0.866
It makes me feel that I am full of energy	4.07	1.17	0.757		
It helps me to concentrate	3.86	1.27	0.752		
It makes me refreshed	4.08	1.14	0.696		
I feel physically and mentally fitter	3.78	1.28	0.658		
It makes me more motivated to work	3.65	1.31	0.646		
It helps relax when I am tired	4.19	1.08	0.570		
It calms me down	4.03	1.08	0.564		
It improves my mood	3.39	1.33	0.541		
Sensory enjoyment and daily ritual				8.980	0.808
I love its smell	4.50	0.90	0.793		
I like its taste	4.55	0.81	0.765		
It is a pleasant ritual for me	4.29	1.49	0.738		
It became a part of my everyday life	4.18	1.17	0.584		
Cultural and Familial Tradition				7.438	0.737
Drinking coffee together is a family ritual	3.32	1.48	0.805		
Drinking coffee is an activity I learned from my family	3.75	1.44	0.801		
It is a part of my local culture	3.77	1.38	0.684		
Social interaction				6.844	0.633
I like the coffee-drinking social gatherings	4.21	1.04	0.759		
It feels good to have a conversation in a company	4.29	0.10	0.699		
Drinking coffee is a social event	3.91	1.19	0.628		

as dominant drivers. Experience seekers (14.0%, n = 91) rank highest in sensory enjoyment and social interaction. This suggests that experiential aspects such as taste, pleasure, and opportunities for social engagement play a central role in motivating this group. Pragmatic enjoyers (17.7%, n = 115). Place relatively greater emphasis on functional benefits together with sensory enjoyment. Their behaviour appears to be driven by both practical value and the quality of the experience. Traditional consumers (38.1%, n = 247) show the strongest rankings for functional benefits and cultural/familial tradition, along with a relatively high importance placed on social interaction. This indicates that cultural heritage, family practices, and social meanings are key motivations for this group. Cluster profiles based on motivations for coffee drinking are shown in Table 3.

Variance analysis (ANOVA) and Chi-square tests were conducted to examine whether consumer preferences differed across identified consumer groups. To enhance the robustness of the test results, a nonparametric bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples was applied to estimate confidence intervals and significance levels. ANOVA, followed by Tukey's post hoc test, was used to investigate the relationship between consumer segments and their preferences for various coffee types and attributes. Results indicated a significant difference among coffee consumer groups in Turkish coffee consumption, $F(4, 629) = 14.52$, $P < .001$, $\eta^2 = 0.09$, indicating a moderate effect size. Smaller but statistically significant differences were observed for filter coffee, $F(4, 629) = 3.23$, $P < 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.02$; cappuccino, $F(4, 629) = 3.00$, $P < 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.02$; iced coffee, $F(4, 629) = 2.85$, $P < 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.01$; café latte, $F(4, 629) = 2.36$, $P < 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.01$; and cold brew, $F(4, 629) = 2.32$, $P < 0.05$, $\eta^2 = 0.01$. These effects were small, indicating limited practical significance.

The results in Table 4 also demonstrate distinct consumption patterns among the clusters. The traditional consumers predominantly preferred Turkish coffee but also consumed other types of coffee as secondary choices, except for mocha and cappuccino. Pragmatic enjoyers exhibited broad preferences, enjoying most coffee types, including espresso, cappuccino, iced coffee, and filter coffee. Experience seekers favoured cappuccino as their primary choice, while indifferent consumers rated all coffee types the lowest. Taken together, the results suggest that segmentation is driven more by differences in traditional coffee consumption (i.e., Turkish coffee) than by preferences for modern or international coffee varieties, which appear to have broader, more homogeneous appeal across consumer groups.

Significant differences were observed in the perceived importance of coffee attributes among consumer groups. Large effects were

Table 3: Cluster profiles based on coffee drinking motivations

Motivational dimension	Indifferent consumers	Balanced consumers	Experience seekers	Pragmatic enjoyers	Traditional consumers
Functional benefits	−0.163 Low	0.014 Moderate	−1.695 Moderate	0.377 High	0.506 Very High
Sensory enjoyment	−1.820 Low	0.404 Moderate	0.427 Very High	0.416 High	0.192 Moderate
Cultural/familial tradition	−0.186 Low	0.099 Moderate	−.108 Moderate	−1.377 Low	0.633 Very High
Social interaction	−0.269 Low	−1.562 Moderate	0.554 High	0.247 Moderate	0.417 High

Values represent Z-standardised scores; positive values indicate above-average motivation levels and negative values indicate below-average levels relative to the sample mean

Table 4: Cluster profiles based on preferred coffee type and coffee attributes

Coffee type	Indifferent consumers	Balanced consumers	Experience seekers	Pragmatic enjoyers	Traditional consumers	F-value	η^2
Turkish coffee	3.74	4.53	4.20	3.89	4.59	14.520***	0.09
Americano	2.36	2.38	2.42	2.75	2.41	1.254	-
Espresso	2.04	2.08	2.06	2.50	2.15	2.168	-
Mocha	2.02	1.89	2.09	2.27	2.14	1.157	-
Cappuccino	2.05	2.30	2.60	2.71	2.41	2.998*	0.02
Cafe latte	2.72	2.60	3.06	3.09	3.09	2.364*	0.01
Cold brew	1.80	1.79	1.89	2.25	1.98	2.319*	0.01
Iced coffee	2.48	2.62	2.88	3.16	2.93	2.845*	0.01
Filter coffee	1.94	2.14	2.15	2.64	2.26	3.234*	0.02
Capsule coffee	1.71	1.78	1.71	2.03	1.74	1.285	-
Instant powder	1.69	1.63	1.85	1.71	1.81	0.542	-
Coffee attributes							
Type of coffee	3.78	4.48	4.37	4.45	4.58	8.850***	0.06
Price	3.40	3.23	3.39	3.30	3.34	0.159	-
Origin	3.16	3.44	3.25	3.54	3.78	3.549***	0.02
Availability	3.16	3.69	3.33	3.61	4.06	7.881***	0.06
Taste	4.01	4.68	4.82	4.78	4.88	22.619***	0.15
Aroma	3.70	4.40	4.80	4.66	4.78	29.047***	0.18
Brand	3.50	3.93	3.71	4.02	4.31	7.610***	0.05
Package	2.64	2.65	2.46	2.66	2.93	1.821	-
label	2.81	2.69	2.41	2.66	2.99	2.479*	0.02
Certification	2.97	3.53	3.30	3.48	3.54	2.224	-

*P<0.05, **P<0.01, ***P<0.001

found for aroma, F (4, 535) = 29.05, P < 0.001, η^2 = 0.18, and for taste, F (4, 535) = 22.62, P < 0.001, η^2 = 0.15. Moderate effects were observed for type of coffee, F (4, 535) = 8.85, P < 0.001, η^2 = 0.06, and availability, F (4, 535) = 7.78, P < 0.001, η^2 = 0.06. Smaller but statistically significant differences were found for brand, F (4, 535) = 7.61, P <.001, η^2 = 0.05; origin, F (4, 535) = 3.55, P < 0.001, η^2 = 0.02; and label, F (4, 535) = 2.48, P < 0.05, η^2 = 0.02, indicating limited practical significance.

The results in Table 3 also exhibit separate preferences among the consumer groups. Traditional consumers place greater emphasis on all product-specific attributes except price and aroma. Experience seekers rate price and aroma attributes the highest. Pragmatic enjoyers generally assign moderate importance to all attributes. In contrast, indifferent consumers attributed the lowest overall importance to coffee attributes, with price considered relatively insignificant within this group. Overall, the findings suggest that segmentation is driven more by differences in sensory preferences and experiential attributes than by branding or informational cues**,** highlighting the dominant role of product-intrinsic qualities in shaping consumer perceptions of coffee. Cluster profiles based on preferred coffee types and the importance of attributes are presented in Table 4.

Analysis of information sources revealed significant differences among coffee consumer groups. A significant effect was found for consumers' own knowledge and experience, F (4, 632) = 9.46, P < 0.001, η^2 = 0.06, indicating a moderate effect size. Smaller but statistically significant differences were observed for information obtained from coffee employees, F (4, 632) = 3.30, P < 0.05, η^2 = 0.02; friends and colleagues, F (4, 632) = 2.85, P < 0.05, η^2 = 0.02; the internet, F (4, 632) = 2.55, P < 0.05, η^2 = 0.02; family members, F (4, 632) = 2.43, P < 0.05, η^2 = 0.02; and product labels, F (4, 632) = 3.67, P < 0.01, η^2 = 0.02. These effects were small, suggesting limited practical significance.

Table 5 exhibits the differences among coffee consumer groups. Traditional consumers place greater importance on their own knowledge and experience, friends and colleagues, family members, and label information than other consumer groups do. Pragmatic consumers primarily rely on coffee employees. Indifferent consumers, on the other hand, use the internet more than any other group as an information source. In general, these findings indicate that while segmentation captures meaningful variation in why and when consumers consume coffee, it explains relatively little variation in how consumers acquire information, suggesting a more homogeneous pattern of information use across segments.

Analysis of coffee-drinking occasions revealed significant differences among consumer segments. Significant group differences were observed for chatting with my friend and colleagues, F(4, 518) = 20.28, P < 0.001, η = 0.14; resting, F(4, 518) = 15.50, P < 0.001, η^2 = 0.10; starting the day, F(4, 518) = 13.61, P < 0.001, η^2 = 0.10; chatting with family, F(4, 518) = 12.35, P < 0.001, η^2 = 0.09; socializing with family, F(4, 518) = 9.35, P < 0.001, η^2 = 0.07; and working, F(4, 518) = 7.75, P < 0.001, η^2 = 0.06. Overall, these results indicate a moderate level of practical significance. Additional significant differences were found for watching TV, F(4, 518) = 4.43, P < 0.01, η^2 = 0.03; chatting, checking messages, or surfing social media, F(4, 518) = 4.41, P < 0.01, η^2 = 0.03; and reading, F(4, 518) = 2.55, P < 0.01, η^2 = 0.01. However, these effects were small, suggesting limited practical significance.

These findings suggest that coffee consumption is embedded in both social (e.g., interactions with friends, colleagues, and family) and functional (e.g., starting the day, working, resting) contexts, with the strongest segment differentiation observed in socially oriented occasions. Table 4 shows the differences between coffee-drinking occasions and consumer groups. Traditional consumers were more likely to consume coffee across most occasions, except during reading and studying, when pragmatic consumers showed higher consumption. Experience seekers, in contrast, preferred to enjoy coffee while socialising with family. Cluster profiles

Table 5: Cluster profiles based on information sources and coffee drinking occasions

Information sources	Indifferent consumers	Balanced consumers	Experience seekers	Pragmatic enjoyers	Traditional consumers	F-value	η^2
Own knowledge and experience	3.82	4.47	4.29	4.32	4.54	9.457***	006
Friends and colleagues	3.26	2.90	3.12	3.38	3.40	2.847*	0.02
Family members	2.87	2.84	2.91	2.80	3.21	2.430*	0.02
Labels	2.71	2.58	3.04	2.96	3.16	3.673**	0.02
Media	2.41	2.08	2.20	2.40	2.43	1.563	-
Internet	2.77	2.29	2.20	2.63	2.49	2.546*	0.02
Coffee employees	2.93	2.45	2.46	3.03	2.67	3.297*	0.02
Coffee drinking moments (occasions)							
Watching TV	2.83	3.20	2.90	3.12	3.53	4.427**	0.03
Chatting with friends and colleagues	3.88	4.41	4.54	4.70	4.83	20.275***	0.14
Resting	3.15	4.09	3.59	4.09	4.29	15.503***	0.10
Smoking	2.77	2.74	2.91	3.02	3.07	0.668	-
Reading	2.24	2.28	2.13	2.74	2.48	2.551*	0.01
Studying	2.24	2.26	2.11	2.93	2.59	4.284**	0.03
Working	3.11	3.17	3.03	3.79	3.83	7.751***	0.06
Chatting, looking at messages, or surfing social media	2.70	2.53	2.42	2.92	3.13	4.407**	0.03
After dining	3.07	3.53	3.39	3.53	4.10	9.350***	0.07
socialising with my family	3.38	3.98	4.44	3.76	4.35	12.345***	0.09
Starting a day	2.70	3.69	3.42	3.74	4.09	13.607***	0.10

*P<0.05, **P<0.01, ***P<0.001

based on information sources and coffee-drinking occasions are displayed in Table 5.

A Chi-square analysis was conducted to examine differences among the five coffee motivational groups in coffee purchasing and consumption behaviours. To enhance the robustness of the findings, a nonparametric bootstrapping procedure with 1,000 resamples was used to estimate confidence intervals and significance levels.

The results revealed significant differences among consumer segments in coffee consumption volume, $\chi^2(12, n = 648) = 71.94$, $P < 0.001$; coffee involvement, $\chi^2(8, n = 641) = 161.65$, $P < 0.001$; and preferred purchase outlet, $\chi^2(12, n = 648) = 34.12$, $P = 0.001$.

More traditional consumers drink 4-5 cups per day, and more pragmatic enjoyers drink more than 5 cups per day than other groups. They are also more involved in coffee than the other groups. Additionally, they purchased coffee more frequently from specialty coffee shops, supermarkets, and other sources. Cluster profiles based on coffee purchasing and consumption behaviours are exhibited in Table 6.

Chi-square analysis indicated statistically significant differences among consumer groups in gender, $\chi^2(4, n = 649) = 11.96$, $P = 0.018$; marital status, $\chi^2(4, n = 648) = 30.15$, $P < 0.001$; age, $\chi^2(8, n = 649) = 48.59$, $P < 0.001$; education, $\chi^2(12, n = 649) = 24.11$, $P = 0.020$; and occupation, $\chi^2(12, n = 645) = 28.55$, $P = 0.005$. The traditional consumer segment had a higher proportion of female coffee consumers, while experience seekers showed a more balanced distribution. However, other groups contained more males. Traditional consumers and experience seekers were primarily married individuals, whereas the indifferent and pragmatic consumer groups were primarily singles. The

Table 6: Cluster profiles based on consumption and purchasing behaviour

Consumption and purchasing behavior	Indifferent consumers	Balanced consumers	Experience seekers	Pragmatic enjoyers	Traditional consumers	χ^2 value	Cramer's V
Amount of daily drinking coffee						71.936***	0.19
1	37 (38.5)	14 (14.0)	21 (23.1)	16 (13.9)	15 (6.1)		
2-3	35 (36.5)	47 (47.0)	42 (46.2)	60 (52.2)	121 (49.2)		
4-5	20 (20.8)	27 (27.0)	20 (22.0)	19 (16.5)	82 (33.3)		
More than 5	4 (4.2)	12 (12.0)	8 (8.8)	20 (17.4)	28 (11.4)		
Involvement with Coffee						161.649***	0.36
Low	70 (74.5)	28 (28.9)	42 (46.2)	41 (36.3)	35 (14.2)		
Medium	17 (18.1)	35 (36.1)	36 (39.6)	25 (22.1)	60 (24.4)		
High	7 (7.4)	34 (35.1)	13 (14.3)	47 (41.6)	151 (61.4)		
Type of outlet						34.122**	0.13
Supermarkets	32 (33.3)	49 (49.5)	22 (24.4)	36 (32.1)	111 (45.1)		
Special coffee shops	3 (3.1)	5 (5.1)	6 (6.7)	3 (2.7)	6 (2.4)		
Factories, online	19 (19.8)	16 (16.2)	21 (23.3)	28 (25.0)	25 (10.2)		
A variety of different sources	42 (43.8)	29 (29.3)	41 (45.6)	45 (40.2)	104 (42.3)		

*P<0.05, **P<0.01, ***P<0.001. The data in parentheses show the relative sizes of the groups as percentages

Table 7: Cluster profiles based on socio-demographic characteristics

Socio-demographics	Indifferent consumers	Balanced consumers	Experience seekers	Pragmatic enjoyers	Traditional consumers	χ^2 value	Cramer's V
Gender						11.961*	0.14
Male	56 (58.3)	56 (56.0)	46 (50.5)	67 (58.3)	106 (42.9)		
Female	40 (41.7)	44 (44.0)	45 (49.5)	48 (41.7)	141 (57.1)		
Marital status						30.147***	0.22
Single	65 (67.7)	38 (38.4)	44 (48.4)	74 (64.3)	109 (44.1)		
Married	31 (32.3)	61 (61.6)	47 (51.6)	41 (35.7)	138 (55.9)		
Age						48.588***	0.19
18-34	70 (72.9)	35 (35.0)	42 (46.2)	69 (60.0)	105 (42.5)		
35-54	22 (22.9)	45 (45.0)	40 (44.0)	42 (36.5)	109 (44.1)		
55 and older	4 (4.2)	20 (20.0)	9 (9.9)	4 (3.5)	33 (13.4)		
Education						24.114*	0.11
Primary	2 (2.1)	15 (15.0)	8 (8.8)	4 (3.5)	18 (7.3)		
Intermediate and high school	44 (45.8)	35 (35.0)	38 (41.8)	53 (46.1)	89 (36.0)		
University	41 (42.7)	32 (32.0)	33 (36.3)	38 (33.0)	97 (39.3)		
Master's and PhD	9 (9.4)	18 (18.0)	12 (13.2)	20 (17.4)	43 (17.4)		
Occupation						28.548**	0.12
Self-employed	18 (18.8)	14 (14.1)	16 (18.0)	21 (18.3)	42 (17.1)		
Public and private sector employees	40 (41.7)	49 (49.5)	41 (46.1)	50 (43.5)	121 (49.2)		
Housewife, retired and unemployed	7 (7.3)	21 (21.2)	8 (9.0)	8 (7.0)	39 (15.9)		
Student	31 (32.3)	15 (15.2)	24 (27.0)	36 (31.3)	44 (17.9)		

*P<0.05, **P<0.01, ***P<0.001. The data in parentheses show the relative sizes of the groups as percentages

indifferent and pragmatic consumer groups comprised more young people. The indifferent consumer group also contained more public and private-sector employees and students. Cluster profiles based on sociodemographic characteristics are presented in Table 7.

5. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This study aimed to identify unique motivational segments among coffee consumers in Northern Cyprus and to investigate potential differences in purchasing behaviour, consumption patterns, and socio-demographic characteristics across these segments. The results affirm that the motivations behind coffee consumption are multifaceted and that meaningful consumer segments can be established based on these underlying motivational frameworks.

The exploratory factor analysis identified four motivational dimensions: functional benefits, sensory enjoyment, cultural and familial tradition, and social interaction. These results align with prior studies that highlight the functional (stimulant), hedonic (taste and aroma), habitual, and socio-cultural factors influencing coffee consumption (Steptoe et al., 1995; Labbe et al., 2015; Samoggia and Riedel, 2018). Nevertheless, this study contributes to the existing literature by incorporating these dimensions into a cohesive segmentation framework, specifically within a Mediterranean cultural context.

The cluster analysis identified five distinct consumer segments: indifferent consumers, balanced consumers, experience seekers, pragmatic enjoyers, and traditional consumers. The traditional segment, the largest group, scored highly on functional benefits, cultural and familial traditions, and social interaction. This underscores the significance of heritage, family customs, social meaning, and utilitarian value in their coffee consumption. These consumers displayed a robust engagement with coffee in both functional and symbolic terms, aligning with an earlier study (Carvalho et al., 2015). They rated most coffee attributes as important, except for price and aroma, and predominantly based their decisions on personal experience, insights from friends, colleagues, and family members, and information provided on product packaging. In terms of consumption behaviour, they indicated that they typically consume coffee on various occasions, except during activities such as reading, studying, or socialising with family after lunch or dinner. Consumers in this group generally consume two or more cups of coffee daily and tend to purchase it from supermarkets and various retail outlets. The traditional segment shows strong engagement with coffee and is mainly composed of married women employed in both the public and private sectors. Their reliance on personal knowledge and label information indicates a higher level of product involvement and literacy. In summary, this profile aligns with the "high involvement" or "enthusiast" consumer segments recognised in specialty coffee markets (Guimarães et al., 2019).

The pragmatic enjoyers segment prioritises both functional benefits and sensory pleasure, embodying a blend of utilitarian and hedonic motivations. They prefer various coffee types, except Turkish, capsule, and instant coffee. While they place considerable importance on coffee attributes, their ratings are not the highest across segments. This group utilises a diverse array of information sources, demonstrating a greater reliance on coffee employees than other segments. Consumers in this group often drink coffee while reading or studying, with a reported daily intake of 4-5 cups. This makes them the second-most-active segment after traditional consumers. Pragmatic enjoyers demonstrate the greatest variety in their purchasing habits, purchasing coffee from supermarkets, special outlets, factories, and online retailers. In terms of demographics, this group is mainly young, single males, including both students and employees in the public and private sectors.

The experience seekers segment places a high value on sensory pleasure and social interaction, demonstrating a significant inclination towards hedonic and social experiences. This group is similar to consumer segments identified in an earlier study (Guimarães et al., 2019). They exhibit a notable preference for cappuccino, which ranks second among the segments. The most critical attributes of coffee for them are price and aroma, followed closely by taste, which ranks second among consumer groups. Regarding consumption occasions, they primarily drink coffee during social gatherings with family members. They indicate that they consume 2-3 cups or more daily and demonstrate a moderate engagement with coffee. Experience seekers purchase coffee from various sources and exhibit balanced gender distribution. This group mainly consists of young and middle-aged individuals, whether married or single. It includes both public- and private-sector employees and students. In general, the behaviour of this segment reflects a tendency towards experimentation and adaptability, aligning with the characteristics of younger, experience-driven consumers noted in global coffee markets (Santos et al., 2021).

Balanced consumers place moderate significance on all motivational factors, reflecting a relatively consistent pattern of coffee engagement without a singular dominant motive. This group prefers Turkish coffee, which ranks second among consumer groups. Additionally, factors such as coffee type, availability, label information, and certification are regarded as of considerable importance in this segment. Furthermore, this group predominantly relies on personal knowledge and experience, which ranked second-highest among the segments. Their coffee consumption spans multiple occasions, such as watching TV, relaxing, reading, and after lunch or dinner. On average, they consume two or more cups of coffee daily and exhibit a moderate level of involvement with the beverage. Balanced consumers primarily purchase coffee from supermarkets. In terms of demographics, this group is mostly male and married. Additionally, it encompasses young and middle-aged individuals working in both the public and private sectors, as well as housewives, retirees, and unemployed consumers.

The segment of indifferent consumers exhibited the lowest level of motivational intensity across all dimensions. This group is characterised by the least coffee consumption among all segments, averaging about one cup daily. It primarily consists of younger individuals and students. This observation aligns with previous studies (Wang et al., 2024; Bressani et al., 2022; Czarniecka-Skubina, 2021), which indicate that younger consumers tend to drink less coffee due to health concerns and financial limitations

(Guimarães et al., 2019; Wang et al., 2024). The relatively minor significance assigned to coffee attributes, along with reduced consumption rates, suggests limited involvement with coffee. For this group, coffee seems to be a situational choice rather than a fundamental aspect of daily consumption behaviour.

The results demonstrate that motivations for coffee consumption extend well beyond physiological stimulation. Sensory enjoyment and its integration into everyday routines emerged as key drivers across segments, particularly among experience seekers. This reinforces the view that coffee consumption is embedded in daily life and carries symbolic and emotional value. Importantly, identifying cultural heritage as a distinct motivational dimension highlights the enduring role of tradition in shaping consumption behaviour. In Northern Cyprus—where coffee culture has historical roots dating back to the Ottoman period—coffee is not merely a beverage but a culturally embedded practice (Wang et al., 2024; Bressani et al., 2022). This supports cross-cultural evidence that food-related behaviours are strongly influenced by family transmission and local traditions (Tucker, 2011; Cruz-Flores et al., 2020).

5.1. Implications, Limitations and Directions for Further Research

The findings of this study have both academic and practical implications. This study contributes to the existing literature on coffee consumption in several ways. First, unlike prior research that typically focuses on isolated motivational drivers (e.g., sustainability or sensory appeal), it integrates functional, sensory, habitual, cultural, and social dimensions into a unified segmentation framework. Second, focusing on Northern Cyprus broadens the geographical and cultural scope of research on coffee consumption. As a culturally hybrid Mediterranean context where social interaction is highly valued, Northern Cyprus provides a particularly relevant setting for examining the role of social motivations in consumption behaviour. Third, the study empirically demonstrates that motivational segments differ significantly in purchasing behaviour, coffee-type preferences, consumption frequency, and outlet choice. By linking motivational profiles to behavioural and socio-demographic characteristics, the study bridges consumer psychology and observable market behaviour.

The findings offer several actionable implications for marketers and policymakers. For traditional consumers, premium positioning strategies that emphasise coffee type, sensory quality, origin, availability, and product variety are likely to be effective. Classic brewing methods, loyalty programs, and communications that highlight cultural authenticity, heritage, and family rituals may further strengthen brand loyalty in this high-consumption segment. For pragmatic consumers, strategies should underline value, convenience, and functional performance, reflecting their broader but utilitarian product engagement. For experience seekers, marketers should focus on creating experiential value, including social media–oriented consumption settings, tasting events, and innovative brewing techniques that enhance the overall consumption experience. Balanced consumers require strategies that stress consistency, accessibility, and lifestyle integration. In contrast, indifferent consumers may be activated by convenience-oriented offerings, such as ready-to-drink products and situational promotions that reduce effort and increase accessibility. From a policy perspective, supporting culturally embedded coffee traditions may help preserve local identity while simultaneously contributing to tourism and gastronomy development.

Despite its contributions, this study has limitations. The use of purposive sampling and an online survey may limit generalizability. Future research could employ probability-based sampling or cross-country comparative designs. In addition, the cross-sectional design does not allow for analysis of changes in motivations over time. Longitudinal studies could therefore provide deeper insight into evolving consumption patterns, particularly in a rapidly changing global coffee market. Future research may also incorporate psychological constructs such as involvement, lifestyle orientation, and sustainability values to further refine segmentation models. Comparative studies across Mediterranean countries would also enhance understanding of cultural influences on coffee consumption.

5.2. Institutional Ethics Review Board Statement

The research design was approved by the Ethics Committee of Eastern Mediterranean University (Ref. No: ETK00-2023-121).

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