CaMfeine Consumption, Substance USE and Personality in an AustruVal Population

Sarah Benson, Andrew Scholey
Swinburne University, Melbourne, Australia

Background
- There is little research on consumer caffeine intake and no known studies measuring intake quantities in Australia.
- The relationship between personality and recreational drug use is well established although, to date, the research has not yet extended to other substances.
- This study aimed to determine Australians’ use of caffeine (including knowledge about caffeine levels in various sources), alcohol, drugs and cognitive enhancers and determine any personality traits associated with their use.

Methods
- After cleaning the data, 550 Australians aged 18+ (mean age of 40 years) completed an online survey that asked questions regarding use of caffeine, alcohol, drugs and cognitive enhancers.
- Frequency of use for different types of drug and cognitive enhancers was also established.
- Participants completed the Alcohol Use Identification Test and personality traits were measured using the NEO Personality Inventory.

Summary and Conclusion
- Australians are consuming caffeine within safe daily limits, with coffee being the main contributor to caffeine consumption.
- Participants are generally unaware of the caffeine content within products.
- Almost 30% of participants binge drink on an average drinking occasion.
- Almost one quarter of participants had used illicit drugs, most commonly Cannabis, MDMA and ecstasy.
- Caffeine use, unlike other substance use, does not seem to be associated with personality traits.
- Future research should further examine the relationship of personality and substance choice using a larger n.