

# Assessment of the Consumption of Various Types of Drinks in Trinidad:

## THE CASE OF ENERGY DRINKS



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### Definitions

Carbonated energy drinks are beverages which contain stimulants such as caffeine, herbal extracts and sugar/sugar substitutes. These products are not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration, and therefore have no restrictions on the amount of added stimulants. (Ward 2009).

Traditional energy drinks – Beverages such as tea, coffee and cocoa which contain natural caffeine makes them suitable energy drinks. These drinks produce a pure and natural energy boost for the consumer. (Ohanessian 2009)

### Introduction

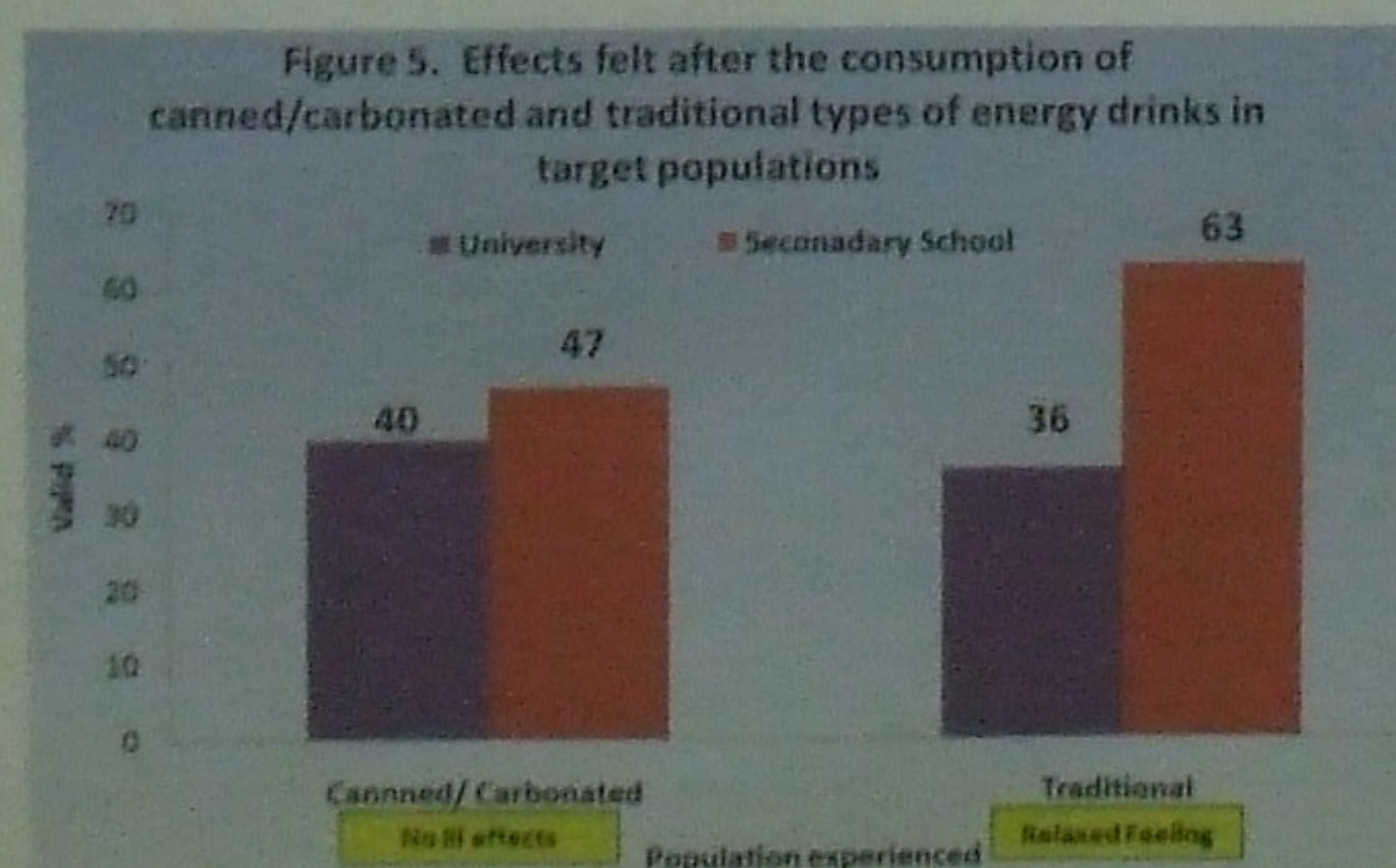
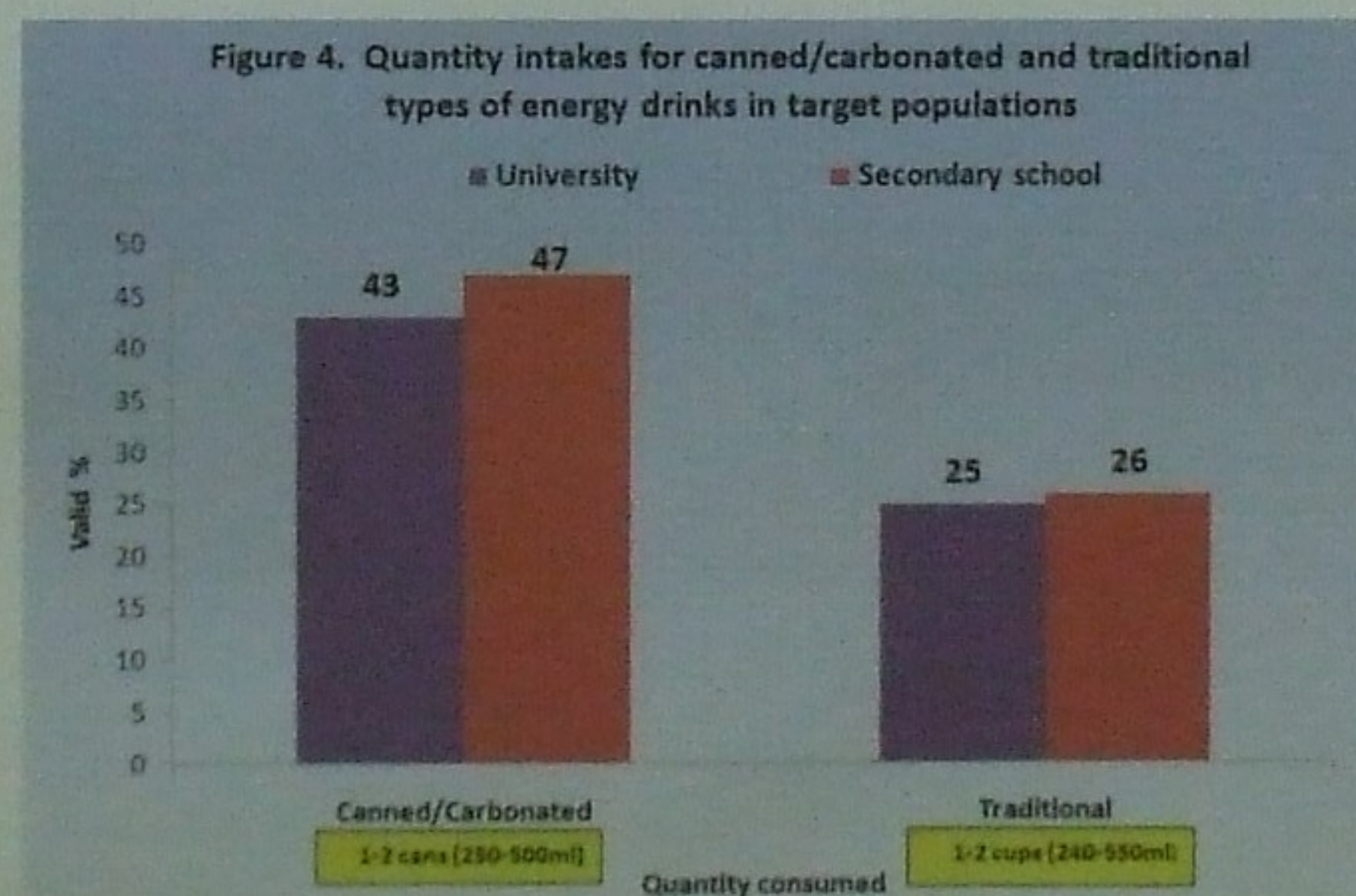
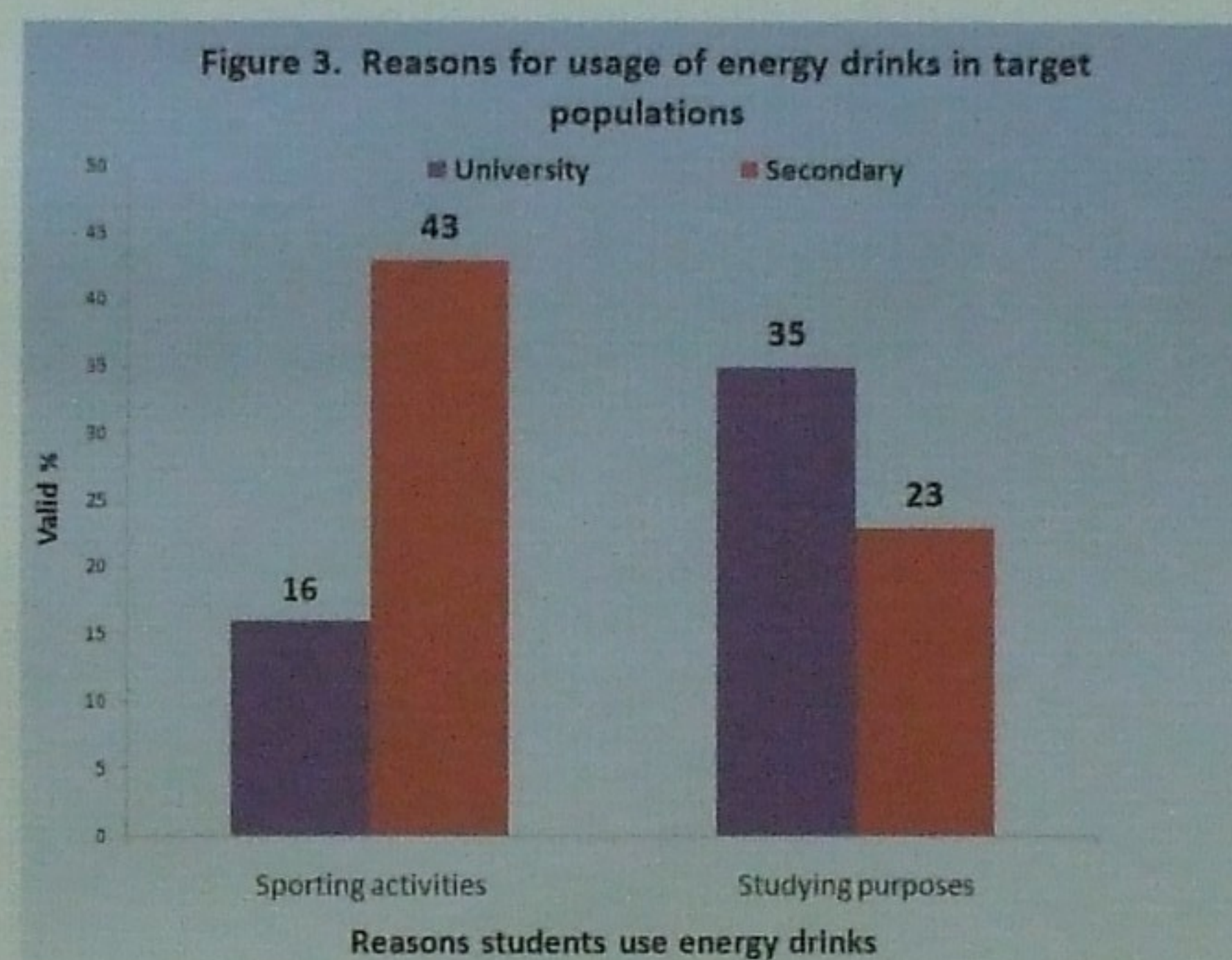
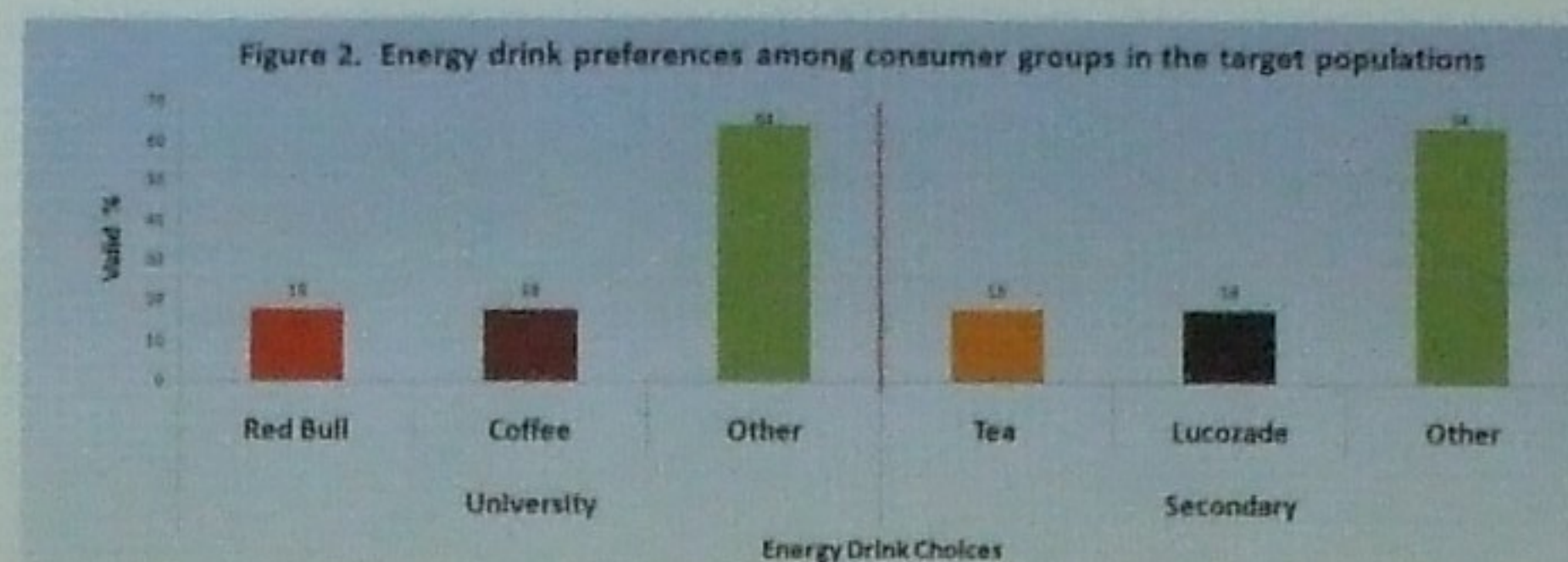
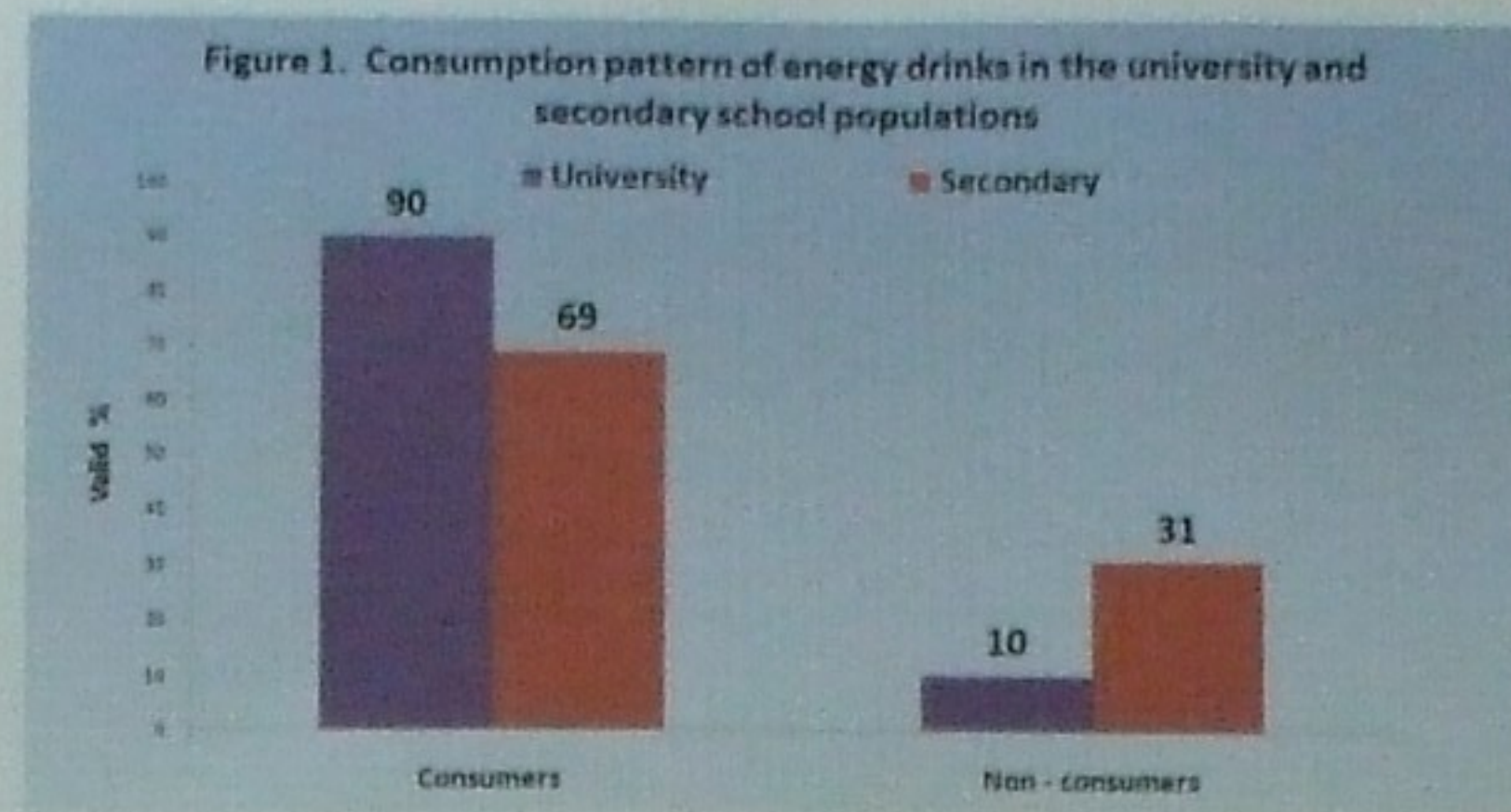
The availability of energy drinks in Trinidad and Tobago has increased as studies show that they are heavily marketed to young adults for their appealing steroid-like effects. (Heneman, Karrie et al 2007). Additional studies have identified mixed reactions, such as, increased alertness, improved memory and in some cases physiological effects (heart palpitations, headaches & nausea). (Malinauskas, et al 2007) Therefore the purpose of this study is to investigate energy drink consumption patterns, as well as the factors that drive consumption at the university and secondary school level.

### Objectives

- To determine how many students from the university and secondary school populations consume energy drinks.
- To investigate the preferences for different types of energy drinks among the university and secondary school sample populations.
- To determine on which occasions students use energy drinks.
- To determine the quantity of canned and traditional energy drinks consumed in each of the study's populations
- To determine the reactions consumers feel soon after they consume canned/carbonated energy drinks and traditional energy drinks.

### Methodology

A survey was conducted among (70) students of the University of the West Indies Trinidad and (51) students in a Form 6 class at High School (pre-university).



### Results

- Consumption Pattern: An estimated 90% of students in the University population are consumers of energy drinks compared to 69% in the secondary school.
- Preferred types of Energy Drink: 'Red Bull' and 'Coffee', each accounted for 18% of the university sample population. While 'Tea' and 'Lucozade' were mostly favored by secondary school students.
- Reason for Consumption: It was found that 43% of the secondary school students consume energy drinks for sporting activities. Whereas 35% of university students used energy drinks for studying.
- Canned Quantity Intake (1-2 cans/week): The level of consumption in the secondary school and the university were 47% and 43% respectively.
- Effect after Consumption: 'No difference in energy levels', were experienced by 40% of university and 47% in the secondary school populations.

Traditional Quantity Intake (1-2cups/week): Consumption in the university was reported at 25% while the secondary school population reported 26%.

A 'Relaxed feeling', was felt by 36% at the university and 63% in the secondary school when traditional energy drinks were consumed.

Negative physiological effects experienced by: University students: Abnormal heart beat (9%), Fatigue (5%), and Dizziness (2%).

Secondary students: Abnormal heart beat (6%), Fatigue (6%) and Dizziness (3%).



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