

Is tea still the quintessential British drink amongst 18-30 year olds?

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Background and rationale

A fictitious tea company wishes to establish a new line of tea aimed at 18-34 year olds – using an advertisement in *Empire Magazine* – a symbol of both conformity to popular movies; but also niche cinema goers, and in the age of streaming – home cinema viewers – what drink is quintessential for movie watching – in the cinema and at home?

The research proposes to ask, via a short anonymous survey, 18-34 how regularly they drink tea, and to establish which soft-drink is the most popular amongst 18-34, e.g. tea, coffee, fizzy-juice. Some of the issues here are: sample size, it is estimated that we could possibly gauge the views of approximately 10 – 50 young adults aged 18-30, effective market research like this should really be supported by either a single study of approximately 1,000 young adults, and a weighted sample of 18-34 year olds across the social-economic ranges, rather than the likelihood of a convenience sample, which means is estimated to primarily be those who have or are studying towards an undergraduate degree or possibly holding or studying towards a Masters' degree. As the sample will be convenience, it is also likely the majority of results will be from respondents based in Central Scotland, specifically Stirling, though some respondents maybe based in the Highlands, Scotland; Ayrshire, Scotland; Glasgow, Scotland or Suffolk, England; and the sample being unweighted means we may skewed results. Though I do not propose to include any Social Economic grading questions, which would most likely *turn* some respondents off to answering the survey. If this was a professional or even a higher educational level (fourth year dissertation or above) then a Social Economic Grading question, as well as questions on: region of living; gender; and education level; may help inform towards a weighted sample and viewpoint.

Instead I propose to following a staple feature of 'advertising research' – 9 out of 10 (90%) of dentists agree that [insert brand] is the best for [insert claim]. Scientific and Consumer Market Research should hold to a higher ethical standard in trying to pursue the truth, but for the purposes of this, and thus the greatest weakness to this research is its' inability to gain a weighted and large enough sample size.

Another issue is that the premise is that tea has historically been the quintessential or *most popular* drink amongst this age group – secondary research will need to see if this is a true or false assumption.

The discipline for this research is Research under Marketing, Advertising and Media; within the University of Stirling's Arts and Humanity's Faculty under the Communication, Media and Culture division, with cross-over into the school of Business and Marketing.

Research Questions

There are multiple research questions – firstly the secondary research will aim to establish if historically tea has been the quintessential or *most popular* drink in the UK amongst 18-30 year olds. This will provide us with the benchmark and control for the other primary question – is tea the most popular drink amongst 18-30 year olds today; and if is not, we can establish what view 18-30 year olds have of tea as a drink, answering a secondary research question of does tea have an image problem amongst 18-30 year olds.

As the tea company want to establish if tea is important to 18-34 year olds, and they want to market their ‘fruit and juice flavoured teas’ to young adults – we will need to establish the most popular soft-drink outside of tea, so as to choose the right ‘flavoured tea’ to use in the advertisement for this age group – IrnBru Tea, Fizzy Orange Tea etc. So answering what non-tea drink they drink the most will hopefully allow us to appeal with the advertisement to a current non-tea drinking market segment.

As Empire Magazine is about movies its important to establish which drink would go well with watching a movie at home or in the cinema – so establishing which soft-drink is the quintessential movie drink – Coca-Cola, IrnBru, Coffee, Tea (I’m looking at you Bridget Jones fans)... will also help us determine the intersectionality of our audiences – also establishing if our audience is used to hot tea or ice tea through another question will determine if we need to market the ‘tea on the go’ (ice tea) range to the audience or the ‘brew range’ (hot tea) etc.

Plan of Work and Time Scale

Weeks 1 and 2

Over the course of two weeks and using feedback on draft questions from friends within the age range, and professionals who write surveys/conduct research, I will draft the short survey questions. As part of this process I will determine the best platform to use for my research purposes (using secondary review research) for the survey hosting – e.g. platforms such as SurveyMonkey and/or editable PDF; as well as the best platform to reach the required market segment of 18-30 year olds.

Weeks 3 and 4

Following on from the initial two weeks I intend to spend two weeks gathering results. During this time, I will also conduct secondary research and write the literature review.

Weeks 5 and 6

The results from the survey will then be combined for statistical analysis, and I intend to use software like 'R' or SPSS to help in that process of combining the data and conducting analysis of the results.

Weeks 7 and 8

The research report will be written-up and the design of appropriate graphs etc for inclusion, as well as appendixes compiled and included. The research report will be sent to proof-readers and colleagues for review.

Week 9 and 10

Any revisions required will be made to the research report, before final submission in week ten.

Secondary Research Sources

As this is primarily a piece of market and consumer research the focus on secondary research is merely for comparison of results – so previous consumer and market research on teas, and-or sociological research on the UK tea drinking habits – such as:

Thomas, Jane E., *Food habits of the majority: evolution of the current UK pattern* (Cambridge University Press, 2007)

Nguyen, D. T.; Rose, M., *Demand for tea in the UK 1874–1938: An econometric study* (The Journal of Development Studies, Vol 24, Issue 1, 1987), p. 43-59

As well consumer/market research conducted on behalf of the industry magazine *the Grocer* (<https://www.thegrocer.co.uk/trend-reports/10-charts-explaining-uk-attitudes-to-hot-beverages/597574.article>); <https://www.forbes.com/sites/sophiemedlin/2019/10/30/the-truth-about-tea-6-facts-on-the-nations-favourite/#173ee05b4d4e>) research by Statista (<https://www.statista.com/statistics/681635/tea-consumption-daily-amount-united-kingdom-uk/>) as well as other research pieces.