# THE FACTORS INFLUENCING CONTEMPORARY COFFEE CONSUMPTION IN THE PANDEMIC ERA

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# ABSTRACT

This research was conducted to determine the factors that influence consumer consumption intensity and its impacts on contemporary coffee. A mix-method approach was used by combining interviews, focus group discussion, and an online survey. The data collection process included 10 informants and 214 respondents. The regression result indicated that taste is the only factor that has a significant positive effect on consumer consumption intensity of contemporary coffee consumption. There was, however, a significant difference in contemporary coffee consumption between males and females. This study also offers several recommendations that can be applied by contemporary coffee business owners to maintain and increase consumer interest in their products both during and post-pandemic.

Keywords: Contemporary Coffee, Distribution, Price, Brand, Taste, Ambience

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Beverage is one of the primary human needs, and due to the high dependence of society on this activity and its commodities, it is one of the biggest contributors to economic activity in Indonesia (Salim, 2018). Along with technological development and product innovation, the beverage business has also developed to where beverage businesses use creativity to create new innovations in terms of taste and shape that make beverages also a recreational necessity. This condition has caused the beverage industry to experience a significant increase in recent years,

as evidenced by the number of beverage brands that have sprung up (Kemenperin, 2019). One of the most popular of these beverages in Indonesia is coffee.

Coffee beverages are in great demand by many people today. Indonesia's coffee bean production reached 742,000 tons in 2019, with about 48% of that production being exported with an export value of related coffee products of USD \$900M (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2020). The level of coffee consumption in Indonesia from 2016 to 2021 increased to 8.22% per year (Katadata, 2018). The high level of production and consumption for this one commodity has made many business actors take advantage of the positive opportunity by opening a coffee business. The Small Medium Enterprise (SME) sector plays a role in making this significant contribution. Today there are 1,204 processed coffee SME business units scattered throughout Indonesia (NusaDaily, 2020).

Entering the third generation of coffee, contemporary coffee was born, a term that represents the rise of coffee with variants that are loved by many levels of society. Unlike coffee consumption in the previous century, which was only enjoyed by a handful of people with high incomes and social status, contemporary coffee can be consumed regularly by ordinary people because it has a relatively more affordable price. Coffee indeed presents a platform for more creative global consumerism in international cities (Chang & McGonigle, 2020). Coffee is now also increasingly popular as a product of society when using information and communication technology. Several contemporary coffee brands are popular in Indonesia, and they include Janji Jiwa, Kenangan, Fore, Kulo, Lain Hati, and Soe (Giladiskon, 2020). The contemporary coffee business has great potential in Indonesia, as evidenced by the continuous expansion of new business players in this industry.

The growth of this industry, however, is very dependent on community consumption. The greater the public's interest in the products sold by contemporary coffee entrepreneurs, the more opportunities these entrepreneurs can develop (Ferreira et al., 2020).

The challenge faced by coffee entrepreneurs, especially for start-ups or small businesses, is the limited resources. The emerging pandemic also put more burden on the coffee business owner, because they lose engagement with their customers due to the limited contact. On the other hand, responding to the potential increase in market consumption, the coffee business now makes efforts to meet the specific needs and desires of consumers, which in turn will increase their interest in future consumption of coffee.

The previous studies on coffee consumption during the pandemic time are still limited, most of them discuss the coffee business in general and do not discuss contemporary coffee specifically. For example, Maspul (2021) wrote about activating e-commerce to overcome the declining coffee consumption in the United Arab Emirates during the pandemic. Jang (2021) found that green ambience of coffee shop influences customer engagement and loyalty in the United States. Meanwhile, research in the local context underlined the role of community development and expert involvement as the strategy to develop a sustainable coffee business (Kurniawan et al., 2021). Another study focused on visual and verbal elements to develop a contemporary coffee brand (Agustin, 2021). However, none of them discusses the essential driving factor that influences the consumption of contemporary coffee during the pandemic from the consumer side.

This research has as its objectives to determine the factors that the contemporary coffee business owners need to pay attention to and coffee consumers consider when they want to consume contemporary coffee. This study also aims to determine whether there is an effect resulting from the characteristics of these consumers, rather than only from the attributes of the contemporary coffee products being offered. The results of this study are also expected to be a reference or provide information for further studies on the consumer interest in purchasing leisure or lifestyle products, especially contemporary coffee.

There are three main questions related to this research. First, how do certain factors influence contemporary coffee consumption interests? To determine these factors, literature reviews were carried out in several national and international journals to learn what attributes have been identified in previous studies that affect consumer buying decisions. Contemporary coffee consumption interest is seen in the frequency of contemporary coffee purchases by consumers on a daily basis. This first question leads to examine what and how these factors are that influence consumers' contemporary interest in coffee and its consumption.

The second question is whether respondent geo-demographic profiles, such as gender and domicile, significantly show differences in their contemporary coffee consumption? The findings offer an overview of the coffee lover profiles and become fundamental for developing the right business strategy for each target segment. The third question is what recommendations can be applied by contemporary coffee business owners to build market interest in their products, and in turn, increase the success of their businesses?

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Contemporary Coffee

The term 'contemporary' is defined as following modern ideas in style or design, and 'coffee' is defined as the roasted seeds of a tropical bush or a powder made from those seeds (*Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*, 2015). Hence, contemporary coffee is a term given to coffee that is provided by sellers with a simple menu, modern processed, *instagramable*, and beautiful for sharing on social media. Contemporary coffee is generally sold at an affordable price and is known as a grab-and-go type of coffee. It is packaged in a plastic cup and easy to consume either

directly onsite or elsewhere. Contemporary coffee is part of the third generation of coffee, indeed characterized by high enthusiasm from the community (Alfirahmi, 2019), especially young people, and collaboration between coffee shop owners and local farmers. Nowadays, contemporary coffee is seen as part of the social culture and style of social life (Felton, 2018). Contemporary coffee is also becoming popular in line with the rapid development of the Internet, which leads to sharing culture and activities between many actors appearing on/using social media (Kao et al., 2016).

#### 2.2 Price

In many journals, prices are widely discussed, especially regarding the willingness topay for specialty coffees, such as coffee products with sustainability labels (e.g. Huang, et al., 2014; Lee et al., 2015). Prices become a significant factor to consider when buying coffee in a competitive market (De Pelsmacker et al., 2005). However, it was also found that when consumers feel the price they had to spend is too expensive, that circumstance helped them think about which coffee that they wanted to buy. Reducing the prices can have a positive impact on the sales of coffee in the competitive market (Andorfer & Liebe, 2015).

#### 2.3 Distribution of Coffee

This variable describes the product selling channel, location, and cost of delivery of the product. Lanfranchi et al. (2016) stated that consumer preferences are almost always balanced between choosing to drink coffee at home or outdoors, such as in a coffee shop. Nowadays, almost all coffee sellers in Indonesia allow consumers to choose and consume their coffee directly on the spot or take it away, either after purchasing it or having it delivered by a third-party delivery service, such as GoFood and GrabFood. Amalia & Wibowo (2019) stated that low delivery costs can be used as an incentive in the form of sales promotions to increase the quantity of the products purchased by consumers. Huang & Dang (2014) also found a positive impact of the distribution aspect on the coffee's purchase intention.

#### 2.4 The Importance of Brand

Brands and labels play an important role in the coffee industry since both can drive the success of a coffee business with value-added embedded in it (Bissinger & Leufkens, 2017; Lee, 2017). In Indonesia, there are various venues that sell coffee, ranging from global coffee chains, Indonesian contemporary coffee, to small-scale local coffee shops. Babin et al. (2006) found that consumers with a collective culture visit the coffee shops of well-known brands because of a desire to be seen as members of consumer groups that are labeled westernized, stylish, and have a successful social image. The presence of branding on the product also contributes to a higher

willingness to pay for a premium price coffee which in turn influences the consumption rate of that product.

# 2.5 Taste

Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (2015) defines taste as a special quality that different foods and drinks have that allows you to recognize that produce when you put it in your mouth. Taste is one of the factors that influence the decision of consumers who want to buy forestry and crop products (Huang et al., 2014). The sensory characteristics of coffee, namely, taste and aroma, are key motivations of coffee consumption behavior (Sousa et al., 2016). Taste also limits coffee consumption, because many people tend to avoid drinking coffee because they do not like its taste or its aroma. Harith et al. (2014) reported that coffee drinkers greatly appreciate the bitter taste of coffee, whereas non-coffee drinkers do not.

#### 2.6 Ambience

The ambience of the places chosen by consumers as their destination when consuming coffee is influenced by age, social status, and some other factors. For example, young female consumers in Asia are more likely to visit cafes, while adults and middle-aged consumers prefer to drink coffee at home or at the office (Lee et al., 2015). As an integral part of shaping the total ambiance of a place, facilities play an important role for sellers to use, support, and deliver consumer convenience (Kotler & Keller, 2015). This feeling of convenience brings pleasure to consumers and also increases their coffee consumption (Jang & Lee, 2019).

### 3. HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

### 3.1 Qualitative Research Findings and Hypothesis Development

The informants and participants mentioned certain statements that supported almost all the coffer factors identified in the literature review. The following quotations describe the findings on the qualitative research that constructed the research model and led to the hypothesis development for the study.

"... the unique taste of coffee is the first thing ... the consistency of taste is important ... if not, I will not buy again." (taste)

"... I am interested to buy (contemporary coffee) if there is discount ... or promotion." (price)

"... If the location (of coffee shop) is near, I will buy for sure ... I will choose the one that is closed to my location. I will not buy if the delivery cost is more expensive than the coffee itself." (ambience, distribution)

"... Usually I will consume the same brand (of contemporary coffee) during pandemic ... I will not change to others." (brand)

The research hypotheses are proposed according to the qualitative research findings and the literature review. Some findings of the previous studies below demonstrate the relationship between independent variables (taste, price, distribution/place, brand, ambience) and a dependent variable (coffee consumption).

Coffee is one of the most widely consumed beverages in the world. It has primarily been consumed due to its stimulant effect and unique taste since ancient times (Gökcen & Şanlier, 2019). Taste is the most important factor that can be detected by consumers' sensory stimuli and bring unique experiences because of the variety of flavor, aroma, and blending recipe (Li, Streletskaya, & Gómez, 2019). The freshness and the various flavor of coffee offer good taste choices that drive coffee consumption (Nainggolan, Kernalis, & Carolin, 2022). Hence, the proposed hypothesis is:

H1: Taste has a significant influence on coffee consumption.

The price as an important factor in driving coffee consumption shows different impacts on the existing studies. It was found insignificant on the research finding conducted by Rivai (2021), but become a significant factor on others (Barahona, Sanmiguel Jaimes, & Yang, 2020; Rahim, Jin, & Fong, 2019). Thus, the proposed hypothesis is:

H2: Price has a significant influence on coffee consumption.

Thornton et al. (2017) stated that the distance of coffee house location influences the consumers' preference to drink coffee. The distance will determine the delivery cost that could be considered by consumers when they do delivery order (Amalia & Wibowo, 2019). Therefore, the distribution (place) could be an important factor that drives coffee consumption. Hence, the proposed hypothesis is:

H3: Distribution has a significant influence on coffee consumption.

Samoggia & Riedel (2019) stated that brand is an important attribute that plays an important role in coffee consumption. The popularity of coffee brands influences consumers' consumption (Bissinger & Leufkens, 2017). Meanwhile, Riefler (2020) found that the authenticity brand of local coffee increases coffee preferences and consumers' consumption as well. Thus, the proposed hypothesis is:

H4: Brand has a significant influence on coffee consumption.

Ambience is another important aspect that drives coffee consumption. Tumanan & Lansangan (2012) explained that the facility's completeness, comfort, and aesthetics design of coffee shops or coffee houses play an important role to drive coffee consumption. However, different findings were also found in some research (Kim & Kim, 2019). Meanwhile, Petry, da Rosa Borges, & Aureliano-Silva (2019) found that ambience significantly influences coffee consumption when consumers perceived it as a lifestyle. Hence, the proposed hypothesis is:

H5: Ambience has a significant influence on coffee consumption.

### 3.2 Research Methods

This research was conducted using a mix-method approach that combined the results of previous qualitative research and a literature review to become the basis for determining the key factors that influence contemporary coffee consumption. Interviews and focus-group discussion with ten informants were conducted using Google Meets, Zoom, and Line Video Call. Qualitative research was done with the consideration that consumer behavior might change during the current pandemic time, and it could influence the findings of the factors that were influencing contemporary coffee consumption. The main findings of the qualitative research were analyzed and carefully selected as a basis for the quantitative research. Quantitative research was then performed to identify the factors that have significant influences on consumer contemporary coffee consumption during pandemic times.

The research technique for the quantitative research technique chosen was an online survey. It was used during this pandemic to keep proper social distance and avoid direct contact with the respondents. A questionnaire was constructed using Google Form to make it easy to distribute and provide positive wide access to the target respondents.

Purposive sampling was chosen to get the proper number of potential respondents. They should be those who drank contemporary coffee at least once in the last month. The qualitative research and literature review was conducted on September-October 2020, followed by quantitative research conducted on November-December 2020 in nationally wide areas. According to Malhotra (2019), the minimum respondent number in marketing studies is 200.

The main data measurement standard was a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree; 5=strongly agree). SPSS Version 26 was used for data processing. KMO, Bartlett's test, and component matrix checking were done to ensure the validity of the data as well as Cronbach's Alpha to determine the reliability of the data (Malhotra, 2019).

Hypothesis testing was performed using regression analysis to identify the influence strength of each factor, while an independent-samples *t*-test and a one-way ANOVA were conducted to identify the difference in the perception of each segment of the respondents, i.e.,

gender, domicile, occupation, and monthly expenditure, regarding the frequency of contemporary coffee purchasing.

# 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

# 4.1 Validity and Reliability

The data collected demonstrates good validity for all variables in the research model which is indicated by the factor loading of each measured variable that is greater than 0.6 and KMO that is more than 0.7. Meanwhile, the Cronbach's Alpha of each variable is also greater than 0.7, indicating good reliability for all the data collected (Table 1).

Variable/Items	References	Loading	KMO	Cronbach
		factor		Alpha
Taste			0.707	0.740
- I consider the taste of contemporary coffee (e.g. sour, sweet, or bitter) when I drink it	Huang & Dang (2014)	0.760		
- I like the strong taste of contemporary coffee when I drink it	Huang & Dang (2014)	0.758		
<ul> <li>Aftertaste on contemporary coffee is very influential when I drink it</li> <li>Types of contemporary coffee (e.g.</li> </ul>	Self- development	0.790		
americano, latte, cappuccino) become my consideration when I drink it.	Self- development	0.696		
Price			0.749	0.787
- I consider the price of contemporary coffee when I buy it	Andorfer and Liebe (2015)	0.758		
- The price of contemporary coffee should match to my expectation	Self- development	0.787		
- I like the contemporary coffee that offers "value for money" price	Alfirahmi (2019)	0.799		
- I like the contemporary coffee that offer special price (e.g. discount, membership, bundling)	Amalia & Wibowo (2019)	0.783		
Distribution			0.793	0.818
- The distribution aspect (e.g. location, duration of delivery) of contemporary coffee become my buying consideration	Self- development	0.828		
- I consider shipping cost when I buy contemporary coffee	Amalia & Wibowo (2019)	0.786		
- I consider the duration of delivery when I buy contemporary coffee	Self- development	0.803		

### Table 1. Validity and Reliability Test Result

Variable/Items	References	Loading factor	КМО	Cronbach
	TT1	0.801		Alpha
- I consider the distance of the contemporary coffee location when I want to buy it	Thornton et al. (2017)	0.801		
Brand			0.748	0.742
- I like to consume contemporary coffee from certain brand(s).	Song et al. (2020)	0.737		
- The popularity of a contemporary coffee brand greatly influences my consumption interest.	Bissinger & Leufkens (2017)	0.816		
<ul> <li>I will buy the contemporary coffee brand recommended by my friends</li> <li>The brand description (brand story)</li> </ul>	Lee (2017)	0.700		
become consideration on my consumption decision	Chen (2020)	0.746		
Location Ambience			0.766	0.773
- The comfort of the place greatly influences my consumption interest	Tumanan & Lansangan (2012)	0.848		
- The completeness of facilities (e.g indoor, outdoor, wi-fi) greatly influenced my consumption interest	Tumanan & Lansangan (2012)	0.821		
<ul> <li>Flexible operating hours (e.g open from morning, open 24 hours) greatly influence my consumption interest</li> </ul>	Self- development	0.665		
- The aesthetics of the place greatly influences my consumption interest	Tumanan & Lansangan (2012)	0.759		
Intention to buy				
- What is the average amount of contemporary coffee you consume	Self- development			

# 4.2 Respondents' Profiles

Table 2 shows the profiles of 214 respondents who went through the cleaning data process. There were 115 males (53.74%) and 99 women (46.29%); mostly 18-22 years old (89.25%) and domiciled in Jakarta (32.24%), Banten (18.23%), and West Java (13.55%). Most of them were students (95.79%) with diverse monthly spending habits.

Variable	Categories	Frequency
Gender	Male	115 (53.74%)
	Female	99 (46.26%)
Age	<18	11 (5.14%)
	18-22	191 (89.25%)
	23-27	6 (2.81%)
	28-32	3 (1.4%)
	>32	3 (1.4%)
Domicile	DKI Jakarta	69 (32.24%)
	Banten	39 (18.23%)
	West Java	29 (13.55%)
	Other area in Java	15 (7.01%)
	Outside Java Island	62 (28.97%)
Occupation	Student	205 (95.79%)
	Employee	4 (1.87%)
	Entrepreneur	5 (2.34%)
Monthly income	<rp 2.000.000<="" td=""><td>34 (15.89%)</td></rp>	34 (15.89%)
	Rp 2.000.000 - Rp 2.999.999	33 (15.42%)
	Rp 3.000.000 - Rp 3.999.999	62 (28.97%)
	Rp 4.000.000 - Rp 4.499.999	39 (18.22%)
	>=Rp 5.000.000,00	46 (21.5%)

 Table 2. Respondent Profiles

Source: Primary Data (2020)

#### 4.3 Results of The Classical Regression Assumption Test

The data analysis discusses the result of the classical regression assumption and multiple regression test. The classical regression tests consist of the test of normality, heteroscedasticity, and multicollinearity, while multiple regression tests include the coefficient of determination, F test, and t-test.

A normality test has been performed and the result of the p-value on Kolmogorov-Smirnov is 0.000 (p<0.05) which indicates abnormal distribution. It means that this research bears extreme data and less accurate measurements. Nevertheless, in some cases, authors continued their analysis with regression despite the abnormality test result (Li et al, 2012; Yan et al., 2021) and conceded that it could be an error and discrepancy in predicting the result analysis.

The test on heteroscedasticity and multicollinearity has also been conducted. The significant value of the variables ranges from 0.035 to 0.969. It indicates that heteroscedasticity

exists partially (sig.<0.05). However, the data does not indicate multicollinearity, since the Pearson-correlation coefficient ranges between 0.082 and 0.372 which is less than 0.8.

### 4.4 Results of Multiple Regression Test

The coefficient of determination, indicated by R-square, shows the variance portion of the dependent variable that can be explained by independent variables in linear regression analysis. Although the test result indicates F-value=2.399 and sig=0.038, the R-square score is 0.055 which means only a small part of the predictor variables can explain its contribution to the dependent variable. It means taste, price, distribution, brand, and ambience simultaneously influence the consumption of contemporary coffee, but they only explain a small part of the whole contribution factors to coffee consumption.

### 4.5 Results of Hypothesis Testing

The regression result demonstrated taste as the only factor that has a significant influence on the consumption of contemporary coffee. Meanwhile distribution, price, brand, and location ambience were not significant factors considered by contemporary coffee drinkers (Table 3).

This interesting finding indicates that the consumption experience of drinking contemporary coffee relies on the taste of the product itself and the consumer journey during the consumption process. The variant of coffee taste, the flavor combination of each variant, the intensity of that taste, and the aftertaste of coffee build the full and final experience of drinking contemporary coffee.

Model	Standardized	Sig.		
<b>Coefficients Beta</b>				
(Constant)	-	0.381		
Taste	0.184	0.039		
Price	0.030	0.749		
Distribution	-0.050	0.585		
Brand	0.089	0.293		
Ambience	0.008	0.929		

Table 3. Regression Result

Source: Primary Data (2020)

The results of the quantitative research also supported the results of previous qualitative research as follows:

"... Most importantly is the taste of the coffee. If it doesn't exist, I will look for a café that has a good taste of coffee anyway, so it does not matter whether the place is good or not."

"... Yes, the taste is the most important thing to me."

The choice of certain variants of coffee reflects the preferences of coffee lovers. When the consumers find a variant that matches their favorite, they tend to consume more coffee. The composition and the richness of that taste also become key points of consideration when consuming contemporary coffee. The right composition of sour, bitter, and sweet levels of contemporary coffee plays an important role in the total consumption level since it clearly expresses the core experience of that coffee consumption. Aftertaste leaves a long-lasting impression about experiencing the taste of coffee, even when the coffee itself does not exist anymore.

The taste of coffee reflects the manner of processing and drying coffee beans. Drying under the sun results in a different taste from that by a machine. Hand-picking harvesting offers superior quality of coffee taste compared to mechanical harvesting (Ghosh & Venkatachalapathy, 2014).

The rejected H2 indicates that price does not influence the consumption of contemporary coffee. They do not consider price when they want to consume it. It strengthens the finding that taste is the most important and the only factor that they consider as long as they have a good experience in their consumption journey.

The distribution aspects also do not influence the consumption of contemporary coffee (H3). Although consumers want to enjoy contemporary coffee at home, the costly delivery charge, fear of broken packages, and unwarranted hygiene procedure during delivery inhibit the consumers to do an online order. The ambiguity between the risk of going to the coffee house and buying online causes distribution aspect becomes neither important and unimportant thing.

The result of the H4 test shows that brand is not the factor for the consumer to enjoy contemporary coffee. It is also an unexpected finding since, in normal conditions, a brand is an important factor for the coffee business. Just before the pandemic was coming, there was a phenomenon that new players of the contemporary coffee business rapidly grew and offered new experiences for the consumers. In such a perfectly competitive atmosphere, so many new brands become indifferent, are not unique, and do not give added value anymore for the confusing consumers.

The pandemic also makes ambiance an insignificant attractive aspect for the consumer of contemporary coffee (H5). The health protocol during the pandemic, such as limited operating hours, physical distancing, and work from home regulation diminish the importance of ambiance as the important thing to enjoy contemporary coffee.

On average, there is a significant difference in the consumption level of male and female consumers based on the results of independent t-testing. Males drink more contemporary coffee than females do (8.95 cups vs. 6.75 cups/month; sig=0.045). The same phenomenon also happens in the research findings of van der Merwe & Maree (2016) that men consume more

specialty coffee than women do. It means that contemporary coffee owners should pay attention to the different behavior of male and female consumers. If it is willing to increase the consumption of each target segment, then it should communicate a different proposition.

Meanwhile, the ANOVA result indicates no significant differences in the consumption level of contemporary coffee (sig. >0.05) based on the domicile (F=0.996; sig=0.471), income (F=0.904; sig=0.606), and age group of the respondents (F=0.563; sig=0.901) It can be understood that lifestyle businesses usually consider psychographic (Pratama et al., 2021) and behavioral aspects (Merwe & Maree, 2016), rather than a geodemographic approach.

#### 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of this research show that taste is the only significant factor affecting consumers' consumption of contemporary coffee. Males consume a higher level of contemporary coffee than females do.

Several recommendations can be offered for contemporary coffee business owners to survive during and after the current pandemic times. First, matching taste is the key to succeeding in the contemporary coffee café business. They should maintain the consistency of favorite tastes for their customers. Second, the development of their products should consider the preferences of different genders of consumers. Third, the coffee business owner should put more effort toward maintaining the taste experience when it needs to be delivered outside the shop. Fourth, further research on the preferences of the female market could be beneficial for the next development of the business.

This study has several limitations in terms of its geo-demographic research coverage. There are numerous opportunities for further research using different methods, such as social network analysis and behavioral ethnography to uncover other aspects that can influence contemporary coffee business development. Cluster analysis could also be performed to categorize the contemporary coffee market segments and their specific expectations.

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