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# **A market research of Finnish consumer perception of Chinese pure tea**

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<p><b>Abstract</b></p> <p>Although coffee is the most popular hot drink in Finland, tea still has a development trend in Finnish culture, especially in the context of increasing consumer demand for natural, organic and healthy products. The purpose of this thesis was to explore the perception and consumption behaviour of Finnish consumers of Chinese pure tea. This study delved into the Finnish tea market, the attitudes, and behaviours of Finnish consumers towards tea consumption, and market competition, as well as focused on the attitudes and preferences of Finnish consumers towards Chinese pure tea.</p> <p>The quantitative research was used to carry out the study. The theoretic background was based on the secondary sources, which are earlier studies and literatures regarding the topics. The structured questionnaire was used to collect the data. This methodology of this thesis used non-probability sampling techniques to ensure practicality. The questionnaire was distributed using a link provided through the survey management software Google Forms. This study used descriptive statistics for data computation and aimed to analyse the survey finding to achieve the research questions and objectives.</p> <p>The results of this study showed that the demand of Finland for tea seems to be influenced by factors such as health awareness, taste preferences, and cultural tendencies. The trend in the tea market shows a pursuit of quality and diversity, as well as an interest in products with health value and cultural background. Furthermore, one of key findings was Finnish interest in the Chinese pure tea and their recognition of the health effects of tea, which reflected the potential opportunity for Chinese pure tea in Finnish market and provided valuable insights for entrepreneurs.</p>		
<p><b>Key words</b></p> <p>Finland, Chinese, Pure tea, Lifestyle, Attitude, Health, Preference</p>		

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Tea, often regarded as the elixir of health, transcends borders, cultures, and centuries. It is not only a drink, but also a carrier of culture and history. In the contemporary landscape of global consumption, it takes a significant place in both tradition and modernity. Chinese tea culture has a long history, and Finland, as a country that advocates nature and health, has an increasing interest in tea culture. Against this background, the primary aim of this thesis is to explore the feasibility of establishing a Chinese tea store in Finland and to understand the current perceptions of Chinese pure tea among Finnish consumers.

This thesis first explains the purpose and objectives of the study, followed by the theoretical part related to market research and consumer behaviour, including tea culture of Finland, Finland tea market, competition of Finnish tea market, actors influencing consumer behaviour, customer perception and attitude. The next is a detailed analysis of the data collected and the presentation of the research results. This thesis uses quantitative research methods to collect data through questionnaires. The empirical data part adopts the analysis method of questionnaire survey, some questions of the questionnaire based on feedback of concept testing and market testing. The final part is to summarize the findings and provides recommendations for future research.

In this thesis, through research and data analysis on the Finnish tea market, that will be better to recognize the potential opportunities for Chinese tea in the Finnish market and provide useful information and suggestions for entrepreneurs.

## 2 PROBLEM SETTING AND CONCEPTUAL FRAME OF REFERENCE

### 2.1 Problem setting

This first part describes the research problem and the purpose of the thesis, and the research objective.

#### 2.1.1 Research problem

In recent years, tea culture has been developing globally, and Chinese pure tea has attracted much attention as a healthy drink. Finland is a country in northern Europe with a rich cultural heritage and passion for fresh food and drink. However, tea consumption in Finland is relatively low compared to coffee. Thus, how well the perception of Finnish consumers of Chinese pure tea is a question that requires in-depth research.

Therefore, the purpose of this thesis is to explore the perception and consumption behaviour of Finnish consumers of Chinese pure tea. This study will explore these issues through market research and data analysis. These include understanding of tea culture, the Finnish tea market, and consumer preferences. By finding out the market acceptance of pure tea of China in Finland, to provide valuable information to entrepreneurs interested in opening Chinese tea shops in Finland.

#### 2.1.2 Research objective

This thesis is a research based. In order to respond the purpose of this thesis, the following research questions are that need to be answered:

1. What are the current demands and trends of tea market in Finland?
2. What factors influence Finnish consumers' purchase behaviour of tea?
3. How is the attitude of Chinese pure tea consumption among Finnish consumers?

4. What is the competition situation in Finnish tea market?
5. what are some beneficial suggestions for Chinese Tea Store of entrepreneurship?

## 2.2 Conceptual framework

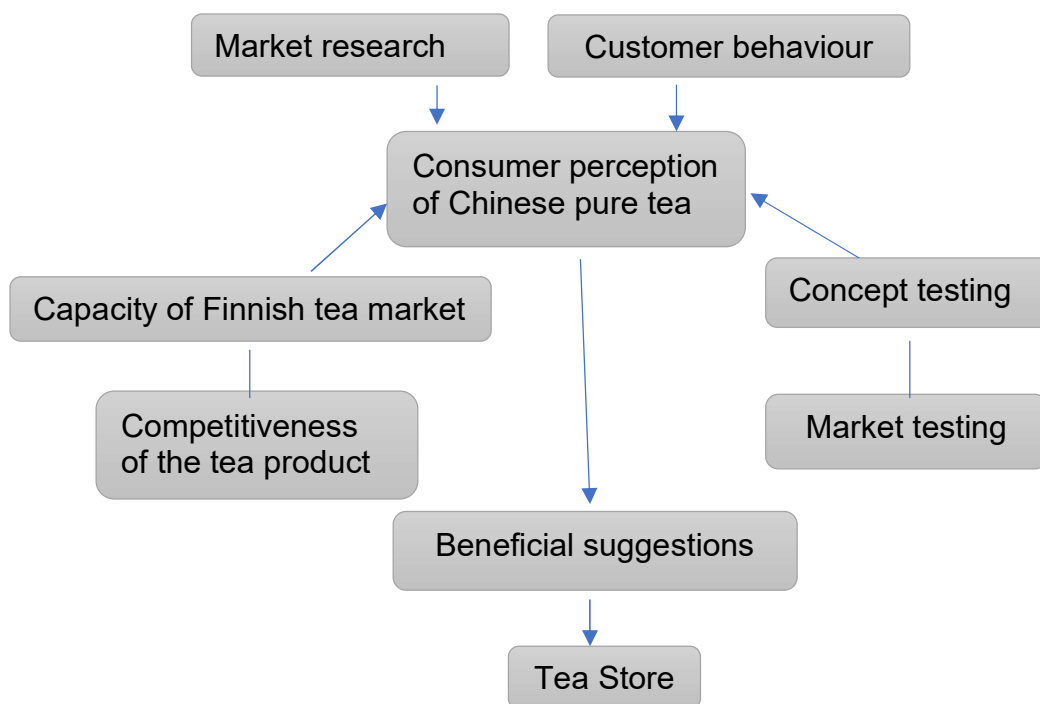


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of Finnish consumer perception of Chinese pure tea. (Author of thesis 2024)

This figure illustrates the structure of this thesis. Theoretical research background covers Market Research and Customer behaviour which include such as tea culture, Finnish tea market, Competitiveness of the tea product, consumer motivation and habit.

The practical survey section is a consumer survey through data collection, such as Concept testing and Tea tasting. Data collection uses questionnaires to collect understanding and attitudes towards consumers Chinese pure tea. Finally, to provide useful information and valuable insights for Chinese pure tea enterprises entering the Finnish tea market.

### 2.3 Boundaries

The purpose of the thesis is to understand the acceptance of Chinese pure tea in the Finnish market. Thus, the market study only focuses on information related to the Finnish tea market and does not discuss the details of the global tea market. A brief introduction to the background of Chinese tea culture and Finnish culture is provided without a detailed discussion of the cultural environment.

The thesis mentions only the behaviour, habits and preferences of tea drinking in Finland, and other customs of catering are not discussed in detail. An extensive analysis of the legal requirements, permits or regulations regarding setting up a Chinese tea shop in Finland are not covered in the thesis.

Regarding the competition in the pure tea market, a comparative analysis of Chinese tea and other Finnish beverages (such as coffee or alcohol) is briefly introduced, but direct competition with other tea shops is not discussed.

## 3 MARKET RESEARCH

Market research is a way of investigating and answering questions about human behaviour (Hamersveld & Bont, 2007, p.37). In order to research the perceptions of Chinese pure tea among Finnish consumers, the first, in this part is to briefly describe relevant background information of the tea market. This involves understanding the culture of the tea industry of China and Finland, its current tea market position and competitive landscape. According to Rubik (2023), a comprehensive background analysis provides to ensure research questions and methodology align with the broader business environment.

### 3.1 Background of Tea market

#### 3.1.1 Tea culture in China

China is known as the birthplace of tea and has a rich tea culture and long history, including the origin of tea, tea ceremony and different types of tea. Tea is regarded as a symbol of lifestyle and spiritual pursuit in China. Chinese pure tea is not only a beverage, but also an important part of the traditional Chinese lifestyle, such as understanding and pursuit of nature, taste and health.

Pure tea is a term used to describe any tea that is made exclusively from a single plant species. For instance, chamomile tea is made purely from chamomile flowers, while Dragon Well green tea is solely composed of leaves from the *Camellia sinensis* plant (Morgan, 2019). Pure tea gives natural flavours without any additional ingredients or flavours.

Chinese pure tea is world famous for its rich flavour, production technology, health benefits and international influence. For example:

- Tea varieties cover green tea, black tea, white tea, yellow tea, oolong tea and other types. Each type of tea has its own unique flavour, texture and nutritional content. (Chazhidao, 2023.)
- Tea production areas are spread across China, and each production area produces unique tea characteristics due to its specific climate, soil and topography. E.g. West Lake Longjing, Huangshan Maofeng, Wuyi Rock Tea, etc. are all famous Chinese pure tea varieties, i.e. the brand name of the tea originating from this region. (Chazhidao, 2023.)
- The production process of pure tea in China has a long history and exquisite skills. It usually includes multiple processes such as picking, withering, rolling, fermentation/oxidation, and baking. Each process has an important impact on the quality of the final tea. (Chazhidao, 2023.)



- Chinese pure tea is believed to have a variety of health benefits, including antioxidants, promoting digestion, improving immunity, lowering blood pressure, improving cardiovascular health, and more. These benefits are due to the rich natural compounds in tea, such as tea polyphenols, caffeine, amino acids, etc. (Yand et al., 2014.)
- In addition, Chinese pure tea occupies an important position in the international tea market. China is the world's largest tea producer, exporter, and consumer according to Ma (2023). Chinese pure tea has an important influence in global tea culture and is favoured by consumers in many countries and regions.

The four main types of Chinese pure tea are green tea, black tea, oolong tea and white tea. The ingredients of tea know are closely related to health, thus according to Yang et al (2014) and Zhou et al (2023), the chemistry of tea constituents is explained as follow:

- Classical tea, like green tea has been used medicinally in China for ages. Green tea is made by steaming or baking, rolling, and drying the leaves, preserving its catechin polyphenols. These compounds make up 30-42% of the tea's dry weight when brewed. For example, a typical serving contains 240-320 mg of catechins and 20-50 mg of caffeine in a 2.5g serving steeped in 250 ml of hot water. (Yand et al., 2014.)
- Black tea is made through a process involving withering and crushing the tea leaves, which triggers oxidation due to enzymes, often called "fermentation." This process converts catechins into theaflavins and thearubigins, giving black tea its colour. In brewed black tea, the catechin content is 3%-10%, and thearubigins with more than 20% are the most abundant. (Yand et al., 2014.)
- Oolong tea is made by gently crushing just the edges of the tea leaves and allowing only a brief period of fermentation. This process creates the unique flavour and taste of oolong tea. It contains catechins, theaflavins,

and thearubigins like black tea. The level of theanine, an amino acid characteristic of tea, can vary depending on how the tea is grown and processed. (Yand et al., 2014.)

- White tea as a kind of traditional Chinese tea which has the minimum-step manufacturing process and is obtained mainly after picking, withering and drying. The main functional ingredients of white tea include tea polyphenols, flavonoids, caffeine, amino acids, tea pigment and mineral elements. The content of tea polyphenols represented by epigallocatechin gallate (EGCG) in white tea is relatively high, which is close to green tea, and higher than black tea and oolong tea. The highest amino acid content is also one of the crucial characteristics of white tea. (Zhou et al., 2023.)

More and more health-conscious people are choosing tea over sugary drinks because of its antioxidant properties, calming effects, potential to help with weight management, and its ability to promote relaxation. (Statista, 2023).

### 3.1.2 Tea culture in Finland

Tracing back to the origins of Finnish tea culture, according to Mäenpää (2020) tea arrived among the nobles of Finland at the beginning of the 18th century, but the drink did not become popular until the 19th century. Tea originally came to Finland from both western and eastern routes for historical reasons:

Whether Finland belonged to Sweden or Russia at that time, it affected trade relations as well as customs. The first references to Finnish tea drinking date back to 1707, during the Great Northern War. Although Turku was the capital of Finland at the time, the first mentions of tea are from Helsinki. The prototypes came from France via Stockholm, and on the other hand from the Russian side from St. Petersburg. In Sweden, tea was apparently introduced in the 1670s, but the Tsar of Russia received tea for the first time already in 1638. (Teenystavat, 2021.)

According to Eklund (2022, p.10) Finnish tea consumption predominantly revolved around Indian and Ceylon teas after World War II. Brands like Lipton's, Paulig, Horniman's, Twinning's, and Princess Tea held the largest market share. Tea gained popularity in the 1960s and 1970s, particularly with the introduction of tea bags. Lipton's Earl Grey, English Breakfast, and Irish Breakfast teas were among the favourites during this time. Chinese tea was also available in the 1980s. Additionally, the smoky black tea Lapsang Souchong was introduced in the late 1970s, diversifying the tea options for Finnish consumers. (Ranta, 2020, p.173). Lapsang Souchong is traditional Chinese pure tea and is known as the originator of black tea. According to Ranta (2020) during this decade of tea trending tea awareness and the work of tea professionals and Friends of Tea Society has changed tea culture.

How is the Tea today in Finland? The new trend started in the early 2000s according to Ranta (2020). In Finland, the average tea consumption per person is around 300 grams per year, significantly lower than coffee consumption, which stands at around 10 kilograms per year (2020, p.180). However, in the early 2000s, there was a rise in domestic tea chains entering the market. These chains mainly focus on loose-leaf tea, which is stored in bags or containers. Customers have the flexibility to choose the quantity they wish to purchase. (Eklund, 2022.)

The focus on tea culture started to gain more value in the beginning of the new century. As people's interest in tea preparation and its history grew, more books on tea began to appear.(Eklund, 2022). This surge in tea culture also led to the emergence of new tea houses and shops. In 2003, reporter Pirkko Arstila founded the "Friends of Tea Society" (Teen Ystävät ry) with the aim of promoting tea culture. Their goal was to increase awareness and knowledge about tea and its preparation, improve tea service in restaurants and cafes, and make the joy of tea more accessible to people. (Ranta, 2020.)

### 3.1.3 The influence of Eastern and Western of tea cultures

According to Yang et al. (2021), tea serves as a significant cultural symbol, reflecting characteristics of both Eastern and Western traditions. While the tea cultures of the East and West have their unique aspects, they also share certain similarities. As tea spread from China to Europe, it underwent changes influenced by politics, economics, and culture. These changes have led to the differences between Eastern and Western tea cultures, and also reflect the correspondence between the issue of different thinking and values. (Ma, 2008).

Cross-cultural communication studies highlight that material cultural differences serve as tangible indicators of cultural divergence, which is evident in the disparities between Chinese and Western cultures. Embracing and understanding these differences helps people respect and connect with other cultures. For example, differences in tea culture, like which tea types are preferred, what utensils are used, and how tea is enjoyed, highlight these cultural distinctions. (Ge,2019.)

## 3.2 Finland tea market

### 3.2.1 Finnish domestic tea

Finland is a health-conscious country, and tea is becoming increasingly popular here. According to the article of Nordqvist (2021) Finns' tea drinking is on the rise and there is especially demand for high-quality, ethical tea and new flavour combinations. Tea is no longer a drink that is only brewed as a substitute for coffee. Instead, tea drinking is a way of enjoyment.

According to Nordqvist (2021) tea is not originally a very Nordic drink. What makes the domestic tea in Finland? The most favourable residential areas for the tea bush are mainly in Asia, such as China and India. The natural conditions in Finland do not suit the plant, thus, the main raw material for tea

therefore often arrives in Finland from abroad, but many other things can make Finnish tea, such as the Finnish ingredients which are used in the tea, the packaging designed and manufactured with Finnish expertise.

Although tea is not a Finnish plant, many ingredients can be added to tea. These ingredients are used in the Finnish tea such as berries, fruits, herbs and other spices. Domestic berries such as blueberries, lingonberries and sea buckthorn go well with tea.

In addition, So-called herbal tea or herbal decoction could be made from completely domestic raw materials, in which no tea is used at all. An herbal decoction can contain such as lemongrass, mint and clover. (Nordqvist, 2021.)

### 3.2.2 Current status and trends of the Finnish tea market

Below is data from Statista research, which shows the overall size and development trends of the Finnish tea market, including the market's annual growth rate and the amount of money consumers spend on tea.

In 2024, Finland's tea market saw revenues of US\$26.3 million, with a projected annual decline of -1.27% from 2024 to 2028. On average, each person contributed about US\$4.73 to this market in 2024. The total volume of tea market is expected to reach 700,000 kg by 2028, despite a projected decline of -1.0% in 2025. The average amount of tea consumed per person in Finland is estimated to be 0.15 kg in 2024. (Statista, 2023.)

The tea market includes black tea, green tea, and mate, which are sold either in tea bags or as loose-leaf tea. However, it does not cover iced tea, herbal tea, instant tea, or other similar beverages of tea. (Statista, 2023.)

### 3.3 Competitive landscape of Finnish tea market

Finland has the highest per capita coffee consumption rates in the world, at around 12 kg yearly (CBI, 2019). While coffee is the most popular hot beverage in Finland, tea also has a significant presence in Finnish culture. From THL's FinRavinto 2017 survey, tea is the fourth most consumed drink in Finland after water, coffee and dairy products (Teenystavat, 2021).

#### 3.3.1 The rise of local brand

In the early, bagged tea brought a new tea drinking model and occupied the market, until the new century, loose tea gradually increased, especially in the selection of specialty stores (Eklund, 2022). Lipton and Twinings are popular international brands, Finnish local tea brand Nordqvist is also gradually emerging.

Nordqvist's status in tea is similar to NOKIA in Finland, and it is Finland's professional national tea brand. It has been in business for more than 40 years since it started retailing in 1979 (Nordqvist, 2021). Some main products are original natural flavour tea bags made from domestic berries and tea leaves, as well as loose tea and herbal tea. Nordqvist tea is a tea product that is prepared in almost every Finnish company, restaurant, and home life.

#### 3.3.2 Tea Market share

In Finland, supermarkets serve as the primary sales channel for the tea market. Black tea holds the largest share, with green tea and fruit flavoured making up only about 10%. Around 70% of tea sales are of bagged tea. The remaining portion includes various loose teas sourced from different regions such as Dian Hong from China, Darjeeling and Assam from India, "Malinin" from Kenya, and blended teas from importers. (Li, 2022, p.5.)

In addition, the popularity of herbal teas in Finland has increased significantly, as people increasingly seek natural and organic options for their health advantages. (Statista, 2023).

According to data of CBI (2013), that international brand Twining and Lipton are dominant players in the most significant categories of tea. For instance, in 2012, Twining held a considerable 31% share of the market value, followed by Lipton with 29% share. The remaining 40% of the market is divided among local brand Nordqvist and various smaller tea suppliers. (CBI 2013.)

The market share of Chinese pure tea in Finland is not large, but Chinese pure tea still has a trend in the Finnish market due to its unique natural and health-care qualities. Currently, Chinese pure tea is sold in some tea shops such as Forsman, Chaya and Thehuone etc. For example, Forsman is an importer that supplies a number of high-quality tea shops selling tea from developing countries (CBI, 2013). Chaya is a tea shop specialized in East-Asian tea from China, Taiwan, Japan and Korea, Chinese pure tea includes oolong tea, green tea, and black tea among them (Chaya, 2020). And Thehuone is a tea shop established in 2005 in Helsinki, which is also selling Chinese pure tea.

According to Statista (2023) in the Tea segment, Unilever (Lipton), Associated British Foods (Twinings) and Tata Global Beverages (Tetley) are the biggest players by revenue.

### 3.3.3 Tea market compares to other beverage market

This comparison focuses on the hot drinks because tea is hot drink. According to the latest data from Statista (2023) Finland's Hot Drinks market is expected to reach a revenue of US\$517.9 million in 2024, with an average volume consumption of 7.61 kg per person. This market comprises three main segments: Coffee (which includes both Roast and Instant Coffee), Tea, and Cocoa.

- Coffee

Coffee dominates the market with a revenue of US\$475.0 million in 2024. Per person revenue is around US\$85.34, with an average consumption of 7.19 kg per person. The market is projected to grow at a rate of 0.40% annually, reaching a volume of 37.9 million kg by 2028. (Statista, 2023.)

- Tea

It is projected revenue of US\$26.3 million in 2024, with per person revenue of US\$4.73 and an average consumption of 0.15 kg per person. However, the tea market is expected to decline annually by -1.27%, with a volume of 0.7 million kilograms by 2028. (Statista, 2023.)

- Cocoa

With revenue of US\$16.6 million in 2024, per person revenue is approximately US\$2.99, and average consumption per person is 0.3 kilograms. The cocoa market is projected to grow annually by 6.51%, reaching a volume of 1.9 million kg by 2028. (Statista, 2023.)

Overall, coffee consumption dominates the hot drinks market in Finland, followed by tea and cocoa. The market is anticipated to grow at an annualized rate of 5.35% between 2023 and 2028. These data cover at-home sales such as supermarkets, convenience stores and hyper-markets. (Statista, 2023.)

## 4 CUSTOMER BEHAVIOUR

Consumer buyer behaviour pertains to the purchasing patterns of final consumers, including individuals and households that acquire goods and services for their personal use. These end consumers collectively form the consumer market. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021, p.152)



Before understanding the perception of Chinese pure tea in the Finnish market, it is crucial to conduct an in-depth analysis of consumer behaviour and habits. Consumers purchases are significantly influenced by a variety of factors, including cultural, social, personal, and psychological characteristics. These factors shape individuals' preferences, attitudes, and behaviours when it comes to choosing products and brands. Cultural factors include the buyer's culture, subculture, and social class. Social factors such as the consumer's groups and social networks, family, and social roles and status. Personal characteristics are also influence a buyer's decisions, such as the buyer's occupation, age and stage, economic situation, lifestyle, and personality and self-concept. As well as psychological factors are further influencing a person's buying choices, which include motivation, perception, learning, and beliefs and attitudes. These characteristics of buyer influence how he or she perceives and reacts to the stimuli. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021).

Thus, this part focuses on tea drinking habits and behaviour of Finland, including Finnish consumers' perceptions and attitudes toward the health-related tea drinking and lifestyle. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021.)

#### 4.1 The cultural shift of focusing on health

Culture is the fundamental factor influencing a person's wants and actions. Much of human behaviour is acquired through learning. As individuals grow up within a society, they absorb its core values, perceptions, desires, and behaviours. Values such as equality, individualism, success, activity, involvement, time, material comfort, and health influence consumer behaviour. As societal values evolve, new products and services emerge to meet changing needs. For instance, the growing cultural emphasis on health and fitness has led to the expansion of industries offering health and fitness services, organic foods, and various diet options. This demonstrates how cultural shifts drive innovation and shape consumer demand. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021, p.153.)

Each group or society possesses its own culture, and these cultural influences on purchasing behaviour can differ from one region to another and from one country to another (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021, p.153). As mentioned earlier for the tea culture of Finland, Finland has a unique culture and tradition, which affect understanding and acceptance of consumers of tea culture. Finnish consumers show a high level of health awareness when it comes to diet. More and more people are choosing to pursue a healthy lifestyle and are showing strong interest in natural, organic and additive-free foods and beverages. As a natural and herbal drink, Chinese pure tea is in line with this health awareness and may be favoured by consumers. Culture continues to change with the advancement of the times, and cultural shifts affect consumer values, needs and behaviours. For example, the cultural shift in people paying more attention to health.

People around the world drink tea because they recognize its positive effects on the body. Originating from its therapeutic use in ancient China and later in France, tea has become widely regarded as a healthy habit by many people. (Li, 2022, p.16.)

According to the research of Li (2022, p.1) nearly half (49%) of adults in Finland reported having at least one chronic disease in 2019, and similar issues with obesity and chronic diseases are observed in other Nordic countries. The use of beverages is generally high among the Finnish adult population. The energy, sugars and acidity contained in drinks are critical for nutrition and health promotion. Abundant use of energy-containing drinks exposes you to energy intake that exceeds the need and thereby increases the risk of obesity in the population. (Valsta et al., 2018, p.57.) The prevalence of obesity is indeed one of Finland's most important public health problems (Koponen et al., 2018).

Research suggests that tea may play a role in preventing various diseases. Studies utilizing modern scientific methods have investigated the potential benefits of tea in preventing chronic conditions like cancer, metabolic syndrome, obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular diseases. The findings from these studies show promising results, indicating that tea consumption may

contribute to overall health and disease prevention. (Yand et al., 2014.) For example:

- Weight reduction and alleviation of metabolic syndrome

The impact of tea on body weight in humans have been investigated and reviewed through many small-scale randomized controlled trials (RCTs). A majority of these results suggest that regularly drinking four or more cups of green tea per day or consuming 600-900 mg of tea polyphenols can help reduce weight or body fat. (Yand et al., 2014.)

- Neuroprotective effects of tea

Several studies have linked tea drinking to improvements in cognitive function, including a modest reduction in the risk of Parkinson's disease (PD). Theanine is a distinctive amino acid capable of crossing the blood-brain barrier, is recognized for its role in the neuroprotective benefits of tea. Research has explored theanine's potential in treating conditions such as depression, anxiety, stress, sleep disturbances, insomnia, and certain symptoms of schizophrenia. (Yand et al., 2014.)

In addition, according to Leader (2020), there are some potential benefits of drinking Chinese pure tea. Drinking tea can increase insulin productivity to reduce risk of diabetes. Known to be full of catechins, Chinese tea helps improve muscle endurance, and the most powerful antioxidant found in tea is epigallocatechin gallate which can reduce inflammation in immune and vascular cells. Tea catechins and other polyphenols are powerful antioxidants that effectively neutralize free radicals. Green tea is full of many antioxidants to help make breaking down fat a faster in losing weight. Green tea can also help improve your memory due to tea contains enzymes that help increase your brain function, and decrease cognitive impairment in middle aged adults.

The potential health advantages of drinking tea are significant matters for public health consideration. Research suggests that individuals who consume four, five, or more cups of tea daily may experience protection against certain chronic diseases. Freshly brewed green or black tea, when consumed without

added sugar, appears to be a healthier choice compared to both sugary and non-sugary soft drinks. (Yand et al., 2014.)

## 4.2 Finnish customer perception on Chinese pure tea

An individual's purchasing decisions are significantly shaped by four key psychological factors, such as perception, motivation, learning, attitudes and beliefs. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021, p.162). This part is mainly to explore perception and attitude factors to further analyze the perception and attitude of Finnish customer of tea drinking.

### 4.2.1 Perception

Perception involves organizing, selecting, and interpreting information to create a coherent view of the world. A person's actions are influenced by their individual perception of a situation. Through the five senses such as hearing, sight, touch, smell, and taste, learning occurs as information flows. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021, p.163.)

According to Inabo (2023), customer perception refers to customers' opinions, feelings, and beliefs about the brand. It's vital for building loyalty, reputation, and awareness. Perception is shaped by direct interactions with company business and external factors like social media, reviews, and pricing. While some elements can be controlled such as product quality, pricing and service, others like reviews and social media are beyond the control. Nonetheless, managing these factors well can greatly influence the brand is perceived. (2023). Customer perceptions shape the brand's image. Some consumers enjoy sharing their positive experiences with others in the network, and their word-of-mouth recommendations are influenced by their view of the brand. (Inabo, 2023.)

There are currently relatively few direct studies on Finnish perceptions of Chinese pure tea. To understand Finnish consumers' views on Chinese pure tea,

we can first look at several aspects such as perception of product quality, recognition of taste and variety, and price perception.

- Perceived product quality

Is the Pure tea perceived to be of high quality, freshness, and uniqueness? This is critical to building consumer trust and loyalty to the product.

- Taste and variety recognition

This item aims to understand whether Finnish consumers are interested in the diversity of tea flavours and varieties, as well as whether they have recognition in traditional varieties of Chinese tea culture. This analysis helps in gauging consumers' openness to different types of Chinese teas and helps product positioning.

- Price perception

Do customers think the product is reasonably priced? Are you willing to pay a higher price for high-quality pure Chinese tea? Understanding price perception helps develop appropriate pricing strategies.

#### 4.2.2 Attitude and preference

Attitudes are like filters through which people view the world, shaping their opinions, emotions, and behaviours towards various objects or ideas. Whether it's religion, politics, fashion, music, or food, attitudes influence how individuals perceive and interact with these aspects of life. They create a framework of preferences, leading people to either embrace or avoid certain things based on their likes or dislikes. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021, p.165.)

Attitudes are fundamental aspects of our mindset, encompassing conscious or subconscious states of mind, opinions, emotions, and preferences for action or activity. They are shaped by three dimensions such as affect (emotional response), behavioural intention (inclination towards action), and cognition

(thoughts and beliefs). Attitudes are formed through accumulated experiences in social interactions and are influenced by surroundings and relationships. (Li, 2022, p.17.)

Attitudes can change based on perceptions, with persuasive messages often leading to positive reactions. They shape how process information, influencing selective exposure to high-quality information. Attitudes also impact behaviour, with implicit attitudes predicting spontaneous actions and explicit attitudes guiding deliberate behaviour. Considering both implicit and explicit attitudes improves the ability to predict behaviour accurately. (Bohner & Dickel, 2011.)

Perhaps many peoples' tea-drinking behaviour is based on the perception that drinking tea affects their health and creates an attitude of tea drinking. Because according Nordqvist (2021) more and more Finns are interested in the health effects of tea and the different ways of making tea. Finnish tea culture is enlightened, and tea drinkers want to know how the products are made. It is no longer a drink that is only brewed as a substitute for coffee.

Finland is well-known for its high coffee consumption per capita, and coffee culture is deeply ingrained in the Finnish lifestyle. However, the preferences for tea have also been evolving, and there is a growing interest in various tea varieties. What are the traditional preferences in Tea in Finland? Such as Loose Black Tea, Tea Bags Black, Fruit and Herbal Tea, Green Tea, Instant Tea (Euromonitor, 2023). Some general observations include:

- Black tea

Black tea often served with milk, honey or sugar which is relatively popular and classic black tea blends are commonly consumed (Eklund, 2022).

- Green tea

Green tea has gained popularity among health-conscious consumers due to its perceived health benefits, and flavoured green teas and blends with herbs are also enjoyed (Eklund, 2022).

- Herbal teas and fruit infusions

Herbal teas and fruit infusions are well-received, especially those with flavours like mint, chamomile, and berry blends, and these types of teas are often consumed for their soothing or refreshing qualities (Nordqvist, 2021).

- Specialty and Exotic teas

As the interest in diverse tea options grows, there is a niche market for Specialty and Exotic teas. This may include Chinese, Japanese, or other international teas with unique flavours and characteristics (Eklund, 2022).

According to Nordqvist (2021) Finnish tea drinking is on the rise. There is especially demand for high-quality, ethical tea and new flavour combinations.

#### 4.3 Lifestyle

Lifestyle is one of personal characteristics that influences a buyer's decisions. According to Kotler (2021, p. 161) people sharing the same subculture, social class, or occupation can lead remarkably diverse lifestyles. Lifestyle, depicted through psychographics, represents an individual's living pattern. It encompasses the AIO dimensions: activities such as social events, work, hobbies, sports, shopping; interests such as food, recreation, fashion, family; and opinions such as about social issues, business, products, themselves. Unlike merely reflecting social class or personality, lifestyle offers a holistic view of how individuals navigate and engage with the world around them. (Kotler, 2021.)

Understanding the concept of lifestyle can provide insights into evolving consumer values and their impact on purchasing behaviour. Today, consumers seek products that reflect their values and lifestyles, not just buy products and functional benefit. (Kotler, 2021.)

Over time, tea drinking has evolved into a rich cultural practice intertwined with art, poetry, and ceramics (Eklund, 2022). During the Sung dynasty, whipped tea was associated with self-realization and spiritual growth. The development of tea into three forms such as boiled, whipped, and steeped, which reflects the cultural values of different eras. (Jolliffe, 2007, p.11.)

As stated before, tea culture in Finland has long revolved around tea bags, to the extent that the standard way of enjoying tea is simply a tea bag in a mug (Eklund, 2022). According to interviews by Eklund (2022, p.31) with various Finnish professionals revealed that despite the availability of higher-quality leaf tea, the predominant tea-drinking habit remains unchanged. Anything beyond this traditional approach may be perceived as extravagant or unconventional, although there's a noticeable shift towards appreciating good quality tea, particularly in larger cities like Helsinki.

According to Eklund (2022), the "way of tea," as described by some interviewees transcends mere beverage consumption, it embodies a lifestyle. These individuals exhibit a remarkable dedication to learning about and exploring the world of tea. For them, tea represents more than just a drink, it's a pathway to conscious living and inner reflection. Engaging in tea ceremonies can be a spiritual experience, fostering a deeper connection with oneself and others. It serves as a means of sharing experiences, exchanging knowledge, and connecting with like-minded individuals. (2022, p.47)

## 5 METHODOLOGY – IMPLEMENTATION

This part is brief overview of research method. These include several aspects such as Research design, Research method, Population and sample, Making the questionnaire, Data collection and analysis, as well as validity and reliability.



## Research Design

This research design is the plan of how researcher will be answering the research question. According to Saunders (2019) research can be structured to serve various purposes: exploratory, descriptive, explanatory, evaluative, or a combination of these approaches. (p.186).

Exploratory study serves as valuable tools for uncovering insights and understanding a topic of interest. They involve asking open-ended questions to discover what's happening within the subject area. Various methods can be employed for exploratory research, including literature reviews, interviewing experts, conducting in-depth individual interviews, or organizing focus group sessions. These interviews are typically unstructured, allowing for flexibility in exploring different aspects of the topic. (Saunders, 2019, pp.186-187.)

Descriptive research is to gain an accurate profile of events, persons, or situations. It rests on one or more specific hypotheses and sampling data collection and analysis carefully. Some methods include such as questionnaire surveys, interviews, and analysis of secondary data. Descriptive research can build on exploratory research or lay the groundwork for explanatory research. (Saunders, 2019, p.187.)

Explanatory research focuses on analyzing situations or issues to elucidate the connections between different variables. Typical uses of explanatory research to find out if there is a causal relationship between variables. Methods of explanatory research such as case studies, observation, historical analysis, attitude surveys, statistical surveys. (Saunders, 2019, p.188.)

Evaluative research focuses on assessing the effectiveness of something to determine how well it works. In business and management, evaluative research aims to evaluate the performance of organizational or business strategies, programs, policies, processes or initiatives.. This evaluation can cover various areas within the organization or business, such as assessing the

impact of a personnel policy, analysing the success of a marketing campaign, a costing strategy, or the delivery of a support service. The goal is to gather insights into the effectiveness of these aspects and identify areas for improvement or optimization. (Saunders, 2019, p.188.)

Descriptive research is used for this thesis. The purpose of this research design is to analyse the perception and consumption behaviour of Finnish consumers of Chinese pure tea. Therefore, to develop the data collection method is based on this research topic and research questions, such as behaviour, perceptions, attitudes, and habits. Through sampling data collection and analysis, an online questionnaire is used to obtain broader feedback from Finnish consumer.

## **Research Method**

A common method of categorizing market research is by distinguishing between qualitative and quantitative approaches. (Hamersveld & Bont, 2007, p.39). Quantitative methods typically involve the collection and analysis of numerical data, often using techniques like questionnaires or statistical analysis. Qualitative methods involve gathering and analyzing non-numerical data, such as through interviews or categorizing information. Quantitative research focuses on quantifiable variables and statistical patterns, while qualitative research delves into understanding underlying meanings, contexts, and experiences. (Saunders, 2019, p.175)

Quantitative research follows a deductive approach, aiming to test theories by collecting and analyzing numerical data. It explores relationships between variables using statistical and graphical techniques, often including controls for data validity. Research designs may involve a single data collection method, like a questionnaire and quantitative analytical procedure, or a combination of methods, such as questionnaires and structured observation, analyzed statistically. Surveys in quantitative research are typically conducted through

questionnaires, structured interviews, or structured observation. (Saunders, 2019, pp.175-178.)

This thesis will be quantitative research which uses structured questionnaires. The data collection is conducted uniformly to guarantee clarity in question expression and consistent understanding among all participants. (Saunders, 2019). This methodology of this thesis uses non-probability sampling techniques to ensure practicality.

### **Population and Sample**

A census is conducted to gather and analyze data from every conceivable case or member within a group (Saunders, 2019, p.292).

According to Saunders (2019) the full set of cases or elements from which a sample is taken is called the population. In this thesis, the population from which researcher would select the sample would be Finnish who live in Finland. Because choosing Finnish residents as survey respondents can directly and accurately reflect Finnish consumers' attitudes towards Chinese pure tea, which able to ensure the sample is representative, and also can be more reasonable for achieving the research questions and objectives.

Non-probability sampling is used in this thesis. According to Saunders (2019, p.315), non-probability sampling, also known as non-random sampling, offers various techniques for selecting samples, many of which involve subjective judgment. In the initial stages of certain research projects, such as piloting a questionnaire, non-probability sampling may be the most practical approach. With the rise of online questionnaires, non-probability samples have become increasingly common. The most prevalent form is convenience sampling, where participants are chosen based on their availability or accessibility. Despite its limitations, convenience sampling is often utilized when resources are limited. However, samples chosen through convenience sampling may still

align with purposive sample selection criteria relevant to the research objectives. (Saunders, 2019.)

The sampling frame of non-probability sample is dependent on research questions and objectives of this thesis, the participants are residents of Finland, including such as friends, classmates, and to seek out more Finnish people on Facebook. The sample size of the target populations are around 300 cases, between the ages of 18-70. The researcher will send a link of questionnaire to the participants, in order gain as many answers as possible to improve response rates and data quality.

### **Making the questionnaire**

In fact, some indirect measures have been designed to reveal attitudes that the person is not even aware of, so-called implicit attitudes. Attitudes are not directly observable, so if someone wants to know a person's attitude, probably the easiest way is to simply ask the person. Not surprisingly, such direct measures are most commonly used in both academic and applied research. (Bohner & Wanke, 2002, p.19.)

The Research of Finnish consumer's awareness and trust of different pure teas could be done by collecting data through questionnaires. The researcher develops own questionnaire, it is based on findings of previous studies such as Finnish tea culture, behaviour, preferences habits and attitudes (Appendix). That include six topics such as tea drinking habits, understanding of Chinese pure tea, taste and aroma preferences, buying habits and the connection between pure tea and health.

Some of these questions are designed based on two types of product testing, such as concept testing and market testing. The concept testing refers to explore the feasibility of a product idea or concept and evaluate how it may perform in the marketplace, which often involves presentations or customer

surveys (Indeed, 2024). E.g. the health-related characteristics and functions of pure tea are designed in the questionnaire to test whether there is a market for Chinese pure tea through feedback of consumer on this health concept, this topic of questions is "The connection between pure tea and health". The marketing test refers to provide a certain amount of trial products to designated consumers and study the future market trend of this product through their reactions (Indeed, 2024). E.g. to provide trial products of Chinese pure tea to several respondents, the purpose is to know the preferences of respondents for different taste profiles, aromatic and the level of awareness of pure tea varieties. These respondents are included in the respondents of questionnaire. There has an extra topic of questions is "feedback on trial products", which is for this part of the respondents.

The types of question are mainly closed-ended questions, and the questions are divided into dichotomous and multiple-choice questions. The nominal information of respondents covers about the respondent's age generation, gender, city, and it is anonymity in the questionnaire.

### **Data collection and analysis**

Quantitative analysis requires employing specific statistical methods tailored to the type of data being analyzed and the objectives of the analysis, whether it's to describe, illustrate, examine, or predict certain phenomena. In quantitative analysis, calculations and diagram drawing are typically conducted using analysis software. This software ranges from basic spreadsheets like Excel to more advanced tools such as Stata, IBM SPSS, and SAS Statistics, which offer comprehensive data management and statistical analysis capabilities. (Saunders, 2019).

Descriptive statistics are used for the data computation of this study. After the data is collected, data cleaning and organization are usually required, which may include handling missing values, outliers, duplicate values, etc. Excel is

used to calculations and diagram drawing for this study. Commonly used data analysis methods include descriptive statistical analysis such as frequency distribution, mean, standard deviation, etc. The frequency table is used to analyze data. Frequency analysis calculates the count and proportion of individuals within each category for a particular variable. It can be applied to various types of variables to understand their distribution across different groups or categories (Bryman, 2016). The results of data analysis are presented usually in the form of tables, charts, etc, including numerical values and statistical significance.

### **Validity and reliability**

The aims of reliability and validity review are to eliminate some of the errors. Reliability and validity are concepts used to evaluate the quality of research. Reliability pertains to the consistency of a measurement over time or across different conditions. It indicates how reliably a method can produce the same results when applied repeatedly under similar circumstances. If a measurement consistently yields the same outcome, it is deemed reliable. (Middleton, 2019).

The reliability and validity of research findings are shaped by the construction of a robust research framework, the selection of suitable methodologies and participant samples, and the diligent and consistent execution of the research process (Middleton, 2019). In quantitative research, reliability criteria can be measured by such as appropriate sample, appropriate sample selection is one of the key factors to ensure the reliability of research results.

For example, the methodology of this thesis used non-probability sampling techniques to ensure practicality. The structured questionnaire of this thesis was the instrument used to collect the data, which was designed in six topics in accordance with the objectives of the study to ensure to ensure that questions are expressed clearly and the validity of the answering the research questions. According to the internet enables the collection of non-random data for

surveys (Bryman,2016), the questionnaire distribution method was implemented in the form of a link on the survey management software Google Forms. This data collection process helped reduce bias and errors to ensure the rationality. As well as this study used descriptive statistics for data computation and aimed to summarize the sample to answer the research questions. And the frequency table was used to analyze data, this data analysis methods, which could effectively extract meaningful information from the data and ensure the reliability and repeatability of the results. At the end, the interpretation of results was to consider on the external validity of the research results, i.e. whether the results were generalized to a wider population or situation.

## 6 FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

This section is the empirical part of the data survey. The researcher received a total of 126 responses through the link to the questionnaire, and after excluding 1 non-Finnish response, the actual number of valid samples was 125. The results of data analysis were presented in frequency charts, which provided the number and percentage of people answering for each question.

The results of the descriptive statistical data analysis were interpreted by background information and six topics which were tea drinking habits, taste and aroma preferences, buying Habits, understanding of Chinese pure tea, feedback on trial products and the connection between pure tea and health. Based on the responses provided from the chart of each question, some findings and analysis are as follows:

## Background information

The background information included three questions: gender, age, and country of residence. The participants in 125 valid samples were all Finnish, with 76.8% of the samples being male and 23.2% being female. This gender distribution indicates a significantly higher proportion and activity of male participants in the survey. From the perspective of age distribution, the highest distribution in the sample was 62.4% for who were "41-60 years old", indicating that tea culture may be more favoured and concerned by middle-aged people in Finland. Followed by 24.8% for "21-40 years old", "Over 60 years old" was 10.4% and the remaining 2.4% for "20 years old and below". In contrast, the participation of young and elderly people is lower. (see figure 2)

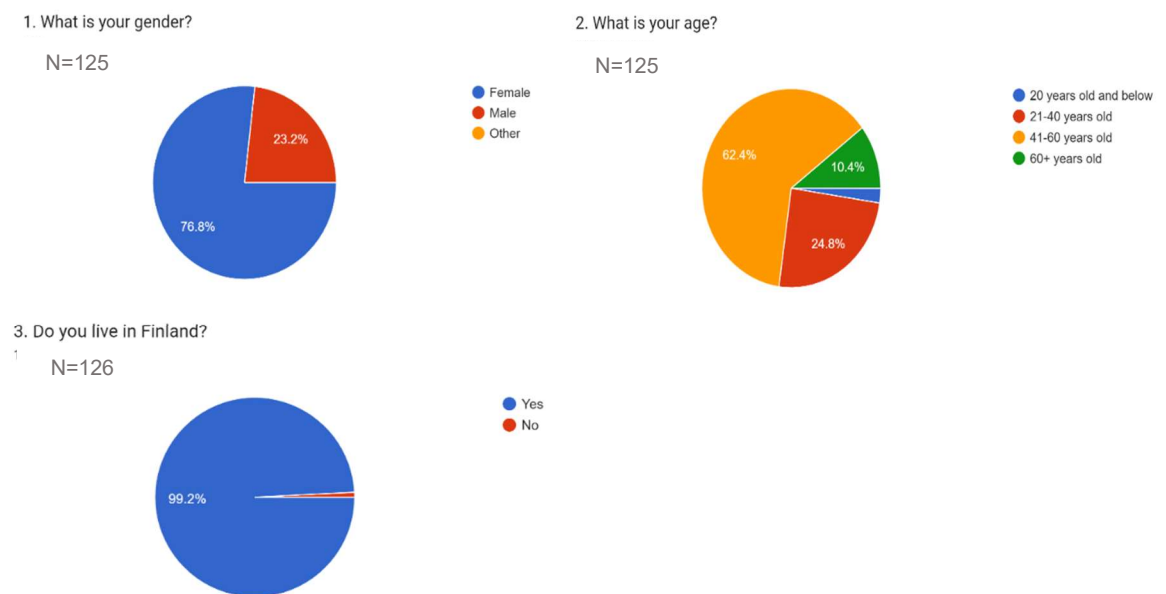


Figure 2. The data of background information



## Tea drinking habits

Question 1. How often do you drink tea?

Based on the figure 3, the majority of respondents drink tea on a regular basis, with 27.2% reporting daily, followed by 30.4% weekly, and 37.6% monthly. Only a small percentage (4.8%) indicated never drinking tea. This shows that tea has a high popularity and daily drinking habit among the respondents.

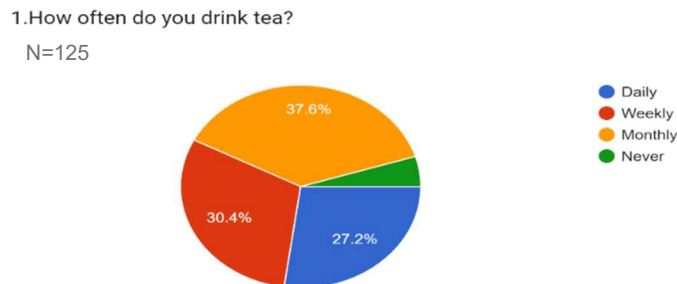


Figure 3. The data of tea drinking habits

Question 2. When do you usually drink tea?

Figure 4 shows that respondents most preferred drinking tea in the evening, accounting for 71.5%. This is followed by afternoon (38.2%) and morning (31.7%). This may reflect the importance of evening tea drinking for relaxation and socializing, while the afternoon and morning may be used more for refreshment.

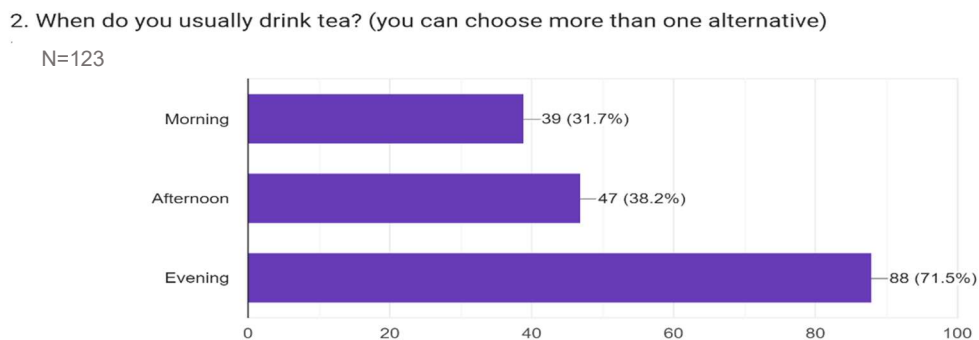


Figure 4. The data of tea drinking habits

### Question 3. Where do you usually drink tea?

Figure 5 shows out of 123 responses, of which 90.2% answered "At home", 26.8% answered "At work", and 9.8% answered "Café or tea house". Most of respondents prefer to drink tea at home, highlighting the comfort and relaxation associated with enjoying tea in one's own space. Although drinking tea at home is the first choice, a significant proportion of respondents still choose to drink tea in the workplace. This suggests that tea serves as a means of refreshment or relaxation during work hours. And also some respondents prefer to enjoy tea in coffee shops or teahouses.

3. Where do you usually drink tea? (you can choose more than one alternative)

N=123

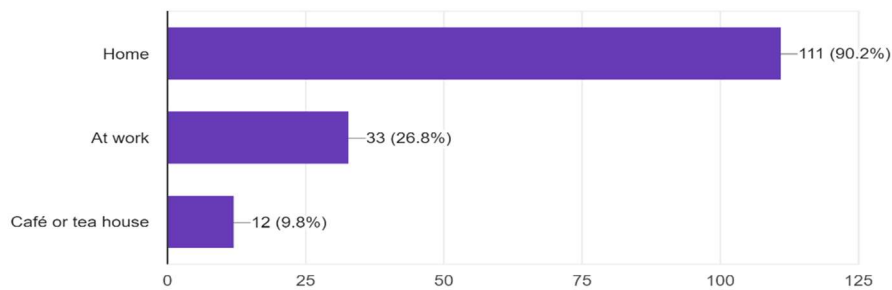


Figure 5. The data of tea drinking habits

### Question 4. What type of tea do you prefer to drink?

Based on figure 6, of which 61.8% answered "Black tea", 41.5% answered "Green tea", 38.2% answered "Herbal tea", 22.8% answered "Scented tea" and 5.7% answered "Oolong tea". This shows the preference of respondents for black and green tea, with herbal tea also gaining some popularity.

4. What type of tea do you prefer to drink? (you can choose more than one alternative)

N=123

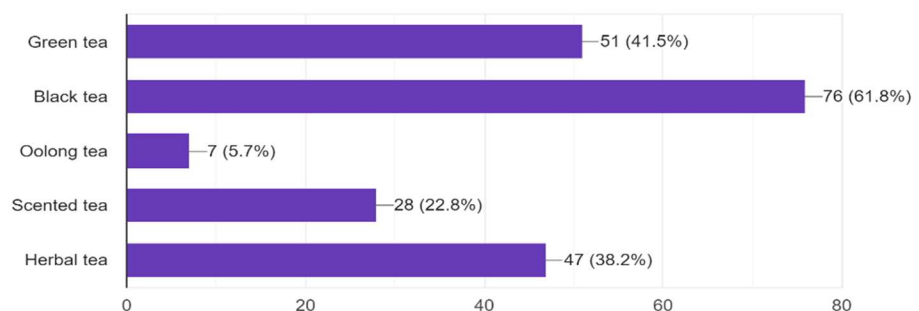


Figure 6. The data of tea drinking habits

Question 5. Which form of tea would you choose to buy?

According to the figure 7 below, the majority of 124 respondents preferred to buy tea bags (79.8%), while only a few chose loose tea (20.2%). This suggests a preference for convenience and ease of use, as tea bags are typically more convenient for everyday consumption.

5. Which form of tea would you choose to buy?

N=124

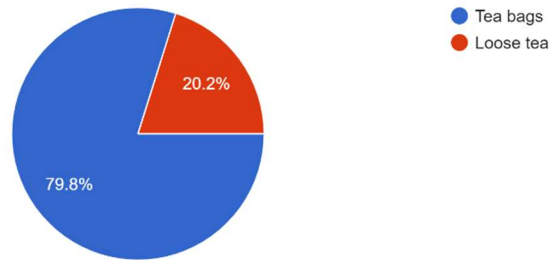


Figure 7. The data of tea drinking habits

### Taste and aroma preferences

Question 6 Which flavour of tea do you prefer?

Most of the 124 respondents choose fruit-flavoured, accounting for 55.6%, showing a high preference for fruit-flavoured tea. Followed by rich tea, accounting for 48.4%. This shows that respondents prefer tea with a strong, mellow taste. Light-flavoured tea is also favoured to a certain extent, accounting for 35.5%. This shows that some respondents prefer tea with a mild, soft and refreshing taste. Preference for floral and grassy is relatively low, at 15.3% and 20.2% respectively. (see Figure 8)

6. Which flavor of tea do you prefer? (you can choose more than one alternative)

N=124

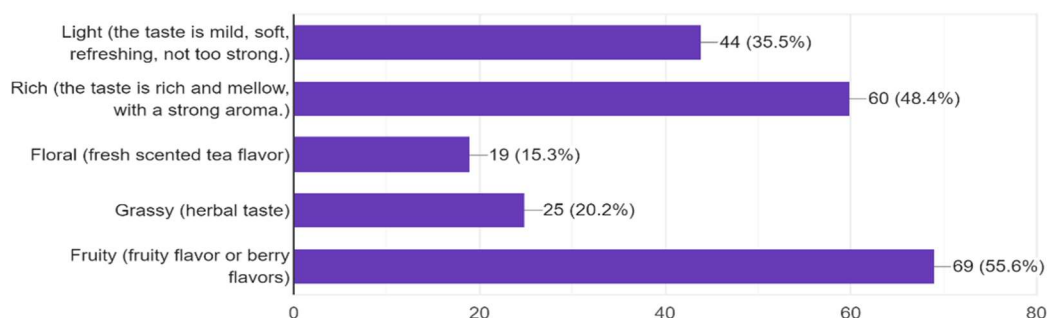


Figure 8. The data of taste and aroma preferences

Question 7. What do you like to add when you drink tea?

Among the 123 responses, the most of respondents (52.8%) preferred to add sugar or honey when drinking tea. 33.3% answered "Nothing", indicating that they prefer the original tea. The addition of milk was also quite popular when drinking tea, accounting for 35%. Only 3.3% of the respondents liked to add fruits to tea, this may be a relatively rare preference. (see figure 9)

7. What do you like to add when you drink tea? (you can choose more than one alternative)

N=123

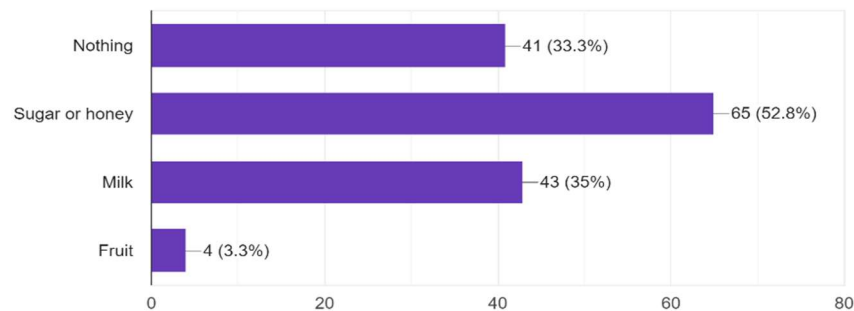


Figure 9. The data of taste and aroma preferences

## Buying Habits

Question 8. What factors do you pay more attention to when buying tea?

Based on the figure 10, "Brand reputation" was the most important factor for 42.6% of 122 respondents. This indicates that consumers place a high value on the trustworthiness and quality associated with a brand. "Price" was a significant consideration for 41.8% of respondents. This highlights the importance of affordability and value for money in purchasing decisions. "Packaging" was another important factor, with 37.7% of respondents paying attention to it. Appealing and practical packaging may influence consumers' perceptions of the product's quality. "Origin" was also considered by 36.9% of respondents. Consumers may prefer teas from specific regions known for their quality and distinct flavour profiles.

8. What factors do you pay more attention to when buying tea? (you can choose more than one alternative)

N=122

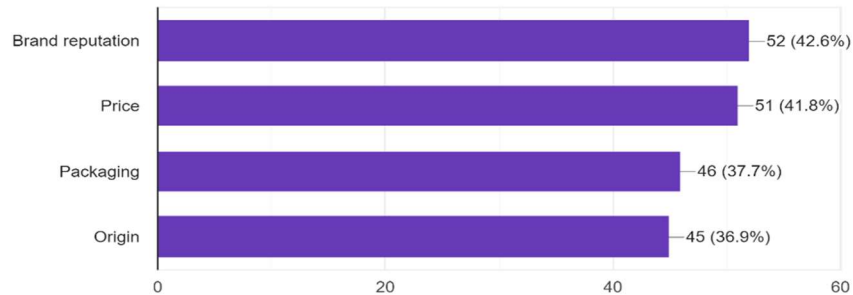


Figure 10. The data of buying habits

Question 9. Where do you prefer to buy tea?

Figure 11 shows with 124 valid responses, most of the respondents (92.7%) preferred to buy tea in supermarkets. As a traditional retail channel, supermarkets provide a variety of tea brands and types to choose from, and also have the advantages of price transparency and convenient shopping. 21.8% of respondents answered to buy tea at specialty tea shops, possibly because these shops may offer specially selected teas and provide expertise on tea varieties and brewing methods to meet the needs of tea lovers. Only a small proportion (7.3%) of respondents chose online platforms. Despite the convenience of online shopping, physical stores still appear to be the first choice for purchasing tea for most respondents.

9. Where do you prefer to buy tea? (you can choose more than one alternative)

N=124

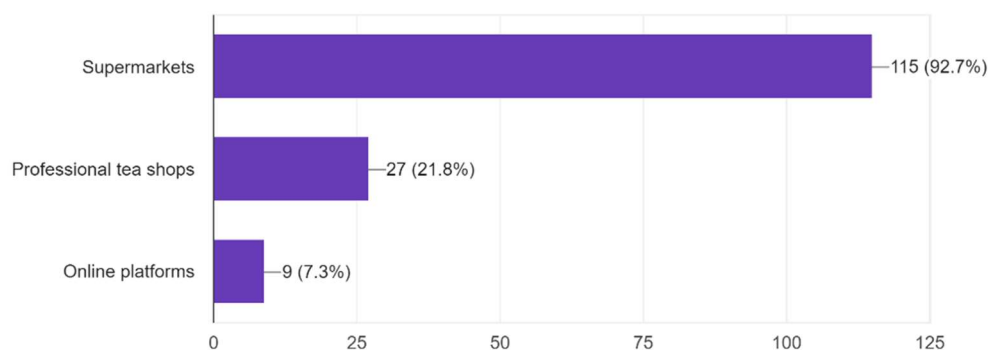


Figure 11. The data of buying habits

## Understanding of Chinese pure tea

Question 10. How familiar are you with the different varieties of Chinese pure tea?

As can be seen from figure 12 for the data of each variety tea, to sum up, there are differences in the familiarity of respondents with different varieties of Chinese pure tea. Black tea appears to be the type of tea that respondents are most familiar with 87.2% answered "I have tried it", followed by green tea 76% answered. Familiarity with white tea, scented tea and oolong tea is relatively low, and some respondents have not even heard of it. This data shows that respondents have different levels of awareness and experience with different types of Chinese pure tea.

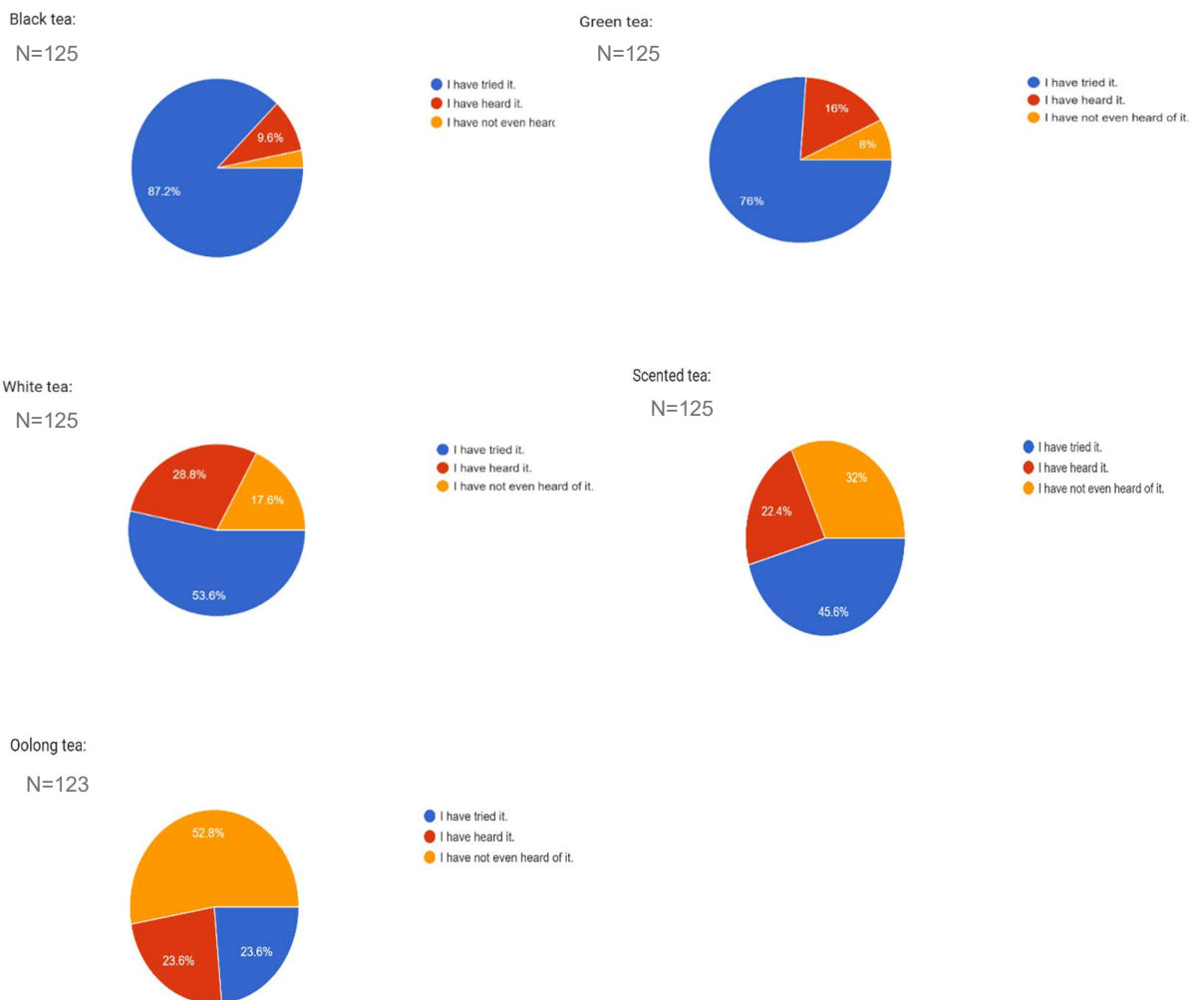


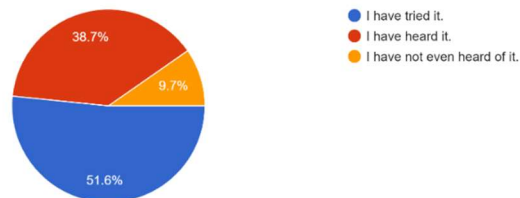
Figure 12. The data of understanding of Chinese pure tea

Question 11. How familiar are you with the subdivisions of Chinese pure tea varieties?

To summarize for the figure 13 about the familiarity of the subdivisions of Chinese pure tea varieties, which shows that Jasmine tea appears to be the most familiar subdivision with 51.6% of 124 respondents have tried it, followed by Lapsang Souchong (12%) among 125 respondents. However, Dahongpao, Tieguanyin, and Jinjunmei have much lower levels of familiarity, with the majority of respondents not even having heard of them. This suggests varying levels of awareness and experience with different subdivisions of Chinese pure tea among the respondents.

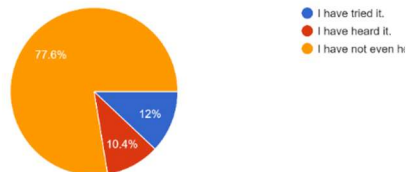
Jasmine tea:

N=124



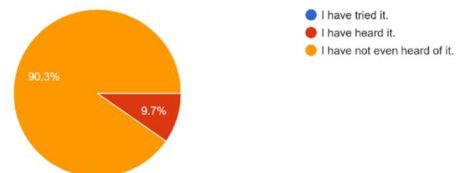
Lapsang Souchong:

N=125



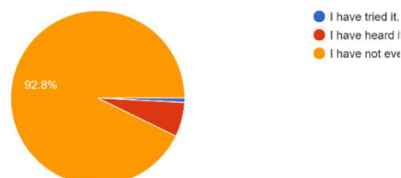
Dahongpao:

N=124



Tieguanyin:

N=125



Jinjunmei:

N=125

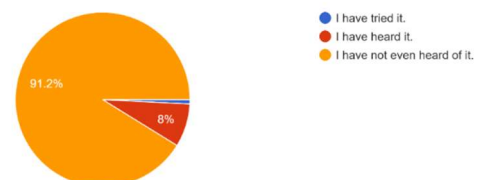


Figure 13. The data of the familiarity of Chinese pure tea subdivisions

## Feedback on trial products

Question 12. Would you like to try the trial product of China Pure Tea?

Among 124 responses, 75% of responders expressed interest in trying the trial product of Chinese Pure Tea, indicating a high level of willingness to sample the product. This suggests a potential demand for Chinese Pure Tea among the respondents. (see figure 14)

12. Would you like to try the trial product of China Pure Tea?

N=124

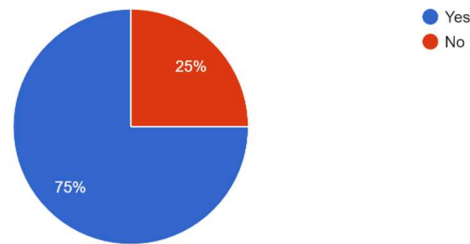


Figure 14. The data of feedback on trial products

Question 13. Which type of Chinese pure tea would you rather try?

There were 116 responses to this question, to answer “Yes” or “No”. The results indicated a relatively balanced preference among the different types of Chinese Pure Tea, with oolong tea being the most preferred choice at 46.6%, followed closely by green tea (44.8%), scented tea (44%), black tea (42.2%), and white tea (39.7%). This suggests that there is interest and curiosity among respondents to explore various types of Chinese Pure Tea, with no single type overwhelmingly dominating the preferences. The analysis reveals a significant level of interest among respondents in trying the trial product of Chinese Pure Tea, with a relatively balanced preference for different types of tea. This indicates that there are market opportunities targeting diverse consumer preferences. (see figure 15)



13. Which type of Chinese pure tea would you rather try? (you can choose more than one alternative)

N=116

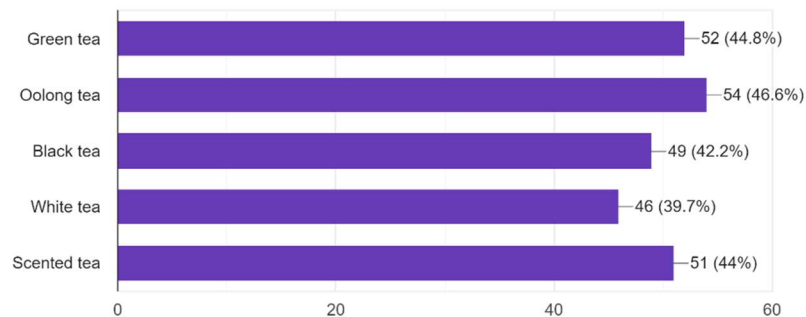


Figure 15. The data of feedback on trial products

### The connection between pure tea and health

Question 14. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

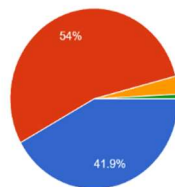
In this section, there are around 123 valid responses to each of following questions (see figure 16):

- Drinking pure tea is good for your health: 41.9% completely agree, while 54% somewhat agree, indicating a strong belief in the health benefits of pure tea among respondents.
- I choose to drink tea for health reasons: 15.6% completely agree, and 54.1% somewhat agree, suggesting that a significant portion of respondents choose tea with health in mind.
- Drinking pure tea gives antioxidant: 29% completely agree, and 60.5% somewhat agree, indicating a widely held belief that pure tea provides antioxidants, which are associated with health benefits.
- Drinking pure tea aids digestion: 20.3% completely agree, and 61% somewhat agree, showing a considerable number of respondents believe in tea's digestive benefits.
- Drinking pure tea aids in weight reduction: 10.6% completely agree, and 45.5% somewhat agree, suggesting a moderate belief in tea's role in weight reduction.

- Drinking pure tea is refreshing: 44.4% completely agree, and 46.8% somewhat agree, indicating a strong perception that tea consumption is refreshing.
- Drinking pure tea prevents vascular diseases: 11.3% completely agree, and 51.6% somewhat agree, showing a moderate belief in the preventative properties of tea against vascular diseases.
- Drinking pure tea lowers blood pressure: 9.8% completely agree, and 49.6% somewhat agree, suggesting a moderate belief in tea's potential to lower blood pressure.
- Drinking pure tea improves immunity: 18.5% completely agree, and 48.4% somewhat agree, indicating a considerable belief in tea's ability to boost immunity.
- Drinking pure tea reduces stress: 27.6% completely agree, and 52% somewhat agree, showing a strong perception that tea consumption can alleviate stress.

Drinking pure tea is good for your health.

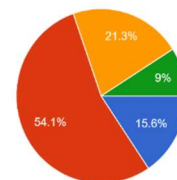
N=124



● Completely agree  
● Somewhat agree  
● Somewhat disagree  
● Completely disagree

I choose to drink tea for health reasons.

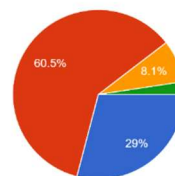
N=122



● Completely agree  
● Somewhat agree  
● Somewhat disagree  
● Completely disagree

Drinking pure tea gives antioxidant.

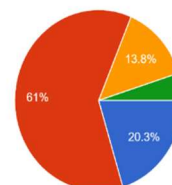
N=124



● Completely agree  
● Somewhat agree  
● Somewhat disagree  
● Completely disagree

Drinking pure tea aids digestion.

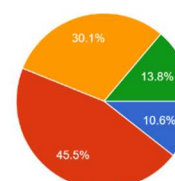
N=123



● Completely agree  
● Somewhat agree  
● Somewhat disagree  
● Completely disagree

Drinking pure tea aids in weight reduction.

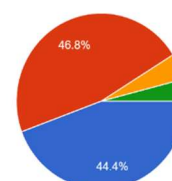
N=123



● Completely agree  
● Somewhat agree  
● Somewhat disagree  
● Completely disagree

Drinking pure tea is refreshing.

N=124



● Completely agree  
● Somewhat agree  
● Somewhat disagree  
● Completely disagree

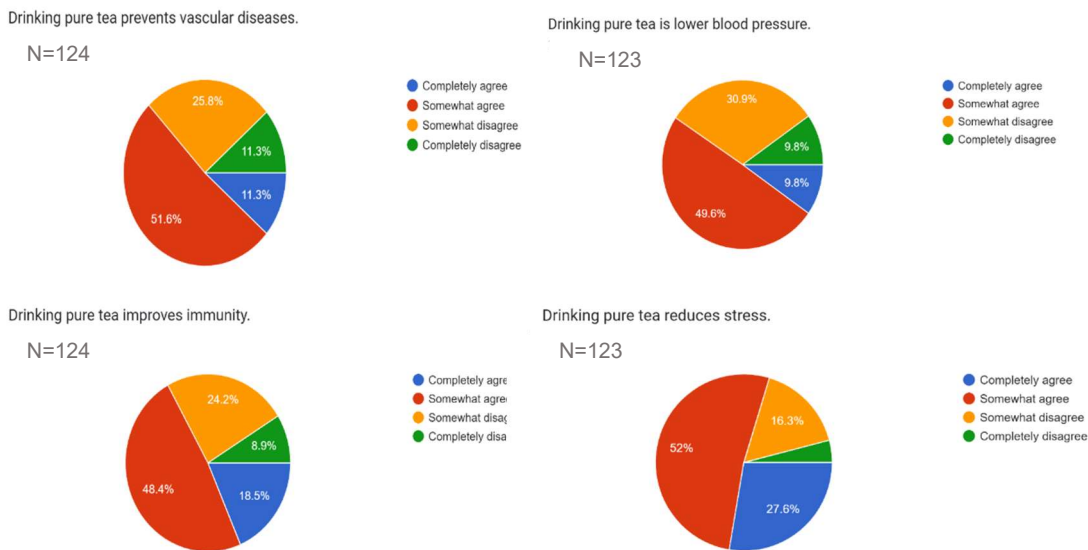


Figure 16. The data of the connection between pure tea and health

Question 15. Do you think different types of pure tea e.g. green tea, white tea, oolong tea and black tea have different effects on health?

According to the figure 17, a significant majority (80.6%) believe that different types of pure tea among 124 responses, such as green tea, white tea, oolong tea, and black tea, have varying effects on health. This suggests a widespread belief that the type of tea consumed can impact health outcomes.

15. Do you think different types of pure tea e.g. green tea, white tea, oolong tea and black tea have different effects on health?

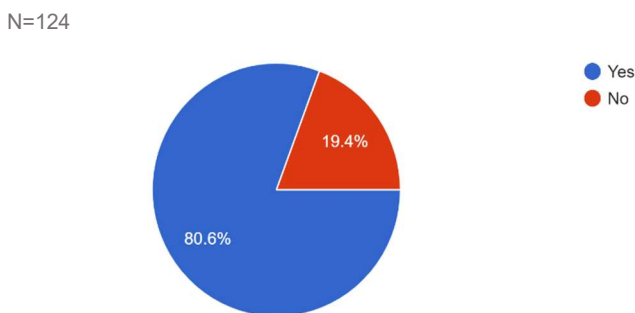


Figure 17. The data of the connection between pure tea and health

Question 16. If a pure tea product was advertised as having specific health benefits, would this affect your purchasing decision?

The figure 18 shows out of 125 responses, a substantial portion (72%) indicate that if a pure tea product were advertised as having specific health benefits, it would positively influence their purchasing decision. This implies that health-related advertising can significantly sway consumer behaviour when it comes to purchasing pure tea products.

16. If a pure tea product was advertised as having specific health benefits, would this affect your purchasing decision?  
N=125

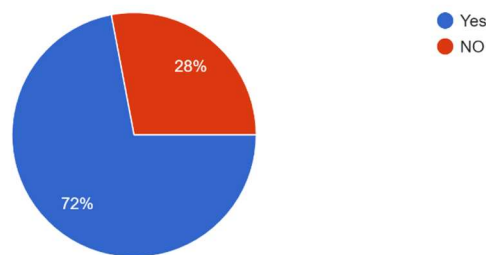


Figure 18. The data of the connection between pure tea and health

## 7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this thesis is to explore the perception and consumption behaviour of Finnish consumers of Chinese pure tea. The background of this study based on the tea cultural of Chinese and Finnish, and answer research questions by exploring the current trends and demands of Finnish tea market, consumer behaviour, as well as the consumption attitudes of Finnish consumers towards Chinese pure tea, and competitive landscape of Finnish tea market. The research methodology was conducted based on the research questions.

## **Current Demands and Trends of Tea Market in Finland**

Finnish tea culture reflects a blend of Eastern and Western influences (Mäenpää, 2020), with a growing interest in tea history, preparation, and enjoyment. The culture encompasses diverse tea preferences, from traditional varieties to modern trends, and emphasizes the value of tea as a cultural carrier and social experience.

Empirical research has revealed insights into the current demand and trends in the Finnish tea market. The results indicate that, the consumer group is diverse and has different preferences for the types and consumption habits of tea. Compared to young and elderly people, tea culture may be more favoured and noticed by middle-aged people in Finland, especially in the age range of 41 to 60. The frequency of tea consumption reflects the high popularity and daily drinking habits of tea among respondents. For tea drinking time, respondents prefer to drink tea at night the most. The choice of tea drinking place reflects the popularity of tea in different scenarios. And the black tea is the most preferred type among respondents, followed by green tea and herbal tea. In addition, compared to loose tea, almost 80% of respondents tend to purchase bagged tea. In the 1960s and 1970s, the emergence of tea bags propelled the popularity of tea. (Ranta, 2020). This indicates a higher preference of Finnish for convenience, which may be related to the fast pace and convenience needs of modern life. According to the survey results on taste and aroma preferences, most of respondents prefer fruit flavoured tea and tea with a strong taste, followed by light flavours, grass flavoured tea, and floral tea. And most respondents like to add sugar or honey when drinking tea, followed by adding milk, and there is also a portion of people who prefer plain tea.

From the data on the purchasing habits of the respondents, it was found out that the proportions of the four factors of brand reputation, price, packaging and origin are relatively balanced, which shows that these factors are important considerations and have a certain influence on purchasing decisions of consumers. For the choice of purchasing channels, supermarkets are still

their preferred purchasing channel. But there are also some tea enthusiasts who choose professional tea shops to purchase tea.

### **Factors Influencing Finnish Consumers' Purchase Behaviour of Tea**

Consumer buyer behaviour is a complex interplay of cultural, social, personal, and psychological factors that influence the purchasing decisions of individuals and households (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021). Understanding these factors is essential for comprehending the perception of Chinese pure tea in the Finnish market.

In the Finnish context, cultural values and norms regarding health and wellness may influence consumers' attitudes towards tea consumption. The survey data revealed that a substantial proportion of Finnish consumers expressed interest in trying trial products of Chinese pure tea, indicating a potential market demand driven by cultural factors.

Social groups of consumers are one of social factors (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021). For example, the survey data showed that Finnish consumers are inclined to purchase tea products from supermarkets, highlighting the influence of social factors such as convenience and accessibility on consumer behaviour.

Personal characteristics, such as occupation, age, economic situation, and lifestyle, further shape consumer behaviour (Kotler & Armstrong, 2021). In terms of preferences for different types of Chinese pure tea, the survey data showed that Finnish consumers exhibited a diverse range of preferences, reflecting individual taste preferences and lifestyle choices. For example, oolong tea, green tea, and scented tea were among the most preferred options, suggesting that personal characteristics play a role in determining consumer preferences.

Psychological factors, including motivation, perception, learning, beliefs, and attitudes, also impact consumer behaviour. The survey data indicated that

Finnish consumers generally agreed with statements about the health benefits of drinking pure tea, such as its antioxidant properties, digestive benefits, and stress-relieving effects. Some feedback also from respondents, such as obtaining some knowledge about tea through the content of the questionnaire. This underscores the importance of perception and belief in shaping consumer behaviour, as individuals are more likely to purchase products they perceive as beneficial to their health and well-being.

### **Attitude of Finnish Consumers towards Chinese Pure Tea Consumption**

There is not much data in the previous literature on the attitudes of Finnish consumers towards Chinese pure tea. The latest understanding has been obtained through the survey data of this thesis.

The survey data revealed that the respondents have a high interest in trying trial products of Chinese pure tea, accounting for 75%. And their interest in different types of Chinese pure tea is relatively balanced, such as oolong tea, green tea, floral tea, black tea, and white tea. There are differences in the familiarity of respondents with different varieties of Chinese pure tea. Green tea and black tea are the tea categories with a higher level of familiarity among the respondents. Although there is relatively little knowledge about some subdivision varieties of Chinese pure tea, there are still some tea varieties that have high recognition among respondents, such as jasmine tea and Lapsang souchong.

Regarding the perception of Finnish on the health benefits of drinking pure tea, the responses demonstrate a generally positive perception of the health benefits associated with drinking Chinese pure tea. There are differences in the level of recognition among respondents of various health-enhancing of tea, which indicate varying levels of belief in health claims.

In addition, 80.6% of respondents believe that different types of pure tea have different impacts on health. And 72% of respondents stated that promoting

pure tea products with specific health benefits would have a positive impact on their purchasing decisions.

### **Competition landscape of Finnish Tea Market**

In the literature section of this study, it is mentioned that the competitive landscape of the Finnish tea market reflects a unique blend of local and international brands, in terms of market share, bagged tea dominates supermarket shelves, comprising about 70% of tea sales in Finland (Li, 2022). International brands like Twining and Lipton have a strong foothold in the market, and local brands like Nordqvist also command a significant share of the market, alongside smaller tea suppliers and brands.

In the survey of this study population, the Finnish people's interest in the diverse varieties of Chinese pure tea and their recognition of the health impact of tea, reflecting an opportunity for Chinese pure tea to gain traction in the Finnish market. Therefore, as consumers pay more attention to health and lifestyle, as well as the rich variety and taste of Chinese pure tea, which can meet the diverse tea needs of Finnish consumers, thus gaining more market share. Especially for consumers who value health.

In conclusion, Finland's demand for tea seems to be influenced by factors such as health awareness, taste preferences, and cultural tendencies. Especially the findings of survey data to emphasize the importance of consumer perceptions of the health impact of different types of Chinese pure tea and the impact of health-related advertising on their purchasing decisions, which reveals the interest and preference of Finnish consumers towards Chinese pure tea. The trend in the tea market shows a pursuit of quality and diversity, as well as an interest in products with health value and cultural background.

The empirical survey of this study used online questionnaire survey method, which was simple, easy to use and wider coverage. This questionnaire survey received appropriate and effective responses, covering respondents of different ages, genders, and local areas, thus having a certain degree of



representativeness. However, it should also be noted that questionnaire surveys have certain limitations, such as possible answer bias or incompleteness. In order to improve the effectiveness of questionnaire surveys, future research can adopt more diverse survey methods, such as in-depth interviews or focus group discussions, to obtain more comprehensive and in-depth insights.

Regarding five questions of the research questions have been answered. These questions have been answered in both the theoretical section and the actual survey results. The research results of this thesis can also be considered effective, while also considering external validity.

## 8 RECOMMENDATIONS

Through market research and consumer behaviour analysis, it was found that factors such as taste preferences, health awareness, pricing, brand reputation, packaging, and origin significantly affect the tea purchasing behaviour of Finnish consumers. Understanding these factors can better understand potential market opportunities and consumer demands, providing useful information and advice for entrepreneurs of Chinese tea shops as follows:

**Diversify Product Offering:** In order to cater to different tastes and preferences of Finnish customers, to provide the diverse varieties of Chinese pure tea. This can include popular options such as green tea, oolong tea, black tea, and specialty blends. In addition, 21.8% of respondents prefer to purchase tea at professional tea shops, therefore, providing high-quality tea and professional knowledge and services of tea are the advantages of professional tea shops, especially meeting the needs of tea enthusiasts. This also provides good opportunities for Chinese tea shop entrepreneurs.

**Focus on Health Benefits:** From this investigation, it was found that consumers are concerned about health-related statements and have an impact on their purchasing decisions. Therefore, it is particularly important to highlight the

healthy quality of Chinese pure tea. For example, emphasizing the antioxidant properties, digestive benefits, and potential weight management effects of various types of pure tea in marketing activities to attract consumers who value health.

**Offer Competitive Pricing:** The data of this survey shows that price is also one of the factors consumers consider when making purchases. Therefore, after understanding market pricing trends, competitive pricing can be applied to Chinese pure tea products to attract price sensitive consumers.

**Enhance Brand Awareness:** Some respondents have knowledge about the varieties and brands of Chinese pure tea. Thus, to enhance the awareness and recognition of Chinese pure tea brands in the Finnish market by increasing promotion efforts. Such as targeted advertising campaigns, social media marketing, and collaboration with local influencers and tea enthusiasts to achieve this.

**Educate Consumers:** In order to help Finnish consumers understand the unique quality and cultural significance of Chinese pure tea, some educational resources and tasting activities can be provided. E.g. organizing tea tasting activities, seminars, and information conferences to deepen appreciation and understanding of products.

By implementing these recommendations, entrepreneurs can capitalize on the growing demand for Chinese pure tea in the Finnish market to identify opportunities for innovation and differentiation and establish a strong foothold in the competitive tea industry.

## 9 FINAL WORDS AND EVALUATION OF THE THESIS

Through the research for this thesis, the author has an in-depth recognizing of the Finnish tea market and the perceptions of consumers on Chinese pure tea. In the process, author gained valuable insights into tea market trends of Finland, consumer behaviour, preferences and attitudes. By the implementing of questionnaire survey, author collected the first-hand date, thereby enhancing the depth and reliability of the research.

Throughout the study, the author encountered several challenges, such as obtaining relevant data, ensuring the representativeness of the survey sample, and effectively integrating the theoretical framework with empirical evidence. However, these challenges also provided opportunities for learning and growth. By overcoming these obstacles, the author has honed his research and analytical skills, developed a deeper understanding of consumer psychology and market dynamics, and improved his ability to draw meaningful conclusions from data.

Going forward, the author would recommend further research into specific aspects of consumer behaviour, such as the impact of marketing strategies on purchasing decisions, or the impact of cultural factors on tea consumption patterns. Furthermore, exploring emerging trends in the tea industry, such as sustainability practices and technological innovations, which could provide valuable insights for future research.

Overall, this thesis was a beneficial learning experience that allowed author to apply theoretical knowledge to practical situations and led to personal and academic growth. Additionally, this study also provided useful reference and guidance for Chinese pure tea enterprises entering the Finnish tea market.

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## APPENDIX

## QUESTIONNAIRE

Participation is voluntary and will not receive any compensation. You do not need to explain if you do not want to participate and there will be no negative consequences. The responses remained anonymous throughout the study process. The results will be published as bachelor thesis. This study complies with ethical standards in the research field. If you have any further questions or concerns, please notify the researcher.

Deadline

This questionnaire deadline is .....

Tea drinking habits:

1. How often do you drink tea?

- Daily
- Weekly
- Monthly or less often
- Never

2. When do you usually drink tea? (you can choose more than one alternative)

- Morning
- Afternoon
- Evening

3. Where do you usually drink tea? (you can choose more than one alternative)

- Home
- At work
- Café or tea house

4. What type of tea do you prefer to drink? (you can choose more than one alternative)

- Green tea
- Black tea
- Oolong tea
- Scented tea
- Herbal tea

5. Which form of tea would you choose to buy?

- Tea bags
- loose tea

Taste and aroma preferences:

6. Which flavour of tea do you prefer? (you can choose more than one alternative)

- Light (the taste is mild, soft, refreshing, not too strong.)
- Rich (the taste is rich and mellow, with a strong aroma.)
- Floral (fresh scented tea flavor)
- Grassy (herbal taste)
- Fruity (fruity flavor or berry flavors)

7. What do you like to add when you drink tea? (you can choose more than one alternative)

- Nothing
- Sugar or honey
- Milk
- Fruit

Buying Habits:

8. What factors do you pay more attention to when buying tea? (you can choose more than one alternative)

- Brand reputation
- Price
- Packaging
- Origin

9. Where do you prefer to buy tea?

- Supermarkets
- Professional tea shops
- Online platforms



Understanding of Chinese pure tea:

10. How familiar are you with the different varieties of Chinese pure tea?

Green tea:

- I have tried it.
- I have heard it.
- I have not even heard of it.

White tea:

- I have tried it.
- I have heard it.
- I have not even heard of it.

Oolong tea:

- I have tried it.
- I have heard it.
- I have not even heard of it.

Black tea:

- I have tried it.
- I have heard it.
- I have not even heard of it.

Scented tea:

- I have tried it.
- I have heard it.
- I have not even heard of it.

11. How familiar are you with the subdivisions of Chinese pure tea varieties?

Lapsang Souchong:

- I have tried it.
- I have heard it.
- I have not even heard of it.

Jinjunmei:

- I have tried it.
- I have heard it.
- I have not even heard of it.

Dahongpao:

- I have tried it.
- I have heard it.
- I have not even heard of it.

Tieguanyin:

- I have tried it.
- I have heard it.
- I have not even heard of it.

Jasmine tea:

- I have tried it.
- I have heard it.
- I have not even heard of it.

Feedback on trial products: (If you have experienced)

12. Would you like to try the trial product of China Pure Tea?

- Yes
- No

13. Which type of Chinese pure tea would you rather try? (you can choose more than one alternative)

- Green tea
- Oolong tea
- Black tea
- White tea
- Scented tea

The connection between pure tea and health:

14. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Drinking pure tea is good for your health.

- Completely agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Completely disagree

I choose to drink tea for health reasons.

- Completely agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Completely disagree

Drinking pure tea gives antioxidant.

- Completely agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Completely disagree

Drinking pure tea aids digestion.

- Completely agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Completely disagree

Drinking pure tea aids in weight reduction.

- Completely agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Completely disagree

Drinking pure tea is refreshing.

- Completely agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Completely disagree

Drinking pure tea prevents vascular diseases.

- Completely agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Completely disagree

Drinking pure tea is lower blood pressure.

- Completely agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Completely disagree

Drinking pure tea improves immunity.

- Completely agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Completely disagree

Drinking pure tea reduces stress.

- Completely agree
- Somewhat agree
- Somewhat disagree
- Completely disagree

15. Do you think different types of pure tea e.g. green tea, white tea, oolong tea and black tea have different effects on health?

- Yes
- No

16. If a pure tea product was advertised as having specific health benefits, would this affect your purchasing decision?

- Yes
- No

Personal information:

1. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male
- Other

2. What is your age?

- 20 years old and below
- 21-40 years old
- 41-60 years old
- 60+ years old

3. Do you live in Finland?

- Yes
- No