

## **ABSTRACT**

‘Coffee,’ the unique tasting and aromatic beverage, is the favorite drink for many people worldwide. Since being accidentally discovered by a goat herder named Kladi, coffee has gradually spread from place to place, even in Thailand. The emergence of western coffee houses has affected the behaviour of Thai consumers on coffee drinking profoundly. This has in turn caused the coffee market in Thailand to rise year by year since 1997.

This research aims to explore reasons that Thai consumers used to decide to drink coffee more than water. Also, the study examined characteristics and perceptions of Thai people towards coffee and water drinking. This research is a cross-sectional survey and a questionnaire was the instrument of the study. The purposive sampling method was used to select the samples which comprised of 200 employees from 10 companies in Bangkok. Data collection started in November 2007 and ended in February 2008 and data was analyzed using frequencies and percentage by SPSS version 12.

The results of the study presented that more than half of the respondents were coffee drinkers who normally drank coffee while working. Its taste and stimulating effect were the main reasons for adoption of the drink. The results also showed that the behavior of people was not relevant to the logical information as explained by Ajzen and Fishbein in the theory of reasoned action. Moreover, coffee drinking is the ‘symbol’ of ‘collar worker’ as its quality of stimulant and its influence by western culture. This phenomenon was explained by Herbert Blumer in ‘Symbolic Interactionism.’ However, clear and accurate information about the effects of coffee and water drinking by many concerned parties should be made known to general public.