STUDY REGARDING THE COFFEE CONSUMPTION AMONG YOUNG PEOPLE

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INTRODUCTION

Coffee is the most popular beverage in the world and it is consumed by most adults. An estimated 80% of people worldwide regularly consume caffeine. Coffee, tea and soft drinks contribute the most to the baseline caffeine intakes of New Zealand, Korea and the US (Fulgoni et al., 2015; Stachyshyn et al., 2021; Choi, 2020).

The benefits and risks of caffeine consumption are dose dependent.

There are no international guidelines for a “safe limit” of daily caffeine intake, but levels up to 400 mg/day are considered as “safe” for non-pregnant adults.

Caffeine is well known for its positive physiological effects on health, such as increasing alertness and combating fatigue (Reyes and Cornelis, 2018).

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The aim of this study was to evaluate the coffee consumption habits and experiences of Romanian tertiary students from the University of Craiova, Biology specialization. The study was conducted online between June 2020 – June 2021.

The investigation used a coffee consumption habits questionnaire from a sample of 102 students. The questionnaire included the following screening questions: 1. The age and the gender. 2. Do you drink coffee? 3. At what age do you drink coffee? 4. Don’t drink coffee because it has given you side effects or you don’t like the taste? 5. Do you drink coffee daily or occasionally? 6. How many cups of coffee do you drink daily? (cups/day or ml/day) 7. Do you drink decaffeinated or decaffeinated coffee? 8. Do you drink American coffee/espresso/caffeinated beverages type 3 in 1? 9. Do you feel the need to drink coffee every day? 10. Do you add caloric ingredients such as sugar or milk to coffee? 11. Do you think that coffee has beneficial or side effects on health? (harmful) 12. Do you have palpitations or tachycardia after coffee consumption? 13. Do you have psycho-motor agitation after coffee consumption? 14. Do you feel more active? 15. Did coffee consumption cause you insomnia? 16. Do you know the beneficial or adverse effects of coffee consumption?

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A total of 102 participants completed the questionnaire. Most of the participants (78) were female (76.47%).

72 subjects (70.58%) of those who completed the questionnaire stated that they consume coffee, 27 of them being smokers (37.5%).

39 subjects (54.17%) stated that they consume coffee daily and the rest (45.83%) only consume occasionally because they do not like the taste or cause them the side effects.

Regarding the amount consumed daily, expressed by the number of cups consumed daily, 69.23% stated that they consume 2 cups of coffee per day, 23.08% consume only one cup and 7.69% consume 3 or more cups per day. One cup contains about 150 ml of coffee.

The evaluation of the coffee variety showed that the majority of the participants (95.84%) preferred caffeinated coffee.

The evaluation of the addition of substrates with the caloric content showed that 70.83% prefer to add sugar and milk, 12.5% consume coffee only with sugar and 16.67% add only milk to coffee.

The evaluation of student’s knowledge of the beneficial or harmful effects of coffee consumption showed variable results. 45.83% of the students stated that the effects depend on the dose, and side effects may occur if caffeine consumption is excessive.

They were able to list both the beneficial and the adverse effects of coffee consumption. 25% considered coffee to be harmful and 12.5% considered it beneficial. 16.67% stated that they do not know how to answer and that they believe that coffee consumption has no effect on the human body. 29.17% of the students stated that they have insomnia after consuming coffee, especially if they consume after 4 p.m., so avoid this. Evaluation of the occurrence of the cardiovascular symptoms after coffee consumption (palpitations, tachycardia) showed that 70.83% of students have no symptoms. 18.05% of them stated that they frequently have tachycardia and 12.5% stated that they have palpitations only in case of consuming too much coffee. 91.67% of participants said they feel more active after drinking coffee, are more alert and have a greater ability to concentrate. 12.5% of students said that coffee consumption causes them a state of mental agitation.

CONCLUSIONS

Coffee is consumed by most students. The majority of them consume a moderate amount of coffee, represented by 2 cups a day. They consume responsibly and are aware that a large amount of coffee can cause adverse effects on the cardiovascular or nervous system. Some students consume coffee even if they do not know what effects it has on the human body or if they consider it to have harmful effects. This shows their lack of interest in the principles of human nutrition and the need to introduce the notions of health education in school curricula.