

**THE IMPORTANCE OF PROTECTING TRADEMARKS FOR
SMALL TO MEDIUM-SIZED COFFEE RETAILERS IN DUBLIN,
IRELAND**

Research dissertation presented in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of
MBA in International Business
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Declaration

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I certify that the dissertation entitled: **THE IMPORTANCE OF PROTECTING TRADEMARKS FOR SMALL TO MEDIUM-SIZED COFFEE RETAILERS IN DUBLIN, IRELAND** submitted for the degree of: **MBA in International Business** is the result of my own work and that where reference is made to the work of others, due acknowledgment is given.

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Dedication

*This dissertation is dedicated to my **parents**, whose unwavering support and encouragement have been the driving force behind my academic journey. Their belief in me has been a constant source of inspiration and motivation.*

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Abstract

This research investigates the current practices and challenges faced by small to medium-sized coffee retailers in Dublin in protecting their trademarks and examines the impact of trademark protection on their business performance. The study aims to explore the role of trademarks in safeguarding daily business operations, analyse the collaborative management of trademarks, and evaluate the impact of intellectual property (IP) strategic decision-making on competitive advantages through a survey conducted with key stakeholders. A positivism research philosophy was applied, supporting the collection and analysis of quantifiable data. A deductive approach was utilized, aligning with the quantitative research method, and a descriptive research design was chosen to focus on the importance of trademark protection for coffee retailers in Dublin. A total of 92 voluntary respondents participated in the survey, and the data were analysed using SPSS 25. The findings reveal that trademark rights are of significant concern for small and medium-sized coffee retailers in Dublin. While most retailers prioritize acquiring trademark rights in Ireland, a considerable portion also holds rights for the European Union, though few have pursued international trademark protection. The results indicate that 35.9% of respondents are uninterested in obtaining proper knowledge about trademark protection, while most participants express a desire to learn more about property rights. Additionally, the majority of respondents regularly seek legal advice, highlighting the importance of legal consultation in avoiding legal issues and gaining knowledge about property acts. This research underscores the crucial role of trademarks in the business strategy of Dublin's coffee retailers and the need for continued education and legal support in this area.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The global coffee industry has witnessed significant growth and diversification in recent years, with small to medium-sized coffee retailers playing a crucial role in this expansion. A survey carried out by Brew Smartly in 2020 revealed that Dublin was the second most “coffee-crazy” capital city in the world, housing 180 coffee shops per 100,000 people, with imports being the equivalent €94.94 per person per year (Mellett, 2021). As the demand for specialty coffee continues to rise, small to medium-sized coffee retailers face intense competition from established brands and new entrants. In this competitive landscape, intellectual property rights (IPRs) such as trademarks have become essential for businesses to differentiate themselves, build brand recognition, and protect their unique offerings. This dissertation aims to investigate the importance of protecting trademarks for small to medium coffee retailers in Ireland, examining the national and global perspectives on intellectual property rights and their impact on the coffee industry.

1.2 Purpose of Research

The purpose of this research is to investigate the importance of protecting trademarks for small to medium-sized coffee retailers in Dublin, Ireland. The research aims to examine the current practices and challenges faced by small to medium-sized coffee retailers specifically focusing those which are operating within Dublin, in protecting their trademarks and further analyse the impact of trademark protection on the business performance of small to medium-sized coffee retailers.

1.3 Objectives

- To examine the role of trademarks in protecting the day-to-day business of small to medium-sized coffee retailers in Dublin.
- To analyse the collaborative management process of trademarks by small to medium-sized coffee retailers in Dublin.
- To evaluate the impact of IP strategic decision-making and competitive advantages small to medium-sized coffee retailers in Dublin through survey with key stakeholders.

1.4 Research questions

1. What is the role of trademarks in protecting a business's brand?
2. How do Dublin-based small to medium-sized coffee retailers collaborate and manage trademarks?
3. What impact does this have on their competitive advantages and decision-making?
4. What recommendations can be suggested for using trademarks in a small to medium-sized coffee retailer based on the findings?

1.5 Why This Research is Necessary

Despite the importance of intellectual property rights, there is a lack of research on the specific challenges faced by small to medium-sized coffee retailers in protecting their trademarks. This dissertation aims to fill this research gap by investigating the importance of protecting trademarks for small to medium-sized coffee retailers in the Irish coffee industry. The research will examine the current practices and challenges faced by small to medium-sized coffee retailers in protecting their trademarks, as well as the impact of trademark protection on their business performance.

1.6 Limitations of this Research

This research aims to investigate the importance of protecting trademarks for small to medium-sized coffee retailers in Dublin, Ireland. However, several limitations must be acknowledged:

1. The study is confined to Dublin, Ireland, and may not reflect the challenges faced by similar businesses in other regions or countries.
2. The research focuses solely on the coffee retail industry, limiting the applicability of findings to other sectors.
3. A limited sample size may not represent the entire population of small to medium-sized coffee retailers.
4. The research is conducted within a specific timeframe, potentially missing long-term trends.
5. The absence of quantitative data limits a comprehensive analysis of trademark protection impacts.
6. The study does not account for external factors like economic conditions and regulatory changes.
7. There is no comparative analysis with other regions or countries.

By acknowledging these limitations, the research provides a clear understanding of its scope and context.

1.10 Chapter Outline

This dissertation will be structured into the following chapters:

- **Chapter 1: Introduction**
Provides an overview of the research topic, including the global perspective on intellectual property rights, definition of trademarks, national perspective on intellectual property rights in Ireland, and a real-life example of the importance of protecting intellectual property.
- **Chapter 2: Literature Review.**
Examines existing research and published literatures on intellectual property rights, trademarks, and their impact on small to medium-sized coffee retailers.
- **Conceptual frameworks**
Will address research questions and discuss your findings when you have analysed your data.
- **Chapter 3: Methodology**
Describes the research design, methods, and procedures used to collect and analyse data.
- **Chapter 4: Findings and Discussion**
Presents the findings of the research, including the current practices and challenges faced by SMCRs in protecting their trademarks and the impact of trademark protection on their business performance.
Interprets the findings of the research, highlighting the key implications for small to medium-sized coffee retailers and the Irish coffee industry.
- **Chapter 5: Conclusion.**
Summarizes the main findings of the research and outlines the contributions to the field of intellectual property rights and small to medium-sized coffee retailers.
Identifies the limitations of the research and suggests potential avenues for future research.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Overview

As demand for specialty coffee continues to rise, small to medium-sized coffee retailers face intense competition from established brands and new entrants. In this competitive landscape, intellectual property rights (IPRs) such as trademarks have become essential for businesses to differentiate themselves, build brand recognition, and protect their unique offerings. The global specialty coffee market is expected to reach USD 51.4 billion by 2030, driven by trends in ready-to-drink coffee, premium brews, and the expanding number of coffee shops worldwide (Desk3, 2023).

Intellectual property rights cover various aspects of the coffee industry, from patenting coffee makers to trademarking blend names and granting plant breeders' rights (JENN CHEN, 2018). As competition intensifies in the specialty coffee market, securing copyright protection for blend names and logos can offer a notable edge.

This literature review will concentrate on the significance of intellectual properties in coffee industry, focusing specifically on how trademarks can help small to medium size coffee retailers in Dublin. This review is particularly relevant given the rapid growth of the coffee industry, the increasing importance of brand differentiation, and the unique challenges faced by smaller businesses in protecting their intellectual property. The objective of the literature review are as follows:

1. The current status of global and Dublin coffee markets
2. Intellectual property rights role in the coffee market
3. Advantages of trademarks for coffee small medium enterprises
4. Challenges and tactics towards ensuring effective IP protection
5. Coffee retailing case examples illustrating successful IP utilization.

Through examination of previous studies as well as industry reports, this review seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of how small and medium sized companies within the coffee sector in Dublin can exploit various forms of intellectual property (IP), notably trademarks, so that they are able to grow amidst an increasingly globalized and competitive world market place.

2.2 IPR

2.2.1 Intellectual Property Rights

Intellectual property rights (IPRs) are legal protections granted to creators over their inventions and creations, allowing them to control and benefit from their use for a certain period. The main types of IPRs include:

- **Patents:** Exclusive rights for inventions, allowing the patent owner to decide how the invention can be used by others.
- **Copyrights:** Rights over literary and artistic works, granting creators control over the reproduction and distribution of their works.
- **Trademarks:** Signs that distinguish the goods or services of one enterprise from another, essential for brand recognition and customer loyalty.
- **Industrial Designs:** Protection for the ornamental or aesthetic aspects of an article.
- **Geographical Indications:** Signs used on goods that have a specific geographical origin and possess qualities attributable to that origin.
- **Trade Secrets:** Protection for confidential business information that provides a competitive edge (World Intellectual Property Organisation, 2020).

2.2.2 Global Perspective on Intellectual Property Rights

Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) provide legal protection to creators and innovators, fostering innovation, economic growth, and job creation. While modern IPRs may seem contemporary, the concept has ancient roots. The earliest documents pertaining to intellectual property date back to 600 BCE in ancient Greece, where bakers were given year-long exclusivity for their innovative dishes. The first formal intellectual property law, a Venetian statute from 1474 AD, marked a significant step in legal protection for creators (Abdulrahman Abou Naja, 2020).

Throughout history, various international agreements and organizations have played crucial roles in shaping the global IPR framework. The Paris Convention of 1883 was the first international agreement to protect trademarks, industrial designs, and patents. Following this, the Berne Convention of 1886 provided protection for literary and artistic works, while the Madrid Convention of 1891 facilitated international trademark registration. In 1893, the United International Bureaux for the Protection of Intellectual Property (BIRPI) was established, later transforming into the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in 1970. WIPO, an

intergovernmental organization, offers exclusive rights to intellectual property owners and introduced the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) in 1978, the largest global IP filing system (Abdulrahman Abou Naja, 2020).

A significant milestone in the global IPR landscape was the establishment of the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) Agreement in 1995, under the World Trade Organization (WTO). TRIPS is the most comprehensive multilateral agreement on intellectual property, providing a consistent IP framework that addresses innovation, technology transfer, and social welfare. This agreement underscores the critical role of IPRs in promoting creativity, innovation, and economic development.

Various types of intellectual property protection are available, including European Patents, International Patents through the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), EU Trademarks, International Trademarks via the Madrid Protocol, Registered Community Designs, Unregistered Community Designs, and International Designs under the Hague System. These protections ensure that intellectual property rights are upheld across different regions and industries, safeguarding the interests of creators and innovators worldwide (Intellectual Property Office Ireland, 2015).

The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has highlighted the critical role of IPRs in promoting creativity, innovation, and economic development, stating that "IPRs are essential for the creation and dissemination of knowledge and ideas" (WIPO, 2020).

2.2.3 National Perspective on Intellectual Property Rights in Ireland

When your intellectual property is protected, you will also have exclusive rights to your unique asset—such as your brand name, innovation, or design in the nations where you have obtained protection. In addition, this prevents others from profiting from your labour of love or worse, harming your brand by prohibiting them from producing any goods or services that seem connected to your company.

The Intellectual Property Unit of The Intellectual Property Office of Ireland for Ireland's policy and legislation on IP that reflects developments in intellectual property policy and practice domestically, at EU level and in terms of international obligations to which Ireland is committed through various international agreements. The Intellectual Property Office of Ireland is responsible for the granting of patents, the registration of industrial designs and trademarks, and has certain functions in relation to copyright and related rights (Department of Enterprise, and Trade and Employment, 2020).

The various types of Intellectual property and their implications in Ireland are discussed in detail in the next chapter.

2.2.4 The Importance of Protecting Intellectual Property.



Figure 1: Starbucks vs Shanghai Xingbake Coffee Logos

Source:(Templeton, 2012)

The importance of protecting intellectual property rights is evident in the case of Starbucks v. Shanghai Xingbake Coffee. Starbucks, a global coffee giant, sued a Chinese coffee shop, Shanghai Xingbake Coffee, for trademark infringement. Shanghai Xingbake Coffee had opened a coffee shop with a similar logo and branding to Starbucks, which led to significant confusion among customers (Hayes, 2006). In 2001, Shanghai Xingbake Cafe, a Chinese coffee chain, adopted a logo and name similar to Starbucks' trademark, using "Xingbake," the Chinese translation of "Starbucks." Following Starbucks' market entry in China, Xingbake changed its name to "Xingbake Coffee" and altered its logo to resemble Starbucks' green circle and white star design. The Chinese chain contended that "xingbake" was a generic term for "Starbucks" in Chinese and that it had prior usage of the name and logo. After a protracted legal battle, the Shanghai No. 2 Intermediate People's Court ruled in favour of Starbucks in 2006. The court mandated that Shanghai Xingbake Cafe cease using its name and logo, pay damages of 500,000 yuan (approximately \$62,000), and issue an apology in local newspapers. The court determined that Shanghai Xingbake Cafe had deliberately copied the Starbucks trademark to exploit its reputation and goodwill. This case underscored the reliability of China's legal system in protecting intellectual property rights for foreign companies (Ning Zhang, 2023).

2.2.5 Types of IPRs

2.2.5.1 Patent

According to 'Department of Enterprise, (2020)' A patent grants its holder the exclusive right to prevent others from making, using, selling, or importing the patented invention without the owner's consent, for a limited time. It is a form of "industrial property" that the owner can

assign, transfer, license, or use. To be eligible for a patent, an invention must be new, involve an inventive step, and be capable of industrial application. Patents are territorial, meaning that patents granted by the Intellectual Property Office of Ireland are only valid within Ireland. Patent Act, 1992 is the primary legislation governing patent rights in Ireland. The Irish patent system offers two types of patents: full-term patents valid for 20 years and short-term patents valid for 10 years. To keep an Irish patent in force, annual renewal fees must be paid each year. Irish applicants can also seek European Patents, administered by the European Patent Office, providing potential protection in 38 member states. Additionally, they can apply for international patents under the Patent Cooperation Treaty, which offers potential protection in over 148 countries. The Intellectual Property Office of Ireland acts as the receiving office for these applications (Department of Enterprise, 2020).

Two best examples of patent are;

- Light bulb by Thomas Edison (U.S. Patent No. 223,898)
- Telephone by Alexander Graham Bell (U.S. Patent No. 174,465) (Brodsky Schur, 2016)

2.2.5.2 Trademarks

The 'Department of Enterprise, (2019)' provides the description of the trademark as;

A sign that distinguishes the goods and services of one business from those of another.

Trademarks serve as indicators of origin and can include words, logos, devices, or other distinctive features, either individually or in combination. The use of trademarks allows businesses to be identified, retain customer loyalty, and foster value and growth. Registering a trademark is one of the most effective methods to establish and protect trademark rights.

Some examples of trademarks are as follows.



Coca-Cola - The distinctive script logo and red colour

Nike - The "swoosh" logo and "Just Do It" slogan

Apple - The bitten apple logo

Irish Examples:



Kerrygold - The brand name for Irish butter and cheese

Tayto- A popular Irish crisp (chip) brand

Guinness - The famous Irish stout beer brand

Trademarks confer territorial rights. In Ireland, the Intellectual Property Office is responsible for the registration of national trademarks and the Trade Mark Act, 1996, is the governing legislation pertaining to protection of trademarks in Ireland. As per Section 47 of the Trademarks Act, 1996, once registered, a trademark is valid for a period of 10 years, which can be extended indefinitely with the payment of a renewal fee every 10 years (Oireachtas, 1995). There are also European and international application systems for trademarks. The European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), based in Alicante, Spain, offers a single registration procedure for trademark protection across the EU. This system involves filing one trademark application and paying one set of fees, making it a cost-effective option for businesses operating in multiple EU countries (Department of Enterprise, 2019). International trademark applications can be submitted through the 'Madrid System,' administered by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in Switzerland. This system allows for the registration of a trademark in several countries through a single application, filed in one language, with one set of fees. This single international application process replaces the need to file separate applications with different national offices for trademark protection (Department of Enterprise, 2019).

2.2.5.3 Copyrights

The 'Department of Enterprise, (2021)' provides the description of the Copyright as a form of intellectual property that grants rights to the creators ("authors") of certain categories of works, such as books, songs, plays or films. There is no registration procedure for copyright works under Irish copyright law. Copyright protection is automatic and arises upon the creation of an

original work. In general, the term of protection for copyright is 70 years after the death of the creator/author but the term of protection varies depending on the type of work. The best examples of Copyrights can be, the Harry Potter book series by J.K. Rowling and "Star Wars" films by George Lucas (Book (eISB), n.d.).

2.2.5.4 Industrial Design

The 'Department of Enterprise, (2024)' provides the description of the industrial design as follows: Industrial design refers to the outward appearance of a product or part of it, characterized by lines, contours, colours, shape, texture, materials, and/or ornamentation. Designs are eligible for protection if they are unique, meaning that no identical design has been previously disclosed to the public. They must also possess individual character, indicating that the relevant consumer would perceive them as distinct from existing designs. It is important to note that a design cannot protect the functional aspects of a product. The design or shape of a product can become synonymous with a company's branding and image, potentially increasing in monetary value over time. Some examples of Industrial designs are ; The distinctive shape of a Guinness beer bottle, The design of a Waterford crystal vase, the design of Iphone etc., In Ireland, the Industrial Designs Act, 2001, is the primary legislation governing industrial designs. Applications for registering an industrial design are submitted to the Controller of Intellectual Property at the Intellectual Property Office of Ireland. The duration of the right is for 5 years from the date of registration and can be renewed periodically for every 5 years after paying the prescribed fees (Oireachtas, 2000).

2.2.5.5 Geographical Indicators

Geographical indications (GIs) establish intellectual property rights for products whose qualities are specifically linked to the area of production. They identify goods as originating in a country, region or locality where a particular quality, reputation or other characteristic of the product is essentially attributable to its geographical origin, for example, Bordeaux (wine), Vetro di Murano (glass) or Prosciutto di Parma (ham) (Department of Enterprise, 2024a).The Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine is responsible for the GI protection schemes for food, agricultural products and spirit drinks (Department of Enterprise, 2024a).

2.2.5.6 Trade Secrets

A trade secret is a type of Intellectual Property such as a formula, a practice or process of a company that is not generally known outside of the company and which is kept secret (Department of Enterprise, 2024c). Ireland transposed the Directive by way of Statutory

Instrument European Union (Protection of Trade Secrets) Regulations 2018 (SI No 188 of 2018) which came into effect on 9 June 2018 providing civil redress measures and remedies in the event a trade secret is unlawfully acquired, used or disclosed. By limiting access to hearings and court documents containing the trade secret the Regulation also ensures confidentiality of the trade secret is preserved (Department of Enterprise, 2024c).

2.3 The role of trademarks in business strategy and brand protection.

The advantage of highly distinctive brand names is that they generally are entitled to broader protection against infringement and probably dilution as well. For example, an old English case decided that use of the brand name KODAK to sell bicycles would confuse consumers into wondering if the camera maker had diversified into that business (Kodak Case. (1898) 15 R.P.C. 105 (1898). Marketers, while desiring distinctive brand names that may be legally protected, also want names that are memorable, likeable and meaningful (Petty, 2008). As vital tools for uniqueness, legal protection, and value creation, trademarks are integral to corporate strategy and brand protection. Trademarks are integral to global expansion strategies. Ghauri and Cateora (2014) in "International Marketing" discusses how global brands use trademarks to maintain consistency while adapting to local markets, highlighting the importance of international trademark protection (Ghauri and Cateora, 2014).

2.3.1 The Strategic Importance of Trademarks

The best way to explain the strategic importance of trademarks are through case studies about actively defending the trademarks, while also showing that even well-established brands can face challenges in maintaining their trademark rights and how important it is for the SMEs to adopt trademark as their business strategy.

2.3.1.1 Successful Trademark Defences:

1. Starbucks vs. Shanghai Xingbake Coffee (2006)

Starbucks successfully sued a Chinese coffee shop for trademark infringement. The Shanghai court ruled in favour of Starbucks, ordering Shanghai Xingbake to cease using its name and logo, pay damages, and issue an apology (Ning Zhang, 2023).

2. Apple vs. Xiaomi (2017)

Apple successfully blocked Xiaomi from trademarking "Mi Pad" in the EU, arguing it was too like "iPad". The EU General Court ruled in Apple's favour in 2017(Reuters, 2017).

3. Bacardi vs. Havana Club (2011)

Bacardi win its attempt to invalidate Havana Club's trademark in the US. The ruling was in favour of Bacardi on the marketing and packaging of HAVANA CLUB rum in the US allowing them to keep their trademark registration (M Neal, 2011).

2.3.1.2 Unsuccessful Trademark Defences:

1. Adidas vs. Shoe Branding Europe (2019)

The trademark dispute between Adidas and Shoe Branding Europe highlights the challenges of protecting simple designs as trademarks. In 2016, Shoe Branding Europe sought to register a two-stripe logo, which Adidas opposed due to similarity with its three-stripe mark. However, the EU General Court ultimately ruled in favour of Shoe Branding Europe, finding the designs were not too similar. The court upheld a 2016 EUIPO decision revoking Adidas' three-stripe trademark registration for clothing, footwear, and headgear. The court determined Adidas failed to prove the mark had acquired distinctiveness across the EU, classifying it as an "ordinary figurative mark" rather than a protected pattern. This case demonstrates the difficulty in establishing and maintaining trademark rights for basic design elements, even for well-known brands (Sharma, 2022).

2. McDonald's vs. Supermac's (2019)

McDonald's lost its "Big Mac" trademark in the EU after Irish fast-food chain Supermac's challenged it. The EUIPO ruled that McDonald's had not proven genuine use of the trademark (Connelly, 2024).

3. Nestle vs. Cadbury (2018)

Nestle failed to trademark the four-finger shape of its KitKat bar in the UK. The Court of Appeal ruled that the shape was not distinctive enough to merit trademark protection (Harrold, 2018).

As effective tools for value development, market distinction, and brand protection, trademarks are essential to contemporary company strategy. Trademarks are intangible assets that have grown in significance in the knowledge-based economy, where customer trust and brand identification are crucial (Cao *et al.*, 2022). The following explains the strategic importance of trademarks.

1. Differentiation and brand identity

Trademarks help companies to distinguish their products and services from those of their competitors and contribute to creating brand identity. A unique identifier, trademarks can help in establishing brand identification which leads to brand loyalty and brand trust (Cao *et al.*,

2022). Trademarks also signal quality, and the origin of the product, which contributes to a reduced search cost for consumers, brand loyalty and brand trust (Castaldi and Dosso, 2018).

2. Legal Protection

Trademarks offer legal protection from counterfeits and imitations. This is important, as it protects the brand integrity and ensures consumers are not misled as to the originality and quality of the product (Dimitrieska *et al.*, 2018).

The legal framework also allows businesses to protect their rights to the mark through litigation, therefore, helping to protect their market position and intellectual property (Sáiz and Castro, 2018).

3. Market Power and Competitive Advantage.

Trademark can play a significant role by boosting a company's market power, allowing for higher prices of products due to the reputation of a brand. This is because trademarks will often embody the brand's reputation and perceived quality; this can enable the company to charge a premium for the products. Trademarks provide a competitive advantage in the form of barriers to entry for new competitors, as it can be very hard for a new company to build brand loyalty and brand recognition, especially where the market is full of established brands(Cao *et al.*, 2022).

2.3.2 Trademarks in Brand Protection.

1. Economic Rights and Brand Equity

Trademarks protect the economic rights of a brand owner and are used to prevent others from using the same or similar marks which could dilute the brand's value. This is important for maintaining brand equity, which is an important and intangible asset for the business. Effective trademark management can positively impact brand equity, as it maintains the consistency of a brand's history and reputation over time. (Cao *et al.*, 2022).

2. Innovation and Market Signalling

Trademarks can also serve as a signal of new product introductions or innovativeness. Trademarks can complement patents, protecting non-patentable innovations such as service innovations and business methods. In the pharmaceutical industry, for example, trademarks are often coupled with patents to build brand recognition for new products, thus enhancing product marketability and building consumer trust (Castaldi and Dosso, 2018).

3. Strategic Trademark Management

Successful trademark management involves the strategic planning and execution of all trademark-related activities to maximize the benefit of your trademarks to your business. This includes selecting trademarks, applying for trademark protection, and enforce those rights to derive the maximum value and impact from brand in the marketplace. These effectively managed trademark portfolios can also attract investment, support marketing and brand building, and facilitate business expansion through licensing and franchising opportunities (Cao *et al.*, 2022).

Brand protection and company strategy are inextricably linked to trademarks. Additionally essential to distinguishing products and services, creating brand identification, offering robust legal protection, and generating economic value are trademarks. Long-term business success and obtaining and maintaining a competitive edge depend more and more on effective trademark administration. Businesses may turn trademarks into a valuable strategic asset that helps build brand value, hold onto market share, and promote innovation by incorporating trademarks into their overall business plan.

2.4 Current Global and Dublin Coffee Market.

The global coffee market has experienced significant growth and diversification in recent years, with small to medium-sized coffee retailers playing a crucial role in this expansion. According to projections, the worldwide coffee market is expected to grow by 10.63% in 2024, reflecting the continued strong demand for coffee products globally (MarketTrendHub, 2024). Numerous factors are contributing to this growth, such as expanding premiumization trends, rising desire for organic and traded products, and rising coffee consumption in emerging nations (Statista, 2024).

The specialty coffee market has seen substantial growth. It is projected to reach USD 51.4 billion by 2030, trends in ready-to-drink coffee, premium brews, and the expanding number of coffee shops worldwide (Mellett, 2021). This trend towards specialty and premium coffee offerings has created opportunities for small and medium-sized retailers to differentiate themselves in a competitive market.

In Ireland, the coffee market is also showing growth trends. Projections indicate that the Irish coffee market will grow by 2.07% between 2024 and 2029, resulting in a market volume of

US\$150.80 million by 2029(Statista, 2024). This growth reflects the increasing coffee culture in Ireland, particularly in urban centres like Dublin.

Dublin has emerged as a significant hub for coffee consumption and coffee shop culture in Europe. A 2020 survey revealed that Dublin ranked as the second most "coffee-crazy" capital city globally, with 180 coffee shops per 100,000 people and imports equivalent to €94.94 per person annually (Mellett, 2021). More recent data from Eachnight.com positions Dublin even more prominently, identifying it as the European capital with the highest density of coffee shops. The study found that Dublin has 232 cafes for a population of 525,383, which translates to an impressive 442 cafes per million people (Drinks Industry, 2022).

2.5 How trademark can benefit Small to Medium Coffee Retailers in Dublin.

From the above studied literature review, the small to medium coffee retailers may benefit the protection of trademark in the following way;

1. Brand Differentiation and Recognition:

Trademarks help SME coffee retailers in Dublin stand out in a crowded market. With Dublin being identified as the European capital with the highest density of coffee shops (442 cafés per million people), having a distinctive trademark can help a business differentiate itself from competitors. A strong trademark creates unique brand associations in consumers' minds, leading to brand equity and recognition.

2. Legal Protection:

Registered trademarks provide legal recourse against infringement, safeguarding a company's brand identity and market position. This is crucial in a competitive market like Dublin, where there are 232 cafés for a population of 525,383. Trademark protection allows SMEs to prevent unauthorized use of their brand elements, protecting their investment in building a reputation.

3. Business Growth and Expansion:

A strong trademark facilitates business growth and expansion. As the global specialty coffee market is expected to reach USD 51.4 billion by 2030, having a protected trademark can allow Dublin-based SMEs to leverage their brand equity when entering new markets or launching new product lines.

4. Customer Trust and Loyalty:

Trademarks help build customer trust by consistently representing the quality and attributes of a product or service. In the coffee industry, where customer loyalty is crucial, a trademark can serve as a symbol of quality and consistency, encouraging repeat business.

5. International Protection:

As SMEs in Dublin may consider expanding internationally, trademarks can be registered in multiple jurisdictions, providing protection in various markets. This is particularly relevant given the global nature of the coffee industry.

6. Licensing Opportunities:

Registered trademarks open doors to licensing and franchising opportunities. SME coffee retailers in Dublin could potentially license their brand to other businesses, creating additional revenue streams.

7. Marketing Advantage

A registered trademark allows SMEs to use the ® symbol, which can add credibility to their brand in marketing materials and signage.

8. Long-Term Asset:

Trademarks can be renewed indefinitely, providing long-term protection and value for SME coffee retailers in Dublin as they grow and evolve their business.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework serves as the foundation for the study, linking the literature review to the research questions and guiding the data collection and analysis. It integrates relevant concepts, models, and theories related to intellectual property rights (IPRs), particularly trademarks, and their impact on small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the coffee retail sector.

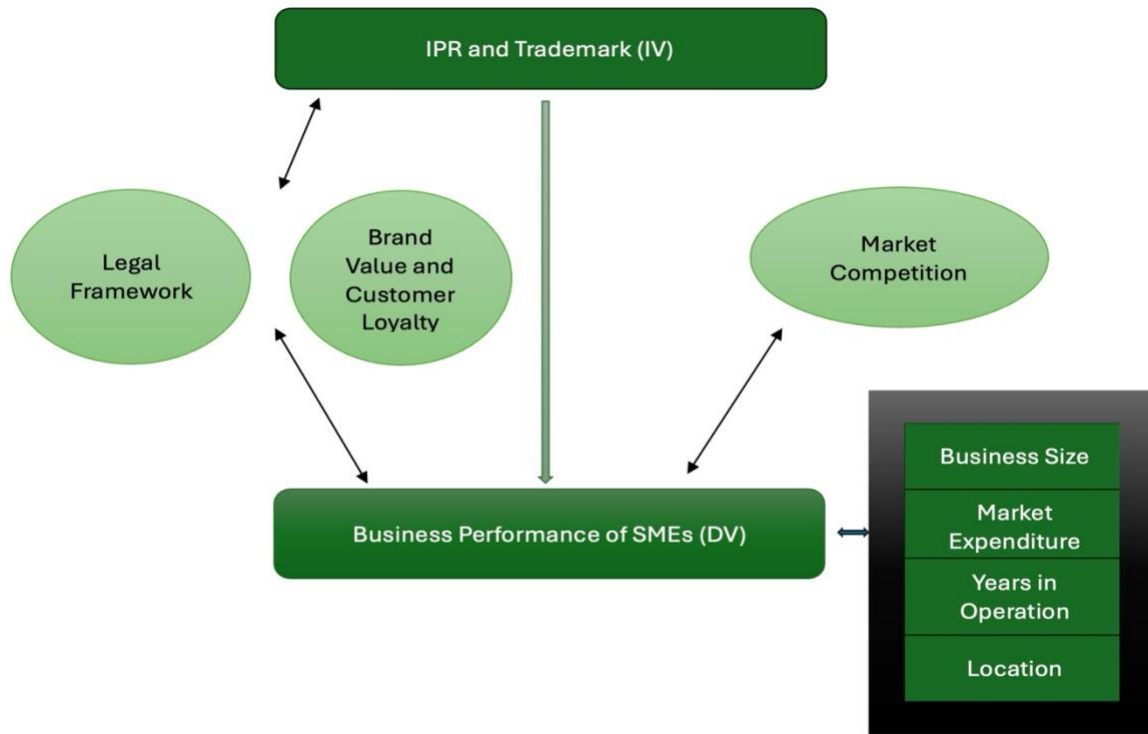


Figure 2: Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework identifies three essential linkages that are important for understanding why trademark protection is important for small- to medium-sized coffee sellers in Dublin, Ireland. Understanding these connections is essential to comprehending how trademarks affect competitive advantage, brand value, and business performance. A thorough explanation of these relationships may be found below.

1. Trademark protection is an independent variable.

Legal actions are taken to safeguard trademarks and stop infringement under trademark protection. It is the main variable that is changed in order to see how it affects other variables.

Starbucks v. Shanghai Xing bake Coffee is a case study that highlights the significance of trademark protection. Starbucks was able to preserve its market position and brand identity in China by successfully suing Shanghai Xing bake for trademark infringement (Ning Zhang, 2023).

2. The business performance of SMEs is a dependent variable.

Brand protection results or effects are measured by business performance. Metrics like revenue growth, market share, client loyalty, and general competitiveness are among them.

Studies indicate that a company's financial success is positively impacted by trademark protection (Çela, 2015). According to research conducted by the European Patent Office (EPO) and the European Union Intellectual Property Office (EUIPO), companies that successfully file for trademarks increase their chances of obtaining venture capital funding and exiting the market through acquisitions or initial public offerings (IPOs). This suggests that trademarks help entrepreneurs by protecting their brand identification and increasing their financial prospects (EUIPO, 2024).

3. Moderator: Competitive Market

The degree and direction of the relationship between trademark protection and business performance are influenced by market competition. Trademark protection may be more important in highly competitive markets than in less competitive ones. In the fiercely competitive Dublin coffee market, with 442 cafés per million residents, trademark protection is essential to being noticed and retaining clientele (Drinks Industry, 2022).

4. Brand Value and Customer Loyalty as a Mediator

The relationship between brand value and consumer loyalty and how trademark protection influences corporate performance is explained. Strong brand value and customer loyalty are increased by effective trademark protection, which boosts corporate performance.

A good example of how trademark protection may preserve brand value and avoid customer confusion is the case of Apple v. Xiaomi, in which Apple prevented Xiaomi from trademarking "Mi Pad" in the EU. This prevented Xiaomi from maintaining customer loyalty (Reuters, 2017)

5. Legal Framework: Mediator: Strong mechanisms for trademark enforcement are provided by strong legal frameworks, such as those found in the EU, as demonstrated by the Apple v. Xiaomi case. Consequently, the effectiveness of trademark protection is mediated by the legal environment.

6. Control Variables

- a. **Business Size:** To separate the impact of trademark protection, it is important to manage the size of the coffee retailer in terms of staff count and yearly sales.
- b. **Location:** Dublin's particular location may have an impact on market dynamics and foot traffic from customers, thus control is necessary to guarantee fair comparisons.
- c. **Marketing Expenditure:** Controlling the amount spent on marketing is necessary to precisely evaluate the impact of trademark protection, since it can also affect brand value and business performance.

- d. Years of Operation: The duration of the business's operation should be considered in the study as it might impact customer loyalty and brand awareness.

2.7 Conclusion

With an emphasis on SMEs in Dublin, the literature review has emphasised a number of important results about the function of IPRs, notably trademarks, in the coffee industry. First off, Dublin is becoming a major hub for the growing global coffee business due to its high density of coffee shops and robust demand from consumers for speciality coffee. For SMEs, who need to stand out in a crowded market, this expansion offers both possibilities and challenges. It has been determined that trademarks are crucial instruments for SMEs to establish brand awareness, safeguard their distinctive products, and obtain a competitive advantage. The analysis explained how trademarks accomplish a variety of tactical goals, such as boosting market power, building consumer loyalty and trust, and providing legal protection against infringement. To preserve brand integrity and market position, case studies of both successful and unsuccessful trademark defences highlight how crucial it is to actively manage and defend trademarks. The analysis also highlighted the financial advantages of trademarks, including the ability to charge more because of perceived quality and lower expenses associated with customer searches. By creating a basis for brand value and opening doors for licencing and franchising, trademarks also aid in the growth and expansion of businesses, both locally and globally. This research emphasises how important trademarks are to SMEs as they negotiate Dublin's cutthroat coffee market. SMEs can safeguard their investments, improve their market presence, and harness their brand equity for future growth by securing and managing their trademarks. This study offers insightful information about the strategic significance of intellectual property rights and offers SMEs a path to success in a more competitive and globalised market.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Overview

This chapter focuses on highlighting all the methods used to carry out this research. Research methods include research philosophy, research approach and methods for data collection. Justifications for the selections made for each research element are discussed in this chapter. Besides, ethical considerations made to carry out this research. This research aimed to adopt onion research model proposed by Saunders et al. (2019). It is a systematic approach to design the method of a research. Hence the below section will focus on this model to describe the suitable method of this research.

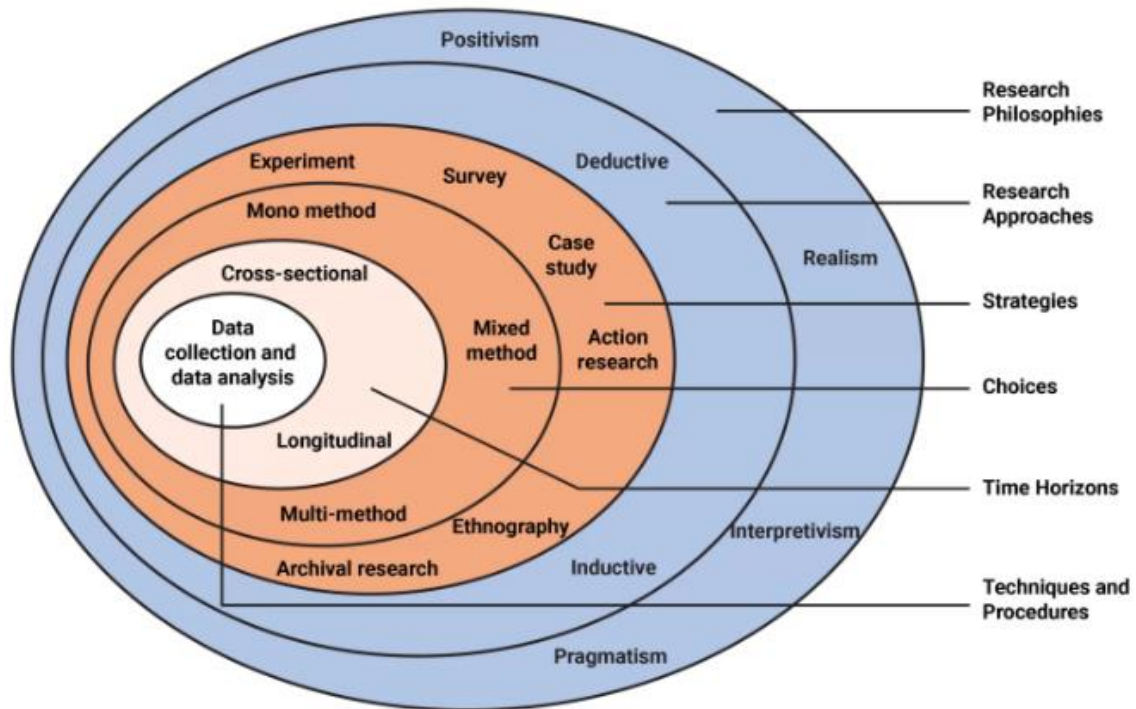


Figure 3: Research onion model

Source: Saunders et al. (2019)

3.2 Research philosophy

Research philosophy refers to as a guide followed by researchers for data collection and data analysis. Interpretivism, positivism and pragmatism are three key research philosophies used to carry out research at large. In interpretivism research philosophy, qualitative or non-

numerical data are collected (Alharahsheh and Pius, 2020). Interviews are conducted to gather non-numerical data to understand the views and opinions of individuals on a particular topic or subject. Secondly, Positivism research philosophy encourages researchers to gather quantitative or numerical data. Surveys and polls are carried out to collect numerical data which helps to make the outcome of research measurable. In pragmatism research philosophy, researchers have the freedom to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. This particular research philosophy is applicable when researchers intend to carry out research using mixed methods (Kelly and Cordeiro, 2020). In the context of this research, positivism research philosophy is considered as suitable for conducting this research. The reason for selecting positivism research philosophy over the other two research philosophies has been receiving a measurable understanding on the importance of protecting trademarks for small and medium size coffee retailers in Dublin, Ireland. The application of positivism research philosophy has been useful in offering a quantifiable knowledge on the same.

3.3 Research approach

Research approach is another element of research methodology. This suggests a detailed plan related to data collection and data analysis to conduct research. Inductive and deductive are two common research approaches used by researchers. In an inductive research approach, general conclusions are derived from a specific observation (Vears and Gillam, 2022). This particular research approach is useful to establish a new theory. In contrast, a deductive research approach is applied to test any existing theory. This specific research approach is also helpful to test hypotheses developed in research. In this research the inductive research approach has been selected. There have been a couple of reasons for selecting the inductive research approach over the deductive research approach. To begin with, an inductive research approach allows researchers to receive detailed knowledge regarding their chosen topic. In addition to this, an inductive research approach is helpful for qualitative data analysis (Hoiruddin and Ulfa, 2021). In contrast to this, quantitative data analysis is facilitated by the deductive research approach. It is also important to note that unlike deductive research approach, inductive research approach is adaptable to new findings. Since deductive approach supports quantitative data analysis, this particular approach has been used to receive findings related to the importance of protecting trademarks for small and medium size coffee retailers in the city of Dublin.

3.4 Research design

Research design works as a strategy followed by researchers to carry out their research. There are two most common research designs that are used by researchers to conduct research. These two research designs are explanatory research design and exploratory research design. It is important to understand the difference between these two research designs to be able to justify the selected research design in executing this research. In exploratory research design, researchers receive the freedom and the flexibility with their process of data collection (Olawale *et al.* 2023). This specific research design is applied when there is a scarcity of information regarding the topic. Hence, researchers can access different sources to collect necessary data. Explanatory research design is quite opposite to exploratory research design. Researchers following exploratory research design need to be structured with their research process. There is no flexibility for research in terms of data collection analysis (Othman *et al.* 2020). There is enough pre-planning by researchers as they use explanatory research design. In this particular research, descriptive research design has been chosen over the explanatory research design. This decision has been made since there has been a need to be flexible in terms of collecting data to analyse the importance of protecting trademarks for small and medium size coffee retailers operating in Dublin, Ireland.

3.5 Data collection procure

Two common approaches that are quantitative and qualitative are followed for data collection by researchers in general. One is quantitative approach, researchers focus on gathering numerical data to receive a measurable outcome in their research (Taherdoost, 2022). Whereas, in the qualitative approach, the focus remains on collecting non-numerical data to receive an in-depth knowledge about a subject. This research aimed to focus on investigating the importance of protecting trademarks for small to medium-sized coffee retailers in Dublin, hence quantitative approach is suitable. As part of the data collection process, it is also important to understand what type of data researchers collect for their research. Data are divided as primary and secondary based on their sources. Primary data refers to those data that researchers collect directly by executing field research (Cerar *et al.* 2021). Secondary data are mostly gathered by researchers through library research. Secondary data is easy to collect compared to primary data. However, primary data is considered more reliable than secondary data considering their reliability. This research has focused on gathering quantitative data from

primary sources. In this regard, surveys have been carried out with the chosen participants. It has been possible to understand the views and opinions of relevant individuals on the importance of protecting trademark rights for small and medium size coffee retail brands in Dublin, Ireland. All the responses given by the participants have been recorded and transcript for analysis.

3.6 Sampling

It is known as the technique of choosing a few people from a large population for the purpose of decoding the perspective of the population on a particular subject. Probability and non-probability are the two key sampling methods that researchers follow to select participants. In probability sampling, researchers consider everybody as a potential sample. Random sampling technique is one of the examples of probability sampling (Rahman *et al.* 2023). In this sampling technique, researchers select participants randomly from a large population considering that everyone in a population is capable of offering the needed insights on a specific subject.

On the other hand, in non-probability sampling, researchers use their subjective judgement to pick samples from a large population. A few examples of non-probability sampling include purposive sampling, convenience sampling and snowball sampling. In this research, non-probability sampling has been implemented. It has been apparent that individuals associated with small and medium size coffee retail brands were needed to be selected as participants to gain insights on the significance of protecting trademarks for those brands in Dublin, Ireland. According to the report by (Mellett, 2021), there are 180 coffee shops per 100,000 people in Dublin. In 2024, Dublin's population is projected at 1,284,551 (World Population Review, 2024). In the city, there are roughly 2,312 coffee shops. A sample size of 92 employees was chosen from this total. This amounts to around 3.98% of all coffee establishments. Purposive sampling was used to calculate the sample size, and researchers used their subjective judgment to make sure the sample was representative of the different kinds of coffee shops in Dublin.

Total Number of Coffee Shops= $(100,000/180) \times 1,284,551 = 2,312$

Sample Size Percentage= $(92/2,312) \times 100 \approx 3.98\%$

3.7 Data analysis technique

Data analysis is another crucial aspect of research methodology. It denotes the interpretation of the gathered data to derive valuable insights. Data analysis techniques are decided based on the type of data that researchers gather. Statistical tools and techniques are implemented to interpret quantitative or numerical data. Thematic analysis technique is used to evaluate non-numerical data (Naeem *et al.* 2021). Since quantitative data have been gathered, IBM SPSS software has been applied to interpret those data. A couple of analyses such as descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation and multiple regression have been conducted within the IBM SPSS software. Cronbach's Alpha test has also been done to test the validity and reliability of the geared quantitative data.

3.8 Ethical consideration

It is significant for researchers to ensure that they conducted research following all the ethical standards. researchers need to collect informed consent from the researchers before engaging them in the research process (Yusof *et al.* 2022). In this research, informed consent forms have been collected from all the five participants. The purpose of conducting this research has been informed to all the respondents. It has been ensured that anonymity of all the participants is maintained throughout this research. Apart from this, it has been made sure that nobody is harmed due to the execution of this research. Besides, participants have been given the freedom to withdraw from this research anytime.

3.9 Summary

This chapter has summarised that primary quantitative data have been gathered and analysed in this research to understand the importance of protecting trademarks for small and medium size coffee retailers in the city of Dublin, Ireland. All the gathered primary quantitative data have been analysed using IBM SPSS software. Informed consent forms have been gathered from the participants to maintain ethics while conducting this research.

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Overview

The present study is based on the trademark protection for the small and medium sized coffee retailer. The quantitative data has been collected for the study and a total 92 participants have been collected as respondents. The responses have been collected for the evaluation and the evaluation can help to get findings about the perceptions of the participants about trademark protection. This chapter make an in-depth analysis through quantitative data with the help of SPSS 25. The details of analysis were given below:

4.2 Findings

Table 1: Years of operation of the coffee shop

	Frequency	Percent
0-2 years	16	17.4
3-5 years	52	56.5
6-10 years	14	15.2
More than 10 years	10	10.9
Total	92	100.0

It is important to have experienced small and medium size coffee retailers to understand the importance that trademarks hold to them. SME coffee brands operating for a long period of time in Dublin can portray how intellectual property, commonly known as trademarks, is impacting them in a highly competitive market. Hence, over 56% of respondents having experience between 3 and 5 years have helped to provide valuable insights on the chosen research topic.

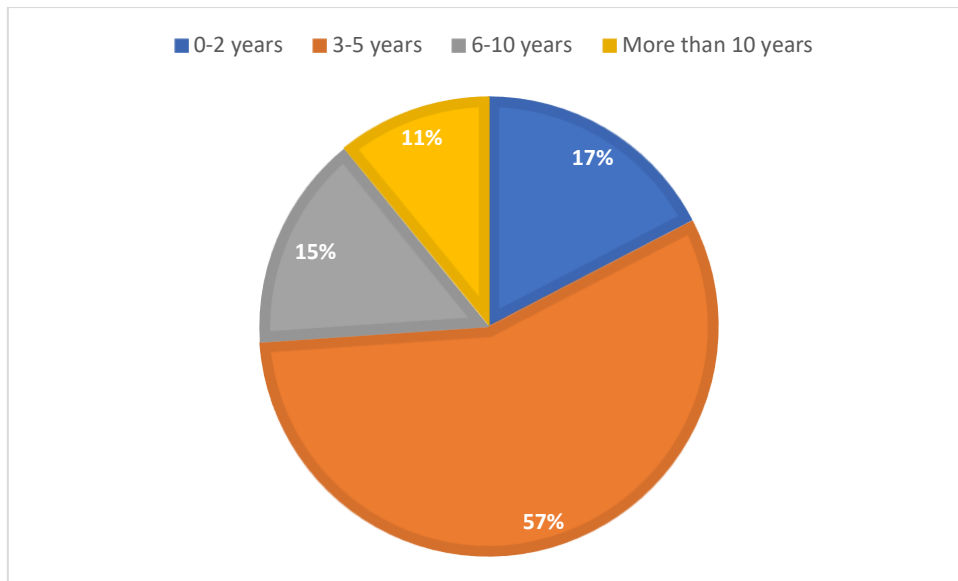


Figure 4: Years of operation of the coffee shop

Table 2: Number of employees in coffee shop

	Frequency	Percent
1 to 5	10	10.9
11 to 20	21	22.8
6 to 10	42	45.7
More than 20	19	20.7
Total	92	100.0

It is interesting to note that the majority of the coffee retailers chosen for the survey have less than 20 employees. This signifies that small and medium size enterprises have been chosen in this study. It was required since the focus of this research has been depicting the impact of trademark on small and medium size coffee retailers operating in the city of Dublin, Ireland.

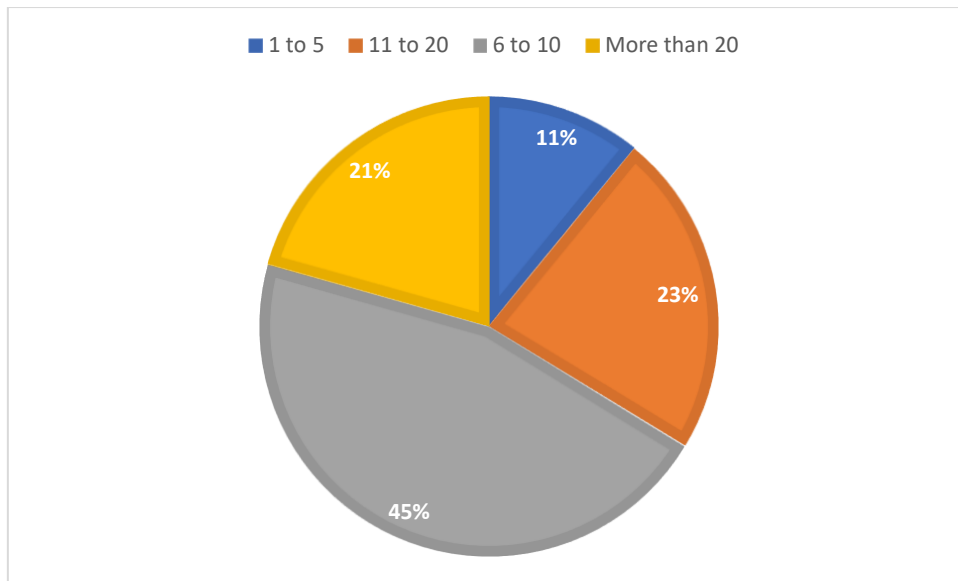


Figure 5: Number of employees in coffee shop

Table 3: Primary location of coffee shop

	Frequency	Percent
Rural	18	19.6
Suburban	39	42.4
Urban	35	38.0
Total	92	100.0

The participation of coffee retailers belonging to rural areas in the survey has been beneficial to understand the challenges that they face, mostly because of the comparative business environment.

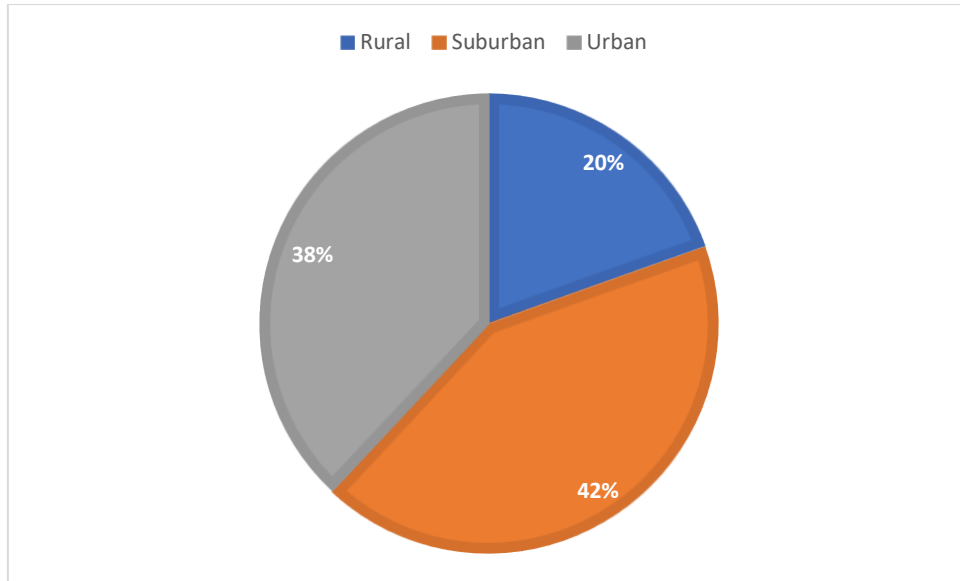


Figure 6: Primary location of coffee shop

Table 4: Familiarity with the concept of intellectual property rights

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	59	64.1
No	17	18.5
Somewhat	16	17.4
Total	92	100.0

The numbers clearly indicate that there is a strong awareness among small and medium size coffee retailers about the intellectual property of popularly known trademarks. This also means that a SME coffee retailer located in the city of Dublin values Trademark rights. This may be because this right comes with some benefits for them.

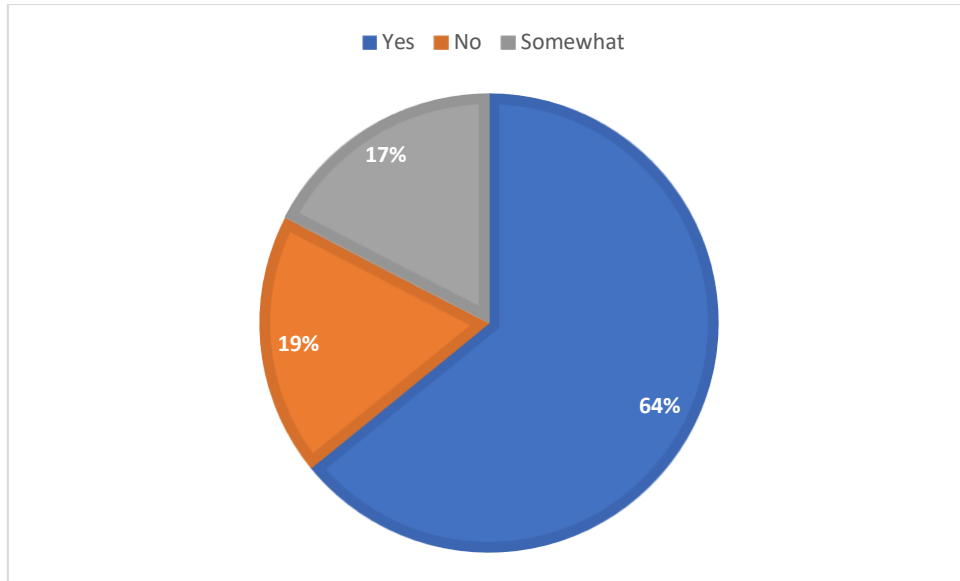


Figure 7: Familiarity with the concept of intellectual property rights

Table 5: Trademark registration status of coffee shop

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	54	58.7
In the process of registering	7	7.6
No	31	33.7
Total	92	100.0

These statistics presented in the chart signals that small and medium size coffee retailers in Dublin are emphasising a lot on acquiring trademark rights to achieve comparative advantage in the market. With the use of such rights, they can acquire an edge over their competitors in the market. According to the data, the highest of 58.7% of retailers has registered their trademark, 33.7% of them said no that means they may plan to acquire trademark or they implement their shop recently and least of 7.6% of respondents are in the process of registering respectively.

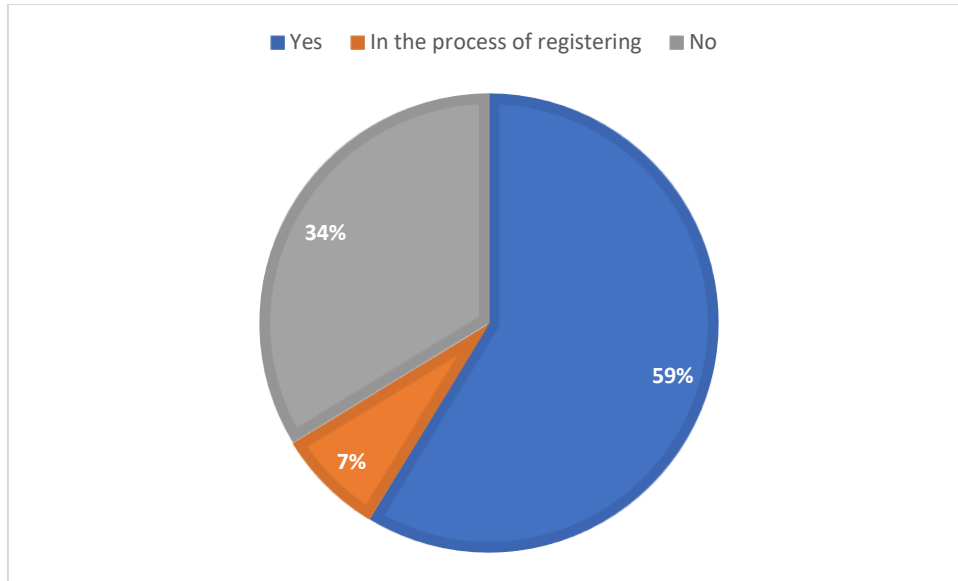


Figure 8: Trademark registration status of coffee shop

Table 6: Location of trademark registration

	Frequency	Percent
International	6	6.5
European Union	29	31.5
Ireland only	39	42.4
Not applicable	18	19.6
Total	92	100.0

It is evident from the data that small and medium size coffee retailers in Dublin are concerned more with acquiring trademark rights in Ireland. Also, there is a significant portion of coffee retailers who have Trademark rights for the European Union. However, a negligible percentage of coffee trailers have Trademark rights for the international level.

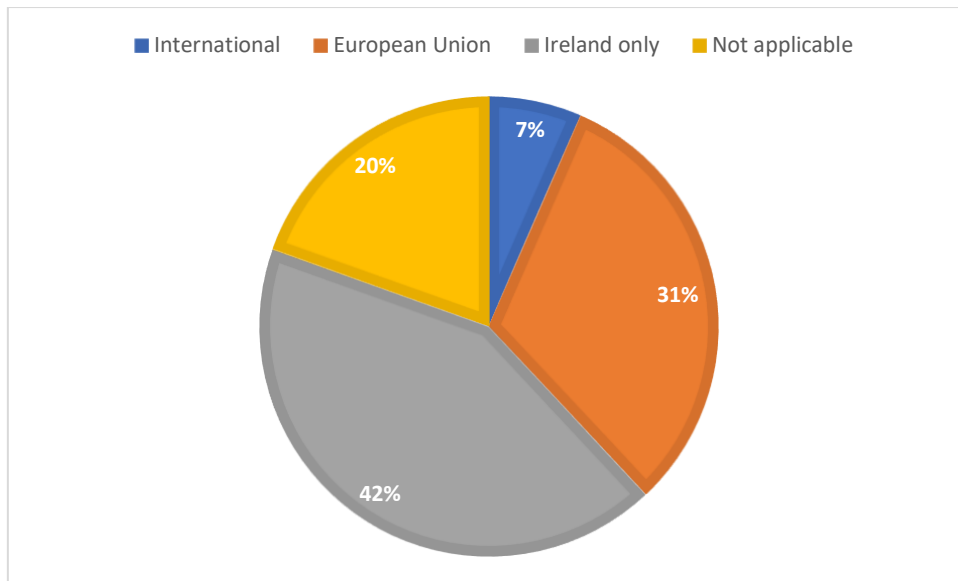


Figure 9: Location of trademark registration

Table 7: Importance of trademark protection for coffee shop

	Frequency	Percent
Very important	31	33.7
Somewhat important	39	42.4
Not important	11	12.0
Unsure	11	12.0
Total	92	100.0

It cannot be denied from this outcome that Trademark rights hold significant importance for small and medium size coffee retailers located in Dublin, Ireland. They understand that having Trademark rights can be helpful to survive in a comparative business environment. They can protect their unique coffee products with the use of IP rights.

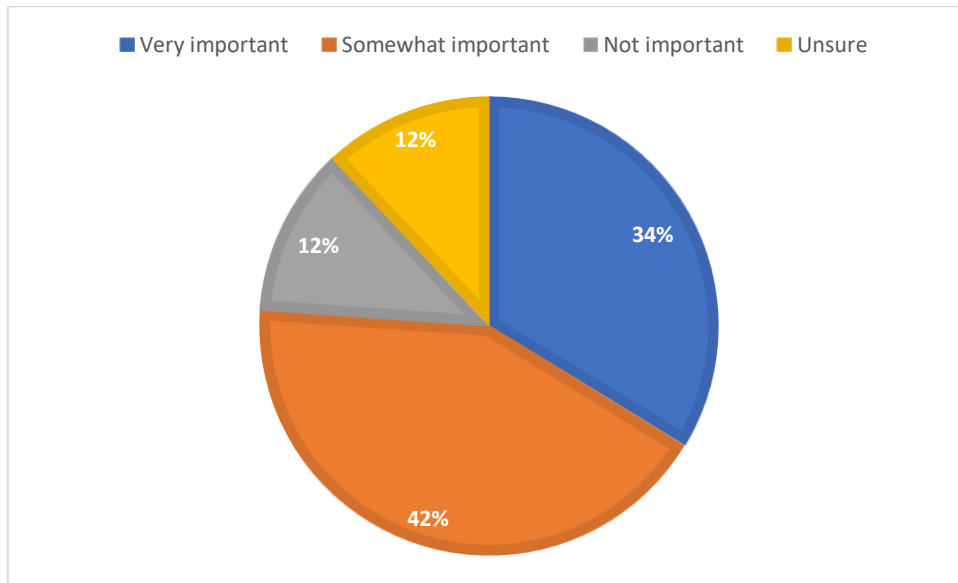


Figure 10: Importance of trademark protection in coffee shop

Table 8: Frequency of review or update of trademark protection strategies

	Frequency	Percent
Regularly (at least once a year)	37	40.2
Occasionally (every 2-3 years)	26	28.3
Rarely (more than 3 years)	15	16.3
Never	14	15.2
Total	92	100.0

It can be seen that majority have claimed that they found review of their Trademark rights once in every year. This means that small and medium size coffee retailers in Dublin can update their IP rights while protecting their unique coffee products in the country. Although, many have said that review of Trademark rights happens once in two or three years which can impact the coffee retailers.

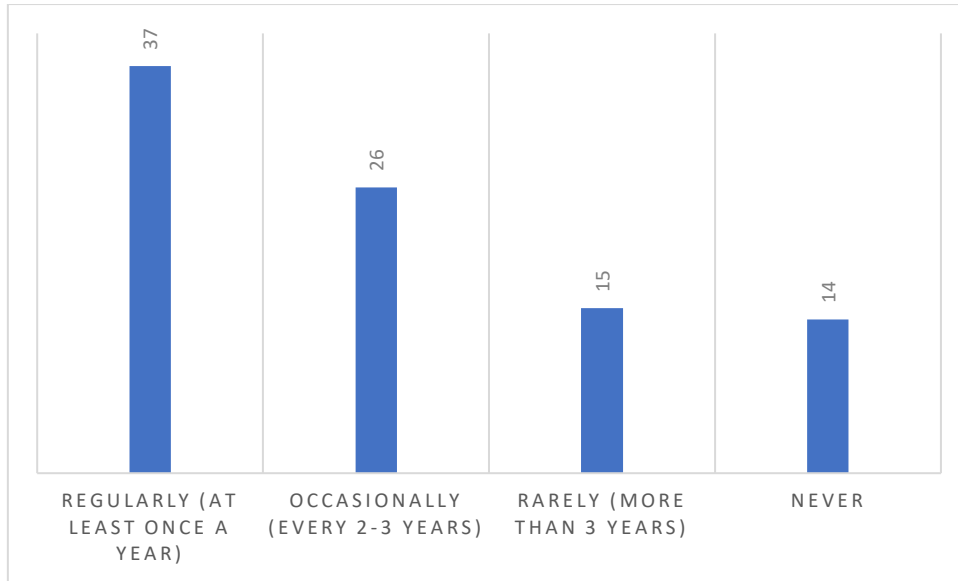


Figure 11: Frequency of review or update of trademark protection strategies

Table 9: Aspects of the business most important to protect with a trademark

	Frequency	Percent
Business name	64	69.6
Logo	46	50.0
Specific product names	20	21.7
Packaging design	12	13.0

The outcome against this specific question indicates that most small and medium size coffee brands in Dublin wish to protect their brand names and logo with the use of Trademark rights. Coffee brands also focus on protecting their packaging design by applying IP rights. This means that there are issues with the theft of business names in Ireland.

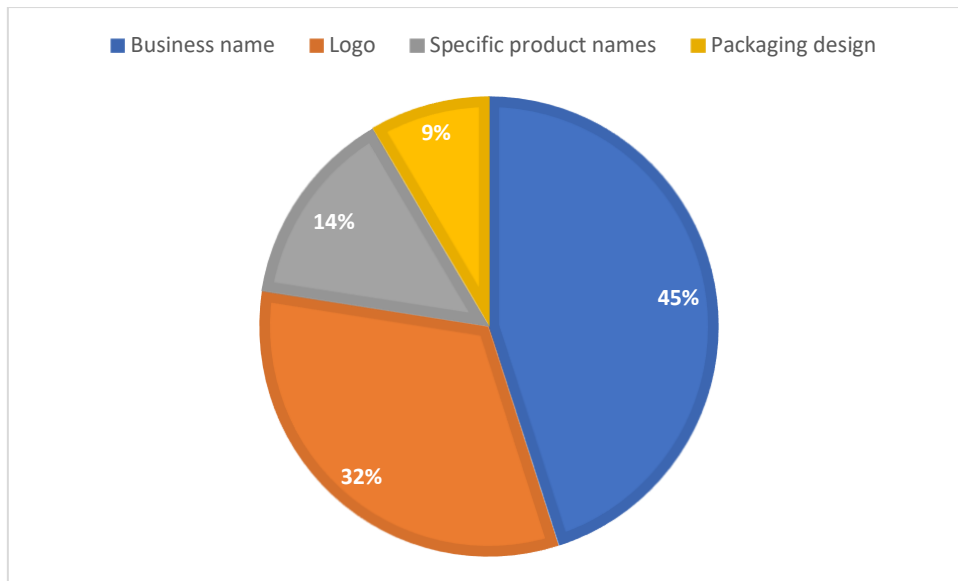


Figure 12: Aspects of the business most important to protect with a trademark

Table 10: Experience with trademark infringement or copying of brand elements

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	50	54.3
No	40	43.5
Unsure	2	2.2
Total	92	100.0

The data found so far makes it apparent that the issue of theft of brand names is prevalent in the country of Ireland. Most small and medium size coffee retailers wish to have Trademark rights to protect their brand names in the market. This also means that the brand names of popular coffee retailers may be misused by others to sell coffee products to earn money.

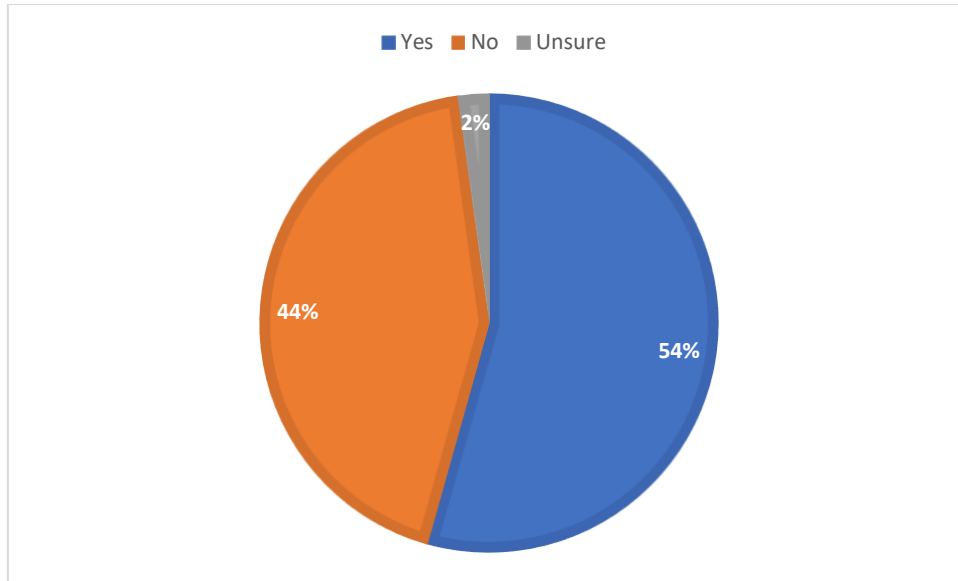


Figure 13: Experience with trademark infringement or copying of brand elements

Table 11: Challenges faced or anticipate facing in protecting trademark

	Frequency	Percent
Cost of registration and maintenance	59	64.1
Lack of knowledge about the process	38	41.3
Difficulty in enforcing rights	23	25.0
Time-consuming procedures	18	19.6

It has been evident that the cost of registration or maintenance for Trademark rights is an issue for small and medium size coffee retailers operating in Dublin, Ireland. It has also been found that there is a lack of knowledge about the process of acquiring Trademark rights among coffee retailers which can impede them from achieving competitive advantage in the market.

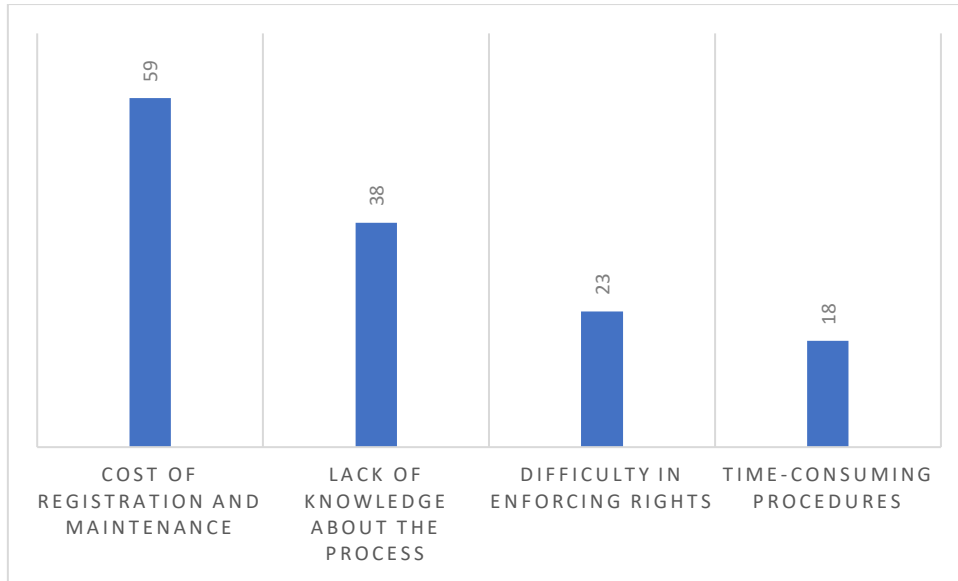


Figure 14: Challenges faced or anticipate facing in protecting trademark

Table 12: Consideration of expanding business

	Frequency	Percent
Yes, already expanded	26	28.3
Yes, planning to expand	33	35.9
No, but interested	27	29.3
No, not interested	6	6.5
Total	92	100.0

These statistics show the majority of the coffee retailers in Dublin are either expanding their businesses or considering doing the same. This reflects that small and medium size coffee retailers in Dublin wish to increase their sales and profitability in the long run.

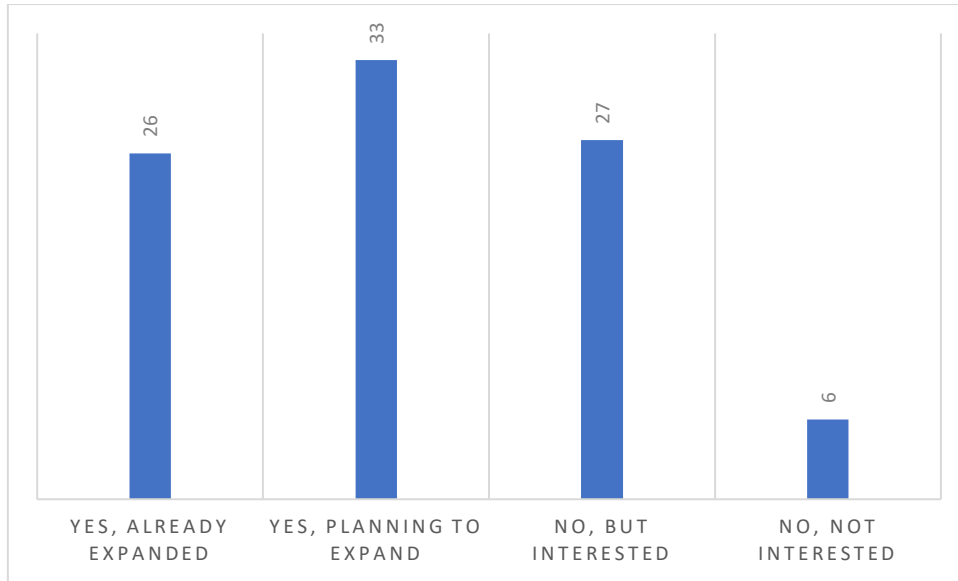


Figure 15: Consideration of expanding business

Table 13: Factors most important when considering business expansion

	Frequency	Percent
Market demand	44	47.8
Financial resources	55	59.8
Brand recognition	28	30.4
Trademark protection	17	18.5

It can be said from this data that most small and medium sized coffee retailers in Dublin are focused on market demand and brand recognition as they intend to expand their businesses. Securing Trademark rights is not the primary consideration for such coffee retailers in the city.

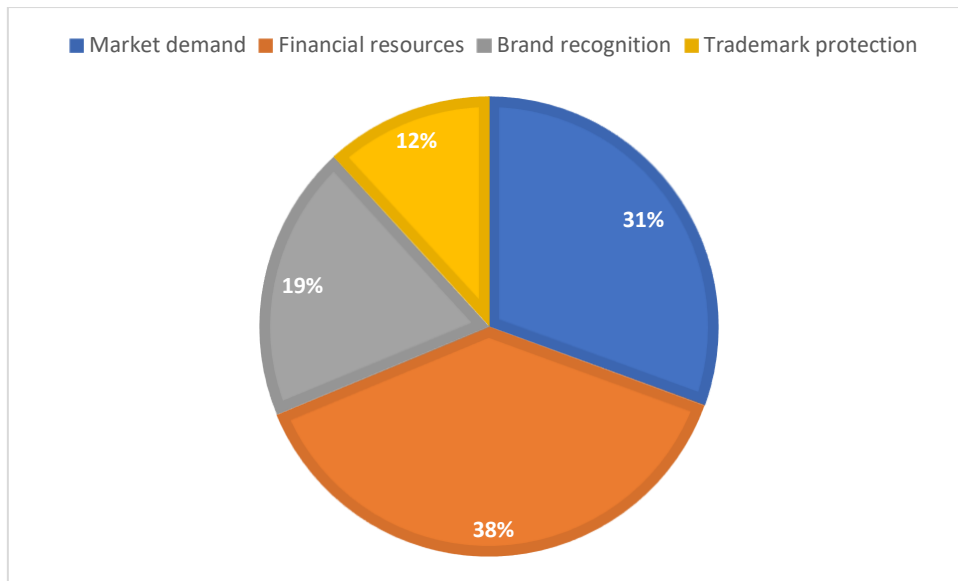


Figure 16: Factors most important when considering business expansion

Table 14: Collaboration with other businesses or legal experts to manage trademarks

	Frequency	Percent
Yes, regularly	27	29.3
Yes, occasionally	45	48.9
No, we do not manage trademarks collaboratively	13	14.1
No, we handle it internally	7	7.6
Total	92	100.0

Small and medium size coffee retailers in Dublin make consultations with legal experts occasionally on Trademark rights. This means that they give importance to their Trademark rights though they are not regular to review their rights.

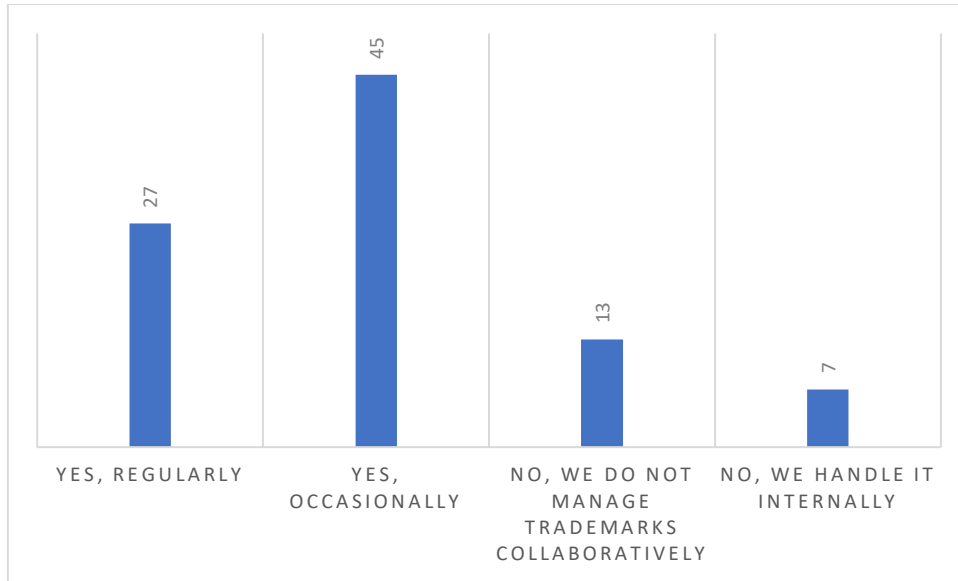


Figure 17: Collaboration with other businesses or legal experts to manage trademarks

Table 15: Type of collaboration for trademark management

	Frequency	Percent
Legal consultation	38	41.3
Partnership with other businesses	33	35.9
Use of external trademark management services	26	28.3
Participation in industry associations	8	8.7
None	17	18.5

Coffee retailers in Dublin believe in legal steps to manage their trademarks. Less number of coffee retailers participate in discussions arranged by industry associations and partners with other businesses regarding Trademark management.

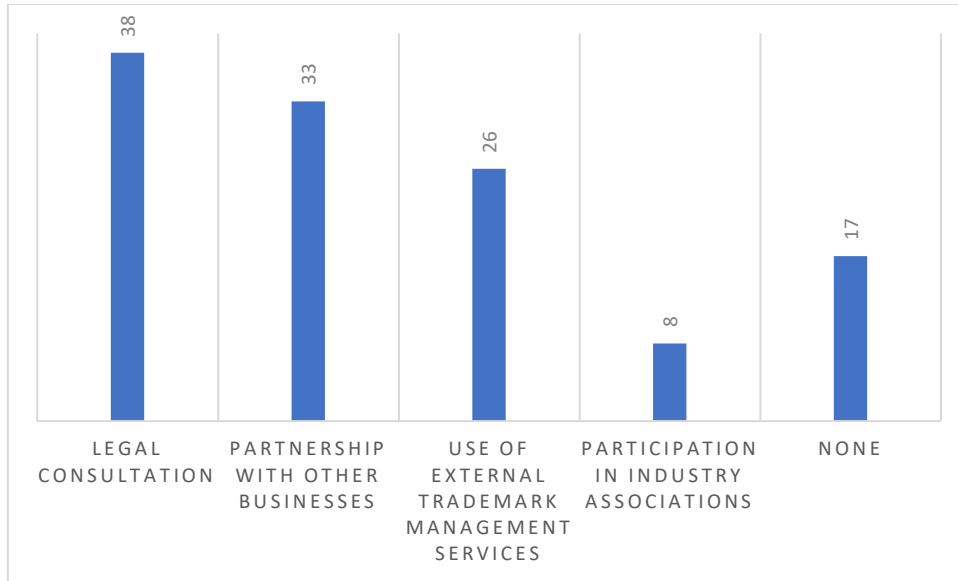


Figure 18: Type of collaboration for trademark management

Table 16: Effectiveness of collaborative trademark management for business

	Frequency	Percent
Very Effective	36	39.1
Effective	36	39.1
Neutral	18	19.6
Less Effective	1	1.1
Not Effective	1	1.1
Total	92	100.0

This chart has shown that small and medium size cough retailers in Dublin believe that it is important to collaborate with one another for effective management of Trademark rights.

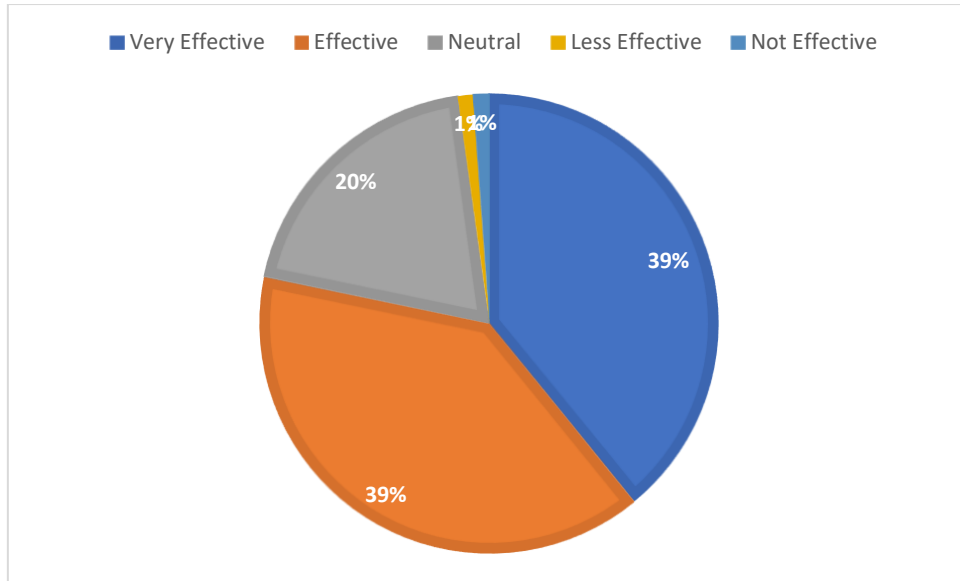


Figure 19: Effectiveness of collaborative trademark management for business

Table 17: Registered trademark has or would improve business performance

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	28	30.4
Agree	34	37.0
Neutral	23	25.0
Disagree	7	7.6
Total	92	100.0

Majority indicating that a Trademark right can help improve their business performances means that IP rights can help small and medium size coffee retailers to achieve comparative advantage in the market. They can protect their brand names and logo against misuse by others. Thus, small and medium size coffee brands can enhance their business growth.

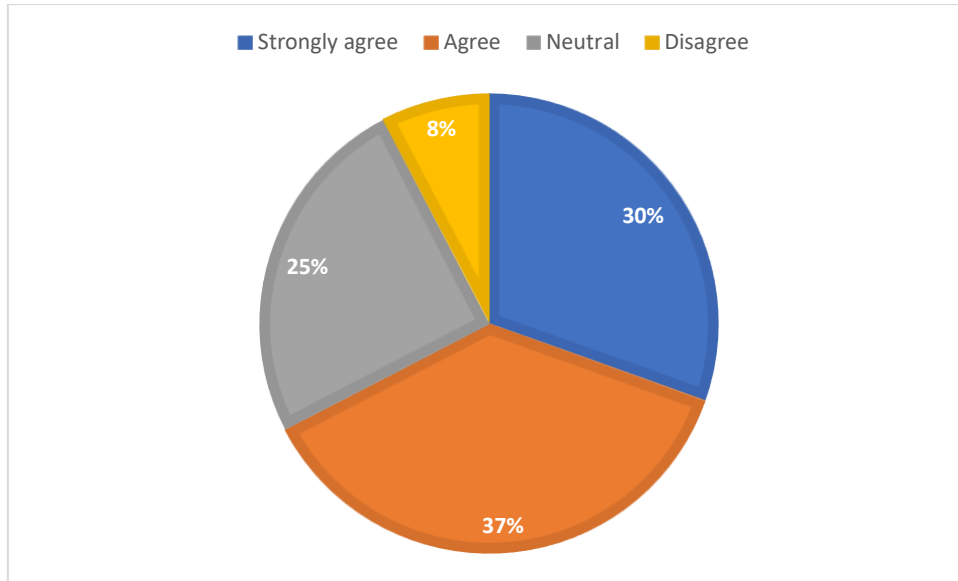


Figure 20: Registered trademark has or would improve business performance

Table 18: Impact of trademark protection on business

	Frequency	Percent
Increased brand recognition	38	41.3
Higher customer loyalty	42	45.7
Ability to charge premium prices	22	23.9
Protection against copycats	25	27.2
No significant impact	14	15.2

It is needless to say that small and medium size coffee retailers in Dublin can strengthen their business reputation as they acquire IP rights. This can promote customer loyalty which is necessary for businesses to sustain their revenue for a long period of time.

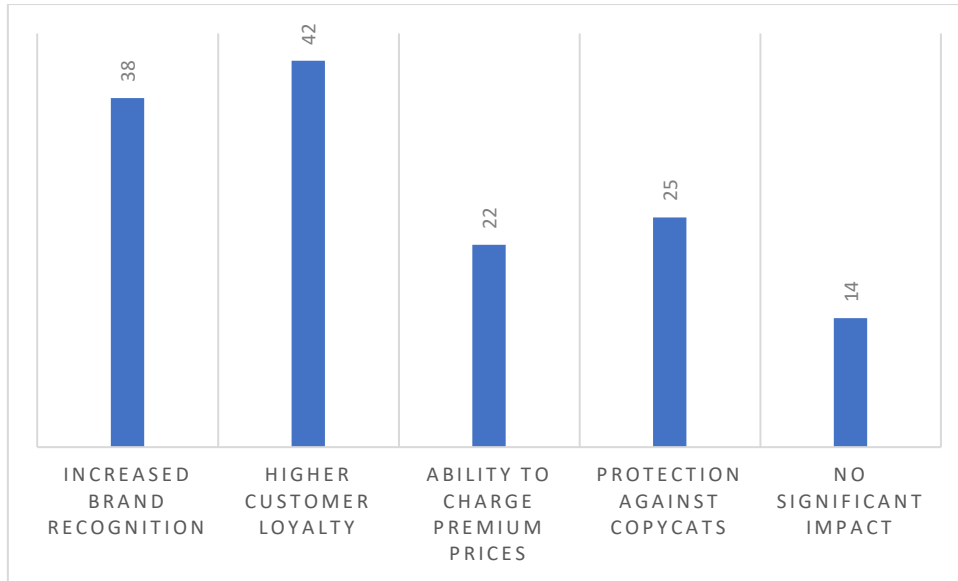


Figure 21: Impact of trademark protection on business

Table 19: Confidence regarding understanding of trademark laws and regulations

	Frequency	Percent
Not at all confident	3	3.3
Not very confident	17	18.5
Somewhat confident	49	53.3
Very confident	23	25.0
Total	92	100.0

It can be said from this outcome that lack of understanding regarding Trademark laws and regulations restrict small and medium size coffee retailers in Dublin to acquire IP rights to protect their brand names and logos.

Table 20: Most significant competitive advantages experienced due to trademark protection

	Frequency	Percent
Brand recognition	37	40.2
Customer loyalty	47	51.1
Market positioning	29	31.5
Legal protection against infringement	15	16.3
None	11	12.0

According to the table this has been identified that maximum respondents have given the opinion to the customer loyalty. This is true that the uniqueness and the trademark protection of the brand can help to attract more people in the business. The consumers can get a clear idea about the products of the specific companies. The protection of the trademark can also provide brand recognition to the company. As per the table and the frequency of the table this is considered that the protection of the trademark can help in market positioning and that can differentiate a brand with their competitors. According to some participants this can help to protect the company against the infringement of the trademarks.

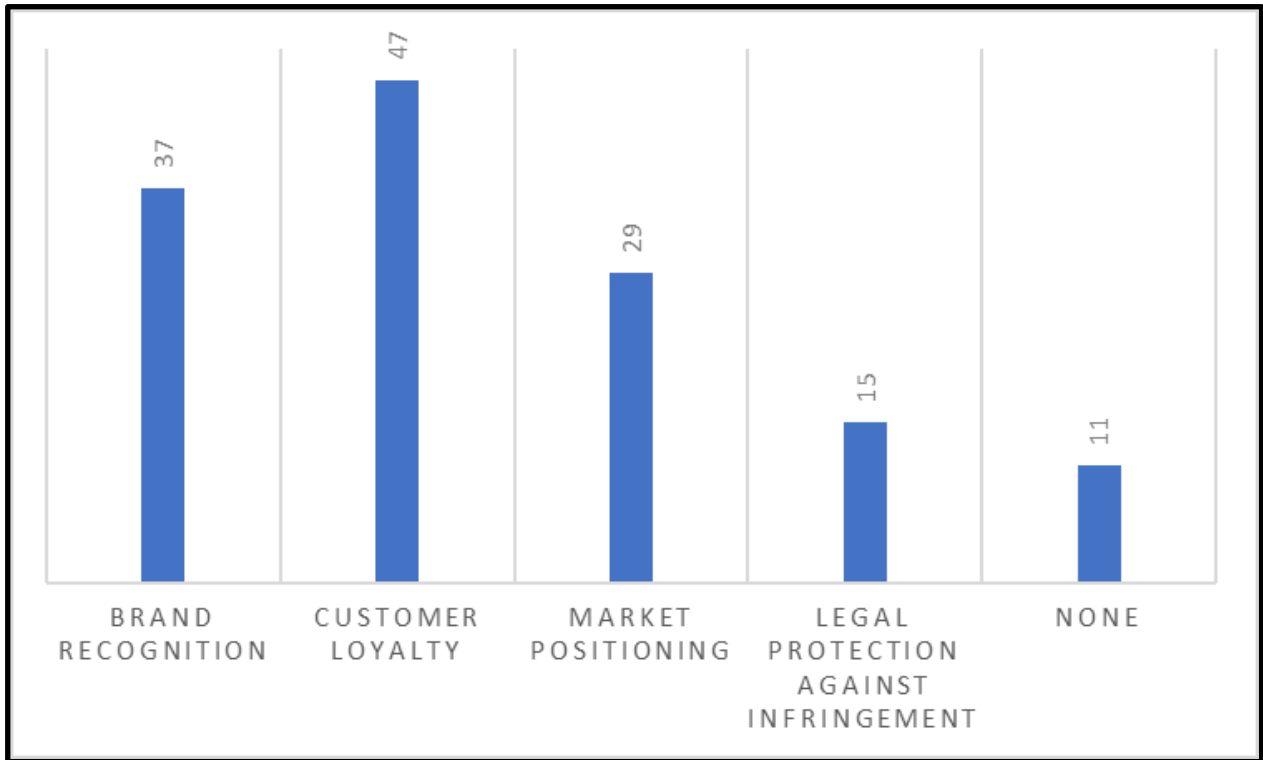


Figure 22: Most significant competitive advantages experienced due to trademark protection

Table 21: IP strategic decision-making enhances business's overall success

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	4	4.3
Neutral	23	25.0
Agree	36	39.1
Strongly Agree	29	31.5
Total	92	100.0

This has been discussed that the IP strategies are the most important part for the company that are helping the company to make it more strategically equipped. Most of the respondents have agreed to the motion that IP strategies can provide success to the businesses. The maximum participants have the positive answer for this question.

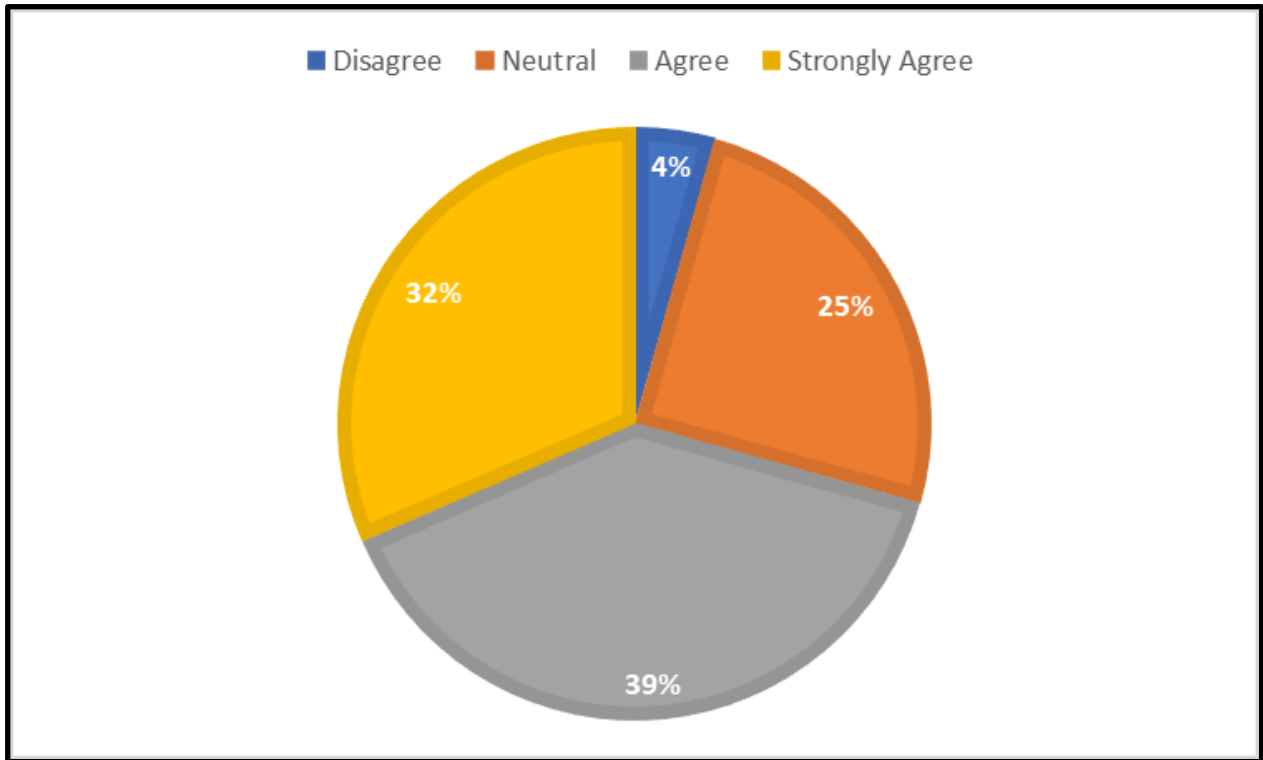


Figure 23: IP strategic decision-making enhances business's overall success

Table 22: Interest in receiving more information or training on trademark protection

	Frequency	Percent
Yes	49	53.3
No	33	35.9
Maybe	10	10.9
Total	92	100.0

The overall result of the test has indicated that the maximum retailers from the country have the interest to get the knowledge about this matter and 35.9% of respondents have no interest in getting the proper knowledge about the trademark protection. A few participants have no surety that they want to have the knowledge or not. Still, most of the number have the interest to get the actual knowledge about property rights.

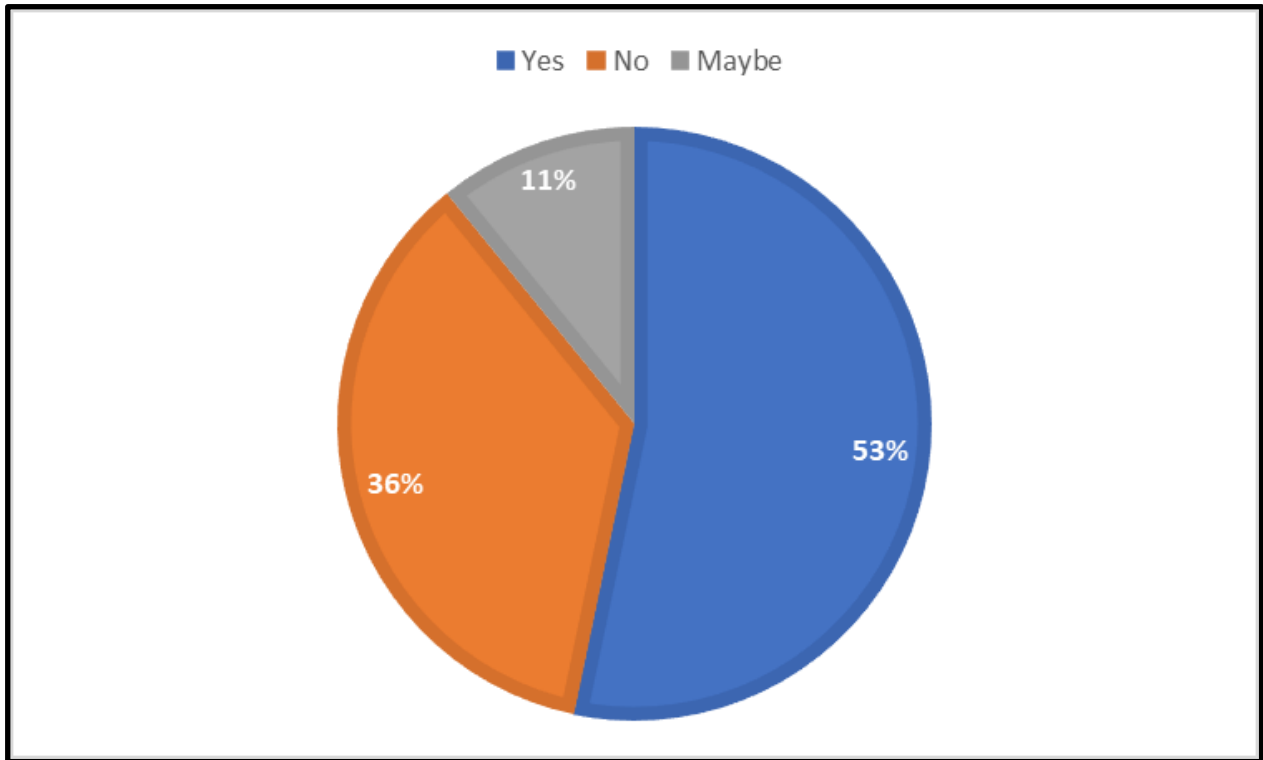


Figure 24; Interest in receiving more information or training on trademark protection

Table 23: Seek legal advice regarding trademark protection

	Frequency	Percent
No	21	22.8
Yes	71	77.2
Total	92	100.0

Maximum numbers of respondents have the opinion that they regularly seek legal advice. And a small number of participants have negative responses about the legal consultation in a regular interval. Legal consultation can help the retailers free from the legal hazards and gain knowledge about the property act.

4.3 Discussion

It is important to have experienced small and medium size coffee retailers to understand the importance that trademarks hold to them. SME coffee brands operating for a long period of

time in Dublin can portray how intellectual property, commonly known as trademarks, is impacting them in a highly competitive market. Hence, over 56% of respondents having experience between 3 and 5 years have helped to provide valuable insights on the chosen research topic. It is interesting to note that the majority of the coffee retailers chosen for the survey have less than 20 employees. This signifies that small and medium size enterprises have been chosen in this study. It was required since the focus of this research has been depicting the impact of trademark on small and medium size coffee retailers operating in the city of Dublin, Ireland.

The participation of coffee retailers belonging to rural areas in the survey has been beneficial to understand the challenges that they face, mostly because of the comparative business environment. The numbers clearly indicate that there is a strong awareness among small and medium size coffee retailers about the intellectual property of popularly known trademarks. This also means that a SME coffee retailer located in the city of Dublin values Trademark rights (JENN CHEN, 2018). This may be because this right comes with some benefits for them. These statistics presented in the chart signals that small and medium size coffee retailers in Dublin are emphasising a lot on acquiring Trademark rights to achieve comparative advantage in the market. With the use of such rights, they can acquire an edge over their competitors in the market.

It is evident from the data that small and medium size coffee retailers in Dublin are concerned more with acquiring trademark rights in Ireland. Also, there is a significant portion of coffee retailers who have Trademark rights for the European Union. However, a negligible percentage of coffee trailers have Trademark rights for the international level. It cannot be denied from this outcome that Trademark rights hold significant importance for small and medium size coffee retailers located in Dublin, Ireland. They understand that having Trademark rights can be helpful to survive in a comparative business environment. They can protect their unique coffee products with the use of IP rights (Department of Enterprise, 2019). It can be seen that majority have claimed that they found review of their Trademark rights once in every year. This means that small and medium size coffee retailers in Dublin can update their IP rights while protecting their unique coffee products in the country. Although, many have said that review of Trademark rights happens once in two or three years which can impact the coffee retailers. The outcome against this specific question indicates that most small and medium size coffee brands in Dublin wish to protect their brand names and logo with the use of Trademark rights.

Coffee brands also focus on protecting their packaging design by applying IP rights. This means that there are issues with the theft of business names in Ireland (Department of Enterprise, 2024). The data found so far makes it apparent that the issue of theft of brand names is prevalent in the country of Ireland. Most small and medium size coffee retailers wish to have Trademark rights to protect their brand names in the market. This also means that the brand names of popular coffee retailers may be misused by others to sell coffee products to earn money.

It has been evident that the cost of registration or maintenance for Trademark rights is an issue for small and medium size coffee retailers operating in Dublin, Ireland. It has also been found that there is a lack of knowledge about the process of acquiring Trademark rights among coffee retailers which can impede them from achieving competitive advantage in the market (Oireachtas, 2000). These statistics show the majority of the coffee retailers in Dublin are either expanding their businesses or considering doing the same. This reflects that small and medium size coffee retailers in Dublin wish to increase their sales and profitability in the long run. It can be said from this data that most small and medium sized coffee retailers in Dublin are focused on market demand and brand recognition as they intend to expand their businesses. Securing Trademark rights is not the primary consideration for such coffee retailers in the city.

Small and medium size coffee retailers in Dublin make consultations with legal experts occasionally on Trademark rights. This means that they give importance to their Trademark rights though they are not regular to review their rights. Coffee retailers in Dublin believe in legal steps to manage their trademarks. Less number of coffee retailers participate in discussions arranged by industry associations and partners with other businesses regarding Trademark management. This chart has shown that small and medium size coffee retailers in Dublin believe that it is important to collaborate with one another for effective management of Trademark rights.

Majority indicating that a Trademark right can help improve their business performances means that IP rights can help small and medium size coffee retailers to achieve comparative advantage in the market. They can protect their brand names and logo against misuse by others (Petty, 2008). Thus, small and medium size coffee brands can enhance their business growth. It is needless to say that small and medium size coffee retailers in Dublin can strengthen their business reputation as they acquire IP rights. This can promote customer loyalty which is necessary for businesses to sustain their revenue for a long period of time. It can be said from this outcome that lack of understanding regarding Trademark laws and regulations restrict

small and medium size coffee retailers in Dublin to acquire IP rights to protect their brand names and logos.

According to the table this has been identified that maximum respondents have given the opinion to the customer loyalty. This is true that the uniqueness and the trademark protection of the brand can help to attract more people in the business. The consumers can get a clear idea about the products of the specific companies. The protection of the trademark can also provide brand recognition to the company (Ghauri and Cateora, 2014). As per the table and the frequency of the table this is considered that the protection of the trademark can help in market positioning and that can differentiate a brand with their competitors. According to some participants this can help to protect the company against the infringement of the trademarks. This has been discussed that the IP strategies are the most important part for the company that are helping the company to make it more strategically equipped. Most of the respondents have agreed to the motion that IP strategies can provide success to the businesses. The maximum participants have the positive answer for this question.

The overall result of the test has indicated that the maximum retailers from the country have the interest to get the knowledge about this matter and 35.9% of respondents have no interest in getting the proper knowledge about the trademark protection. A few participants have no surety that they want to have the knowledge or not. Still, most of the number have the interest to get the actual knowledge about property rights. Maximum numbers of respondents have the opinion that they regularly seek legal advice. And a small number of participants have negative responses about the legal consultation in a regular interval. Legal consultation can help the retailers free from the legal hazards and gain knowledge about the property act.

4.4 Conclusion

The evaluation of the data has given the most specific results about the perceptions of the respondents. The respondents have given their perceptions about the trademark protection and maximum participants have a positive initiative to protect their trademark. The coffee retailers from the country have various challenges and the cost and maintenance challenge are the most important challenges that have been identified for the study. The coffee retailers are most frequent in taking consistency from the legal persons. The retailers are interested in taking the classes on trademark protection and intellectual property rights and the government has positive initiatives to create awareness through online courses.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Implications of findings for the research question

The current study is based on the trademark protection for the small and medium sized coffee retailers. The primary quantitative data analysis has been done for the study and 92 total respondents have been recruited for the study. Most of the participants have the experience of 3 to 5 years and the maximum participants have the knowledge about intellectual property rights. According to the evaluation of data this has been identified that a maximum number of 54 participants have registered their trademark. A number of 7 respondents have given the opinion that it is on processing and 31 have no registration. The result of the examination considered that maximum numbers of coffee retailers have the awareness of intellectual property rights. The retailers that are not aware of these rights should take suggestions from the retailers that have registered their trademark to protect their trademark (Trappey *et al.* 2021). Considering the geographic location of the trademark registration that has noticed that most of the retailer's 39 numbers are from Ireland only. 29 numbers are from the European Union and 6 are from international locations and that denotes that the retailers from Ireland have the positive initiative for registering the trademark.

Importance of the trademark protection is another important point that has been asked to the respondents and 31 participants have said that it is very much important for the small and medium sized coffee retailers. 39 among all the respondents have said that it is somewhat important and eleven of them have responded that it is not important. This result has considered that the maximum participants have a positive mind set about the trade mark protection (Flikkema and Man, 2021). Those that have no initiatives to protect the trademark may be affected with the intellectual property rights. As per the examination of data this has been considered that a number of 37 respondents have the good frequency of changing the trademark protection strategies. 26 participants have the initiative once in 2 to 3 years. 15 respondents have the opinion that they rarely (more than 3 years) change the strategy. The result has proved that the maximum respondents have the initiatives for innovative strategies for changing trademark protection frequently (Borah *et al.* 2023). Those who are not having the positive attitudes can be impacted with the expiry of the intellectual property rights.

This is noticed that most of the coffee retailers have the opinion that the business name should be the main aspect that has to be given importance in the intellectual property rights. A number of 46 participants stated that the logo of the business is important. 20 of them have responded for specific business names and some of them have responded for the packaging design. This is true that the business name is a trademark that has to be protected by the retailers (Heath and Mace, 2020). The design of the logo is also an important part of business that should be protected, that no other can use the same logo for the business. Trademark infringement is another challenge that is also faced by the coffee retailers. 50 respondents have the experience of trademark infringement that is creating confusion for the consumers to ensure the actual products (Beebe *et al.* 2022). Simultaneously 40 among all the participants do not have the experience of the trademark infringement. Maximum numbers of the coffee retailers are facing the challenge with copying the brand elements. A legal framework for protecting intellectual property is required. There are several challenges that are also impacting the small and medium sized coffee retailers. The first and foremost challenge is the cost of the registration and maintenance.

A number of 59 participants have the opinion that cost and maintenance of the registration is a challenge for small and medium sized retailers. 38 numbers of retailers have difficulty with the lack of knowledge for the entire process of the registration. This is a serious challenge for the retailers to have less knowledge about the act and process (Dhir *et al.* 2021). Time consumption is also a challenge for the retailers and some of the retailers have the difficulty in enforcing the property act. Expansion of the business is another valuable part for the coffee retailer and most of the retailers have the planning to expand the business. 26 out of 92 have actually expanded the business. 27 of them have the interest to expand the business, still they have no planning for expansion. This is important to have a positive mind set to expand the business and that can increase the popularity of the coffee retailers in the country (Padilla and Taullet, 2020). Business expansions also have consideration and there are different considerations such as market demand. 44 participants responded to market demands and 55 responded for financial resources. Market demand and financial resources both criteria have its importance to consider at the time of business expansion (Varadarajan, 2020). Some of the participants have said that the brand recognition is also a consideration for the business expansion.

Collaboration with the other businesses or legal experts are also important for the trademark protection. A maximum number of participants have said that they occasionally collaborate

with the legal experts regarding the trademark protection. 27 among all respondents have regular communication with the legal experts. The result is shocking and fewer coffee retailers have collaboration with the legal experts (Rhiney *et al.* 2021). The participants were asked for the type of collaboration and most of them have said that they have the legal collaborations for protecting the trademark. 33 numbers of respondents have partnerships with other companies and some of them are collaborating with external trademark management services. This has noticed that maximum coffee retailers have chosen legal consultation for the business (Nurullah, 2022). Most of the retailers have accepted that the collaborative services are very effective for business and collaborations can help the businesses to expand. A maximum number of businesses have the opinion that registering the trademark has improved the business performance and it enhances the customer loyalty (Cao *et al.* 2022). Simultaneously it increases the brand recognition among the consumers and the trademark recognition process has increased the confidence level of the retailers about laws and regulations (Treiblemaier and Garaus, 2023). Most of the respondents as per the result of evaluation are interested in training regarding trademark protection and online courses and seminars are the best ways that have been chosen by the participants that can provide a vast knowledge about trademark protection.

5.2 Contributions and limitations of research

The current study is the significant and relevant study in the context of business performance and protecting intellectual properties for the small and medium sized coffee retailers in Dublin Ireland. The research has contributed knowledge about the trademark protection and how the trademark protection acts can make the retailers more benefited with the intellectual property act. This is true that the protection of the trademarks such as business name, logo of the company and other aspects should be registered and protected with the intellectual property act (Gaikwad *et al.* 2020). Without this action the other companies can copy the brand name or the other business components for their business. This can be a difficulty for the consumers to identify the actual brand and authentic products. This whole research has its importance to contribute in discussing the significance of intellectual property protection. The limitation of the research is the time management for the data collection and analysis. The study has covered the whole Dublin and there are several small and medium sized coffee retailers. In a short time, the collection of participants for the survey has faced a problem. It can be more accurate to have more time in doing the survey work and that creates a limitation for the study.

5.3 Recommendations for practice

Recommendation 1 Increase awareness

Increasing awareness among the coffee retailers in Ireland and as per the study many retailers have less knowledge about the process for trademark protection. Online courses from the end of the government have the potential to make the retailers knowledgeable (Shaw *et al.* 2022). Simultaneously the workshops and meetings about the trademark protection can be the authentic sources to provide the knowledge to the retailers. Collaboration with other companies to make the partnerships and proper legal consultation is appropriate to gain the knowledge about the intellectual property protection and its registration process. According to the responses of the respondents many retailers have least information about the law and acts. The legal consultation in a frequent interval can enrich the knowledge of the coffee retailers in Ireland.

Recommendation 2 Cost effective registration

Cost effective registration is required for the small and medium sized coffee retailers in the country. The small and medium sized coffee retailers have a low strength of employees and financial background. The government should take the initiative for the small and medium sized retailers to register their trademark with a reasonable amount (Widiastuti *et al.* 2020). According to the study this has been identified that maximum respondents have complained about the cost and maintenance of the trademark registration. This is a difficulty for the small sized coffee retailers to bear the charges for the trademark registration. New initiatives from the government can help the retailers to register their trademarks and it can grow the interests of the retailers who have least interests about intellectual property protection.

Recommendation 3 Uniqueness in trademark

The significance of the trademark registration has been discussed and simultaneously the retailers also need a change in their practices. The coffee retailers should have the initiative to make unique trademarks that are not similar with the other companies (Kim and Park, 2021). This can cause an operational hazard. Similarity with the other companies can create a challenge for the intellectual property act. Innovative ideas and vast research should be done from the end of the company to avoid the similarity. There is a possible chance for the similarity

of the logos for the companies. Research and innovation within the management of the coffee retailers can help to make the trademarks more distinctive and unique from other companies.

5.4 Recommendation for future research

The research that has been done based on the trademark protection for the small and medium sized coffee retailers in Dublin, Ireland has the significance to provide a vast knowledge about the importance of trademark protection. The study has an elaborate discussion about the intellectual property act and other relevant points. The collection of data from the participants helped the research to come towards the specific outcomes that met the objectives of the study. However, the study has been finished with successful considerations, still the study has its future scope to research on other locations such as the UK. The UK market of UK is broader than Ireland and the future research on the UK market can give the idea about the perceptions of UK coffee retailers regarding the trademark protection. The present study has adopted primary quantitative data analysis. In future the study can adopt the secondary qualitative data analysis and the data can be collected from the authentic documented sources. The documented and latest sources for the study can enrich the study to meet the aims and objectives. The present study has used IBM SPSS tool for analysing the quantitative data and in future the research can be done through thematic analysis.

5.5 Final conclusions and reflections

5.5.1 Final conclusion

The research regarding the importance of the trademark protection for the small and medium sized coffee retailers in Ireland has the most significant outcomes. The aims and objectives have stated in the introduction part of the research. This part has discussed the global conception of intellectual property protection. Simultaneously the national perception of Ireland has also been discussed in this chapter. Several definitions of terms have been presented such as trademarks, trade secrets, geographical indications, patents and copyrights. These definitions help to know about the terms that are associated with the trademark protection and authenticity of the businesses. The literature review chapter has the discussion about the border discussion about the terms that have been defined in the first chapter. The literature is taken from the authentic sources and latest sources that are published. There are various real examples of successful trademark defences. The companies such as Starbucks, Xing bake coffee, apple, Xiaomi, Bacardi and Havana club. Real examples of intellectual property defence

have provided a vast knowledge about the copyrights and how the companies have maintained their authenticity.

The methodology part of the study has the most important role in the research and a positivism philosophy has been chosen for research. Deductive approach and explanatory design of the study has moved the study towards quantitative data collection. Simple random sampling has been used to recruit the participants for the research. Simple random sampling helps the researcher to collect a 92 number of people among a large number of the population for a survey. The respondents all are related with the coffee shops in Ireland and the survey has been conducted through a questionnaire. The responses depending upon the perceptions of the participants have been considered as the raw data of the study. IBM SPSS tool has been used to evaluate the quantitative data. The questionnaire has covered numerous aspects about the trademark protection. The questions are about the awareness of the trademark protections to the training about the trademark protections and its best sources. According to the study this has been considered that the maximum coffee retailers from the country have the awareness about the trademark protection. Simultaneously numerous retailers have no idea about the process of intellectual property law and acts. Some of them have the problem with the cost and maintenance challenge to register the trademarks.

5.5.2 Reflection

According to the whole research that has been done I have got the idea about the trademark protection. I have learned the significance of the trademark protection for a business and trademark protection can help the businesses to keep its authenticity. Through the examination of data, I have considered that the trademark protection can increase the customer loyalty and brand recognition. Protection of intellectual property is a main aspect for the business expansion and in the future, I have the planning for a coffee shop and I have got the knowledge of how the small properties can protect their intellectual property to expand the business. I must admire the approach of the research that has provided awareness about the trademark protections and its significance. In the last part of the study, I have suggested several strategies and suggestions for both the retailers and the government of the country. The practices can enhance the knowledge of the retailers and the retailers should practice the uniqueness of the brand names and logos.

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APPENDIX - I

Questionnaire

Introduction:

The purpose of this survey is to investigate the importance of protecting trademarks for small to medium-sized coffee retailers in Dublin, Ireland. Your responses will help us understand the role of trademarks, collaborative management processes, and the impact of IP strategic decision-making on competitive advantages. This survey is anonymous, and all responses will be kept confidential.

Section 1: Demographic Information

1. How many years has your coffee shop been in operation?
 - 0-2 years
 - 3-5 years
 - 6-10 years
 - More than 10 years
2. How many employees does your coffee shop have?
 - 1-5
 - 6-10
 - 11-20
 - More than 20
3. What is the primary location of your coffee shop?
 - Urban
 - Suburban
 - Rural

Section 2: Role of trademark in protecting business

4. Are you familiar with the concept of intellectual property rights?
 - Yes
 - No
 - Somewhat
5. Does your coffee shop have a registered trademark?
 - Yes
 - No
 - In the process of registering

6. If you have a trademark, where is it registered?
- Ireland only
 - European Union
 - International
 - Not applicable
7. How important do you consider trademark protection for your business?
- Very important
 - Somewhat important
 - Not important
 - Unsure
8. How often do you review or update your trademark protection strategies?
- Regularly (at least once a year)
 - Occasionally (every 2-3 years)
 - Rarely (more than 3 years)
 - Never
9. What aspects of your business do you believe are most important to protect with a trademark? (Select all that apply)
- Business name
 - Logo
 - Specific product names
 - Packaging design
 - Other (please specify)
10. Have you ever experienced trademark infringement or copying of your brand elements?
- Yes
 - No
 - Unsure
11. What challenges have you faced or anticipate facing in protecting your trademark? (Select all that apply)
- Cost of registration and maintenance
 - Lack of knowledge about the process
 - Difficulty in enforcing rights
 - Time-consuming procedures

- Other (please specify)

Section 3: Collaborative management of trademark

12. Have you ever considered expanding your business?

- Yes, already expanded
- Yes, planning to expand
- No, but interested
- No, not interested

13. What factors are most important when considering business expansion? (Select all that apply)

- Market demand
- Financial resources
- Brand recognition
- Trademark protection
- Other (please specify)

14. Do you collaborate with other businesses or legal experts to manage your trademarks?

- Yes, regularly
- Yes, occasionally
- No, we handle it internally
- No, we do not manage trademarks collaboratively

15. What forms of collaboration do you engage in for trademark management? (Select all that apply)

- Legal consultation
- Partnership with other businesses
- Use of external trademark management services
- Participation in industry associations
- None
- Other (Please specify)

16. How effective do you find collaborative trademark management for your business?

- Very Effective
- Effective
- Neutral
- Less Effective
- Not Effective

Section 4: Impact of IP Strategic Decision-Making and Competitive Advantages

17. Do you believe having a registered trademark has or would improve your business performance?

- Strongly agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

18. How has or would trademark protection impact your business? (Select all that apply)

- Increased brand recognition
- Higher customer loyalty
- Ability to charge premium prices
- Protection against copycats
- No significant impact
- Other (please specify)

19. How confident are you in your understanding of trademark laws and regulations?

- Very confident
- Somewhat confident
- Not very confident
- Not at all confident

20. What are the most significant competitive advantages you have experienced due to trademark protection? (Select all that apply)

- Brand recognition
- Customer loyalty
- Market positioning
- Legal protection against infringement
- None
- Other (Please specify)

21. Do you believe that IP strategic decision-making enhances your business's overall success?

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly Disagree

22. Would you be interested in receiving more information or training on trademark protection for small businesses?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

23. What type of resources would be most helpful for learning about trademark protection?
(Select all that apply)

- Online courses
- Workshops or seminars
- Written guides or manuals
- Consultation with legal experts
- Other (please specify)

24. Have you sought legal advice regarding trademark protection?

- Yes
- No

APPENDIX - II

PLAIN LANGUAGE STATEMENT

Introduction to the Research Study

Research Study Title: investigate the importance of protecting trademarks for small to medium coffee retailers in Ireland, with special reference on Dublin

University: Griffith College, Graduate Business School.

Principal Investigator: Dr Garrett Ryan.

Researcher Name: Abhijith George

Email: abhijithgeorge89@gmail.com

II. Details of what involvement in the Research Study will require

This project involves taking part in semi-structured interviews and or completion of a survey. The interviews/survey responses will be recorded, and seek to gather information on your experience of running your coffee shop business with or without the use of trademark as a edge in the competitive market. Questions are directed towards your thoughts on how much you understand about the benefit of trademarks in a competitive market . I estimate the interviews/survey will take no longer than 15 minutes to complete.

III. Potential risks to participants from involvement in the Research Study (if greater than that encountered in everyday life) I do not anticipate any risk to participants as a result of participation in this Research Study.

IV. Benefits (direct or indirect) to participants from involvement in the Research Study

The objective of this Research Study is to gain new knowledge that will enable understand the importance of trademark in a entrepreneur venture like small to medium coffee retail industry. This study may, therefore, be of benefit to you by providing you with the opportunity to contribute to body of knowledge on Intellectual property especially trademark so that you and or society may benefit.

V. Advice as to arrangements to be made to protect the confidentiality of data, including that confidentiality of information provided is subject to legal limitations

Every effort is made to ensure the confidentiality of the participant. Participant names will not be recorded, as all participants will be assigned a code. Where used, recorded interviews/survey data will be downloaded to a password-controlled computer, typed transcripts/survey results are held within password-controlled documents. Participant biographical details and or mention of other persons will be omitted in the final report. Confidentiality of information provided is subject to legal limitations.

VI. Advice as to whether or not data is to be destroyed after a minimum period

Audio tapes/Survey data will be destroyed on the successful completion of this master's degree in full compliance with GDPR regulations.

VII. Statement that involvement in the Research Study is voluntary

Involvement in this Research Study is voluntary. Participants who decide to take part may withdraw from the Research Study at any point. There will be no penalty for withdrawing before all stages of the Research Study are complete..

If participants have concerns about this study and wish to contact an independent person, please contact:

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