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**Popular article****Brewing Global Success: Market Penetration Strategies for Indian Coffee****Bharath, V.***M. Sc. Scholar, Department of Agricultural Extension, University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore- 560 065**\*Corresponding author: [bharathvchudamani2499@gmail.com](mailto:bharathvchudamani2499@gmail.com)**Received: 24/06/2025**Published:28/06/2025***ABSTRACT**

India, the seventh-largest coffee producer globally, cultivates premium Arabica and Robusta beans under unique shade-grown systems in the southern states. Despite its rich heritage and distinct flavour profile, Indian coffee remains underrepresented in global markets compared to leaders like Brazil and Vietnam. Coffee exports for FY 2024–25 show strong demand from countries such as Italy and Germany, with rising unit values indicating growing appreciation for Indian beans. Strategic focus areas include building a global brand identity for Indian coffee, promoting value-added and specialty products, targeting emerging markets, and leveraging digital platforms for direct-to-consumer sales. Additional strategies involve public-private partnerships, sustainable farming practices, collaborations with global coffee chains, and farmer capacity building. Coffee tourism and data-driven export intelligence further enhance global visibility and competitiveness. Addressing supply chain inefficiencies, quality inconsistencies, and limited global awareness is essential. With coordinated efforts, India can transform its coffee sector into a globally recognized and premium export industry.

**Keywords-** Indian Coffee, Coffee Exports, Marketing strategies.

**INTRODUCTION**

India, the seventh-largest coffee producer globally, boasts a rich coffee heritage, producing premium varieties like Arabica and Robusta mainly from the southern states—Karnataka, Kerala, and Tamil Nadu. Indian coffee, grown under the shade of forest canopies and intercropped with spices like pepper and cardamom, offers a unique flavour profile that appeals to global palates. Yet, despite this competitive edge, Indian coffee still lags behind major exporters like Brazil, Vietnam, and Colombia in global market share.

In India, Different coffee plantations were established in the 18th century. The Indian coffee industry has made a distinct mark over time on the global coffee map. All coffees in India are

cultivated beneath a “well-defined two-tier shadow canopy of evergreen legumes,” which is unique in the world. (VA, N.A. and Panakaje, N., 2022.)

In today’s competitive global landscape, merely growing quality coffee is not enough. It’s essential to adopt smart, sustainable, and targeted market penetration strategies to expand India’s coffee export footprint. Let’s explore key global market penetration strategies for Indian coffee, blending innovation, branding, trade policy, and sustainability.

**Table:1.** Exports of coffee from India by countries- FY 2024/2025\*

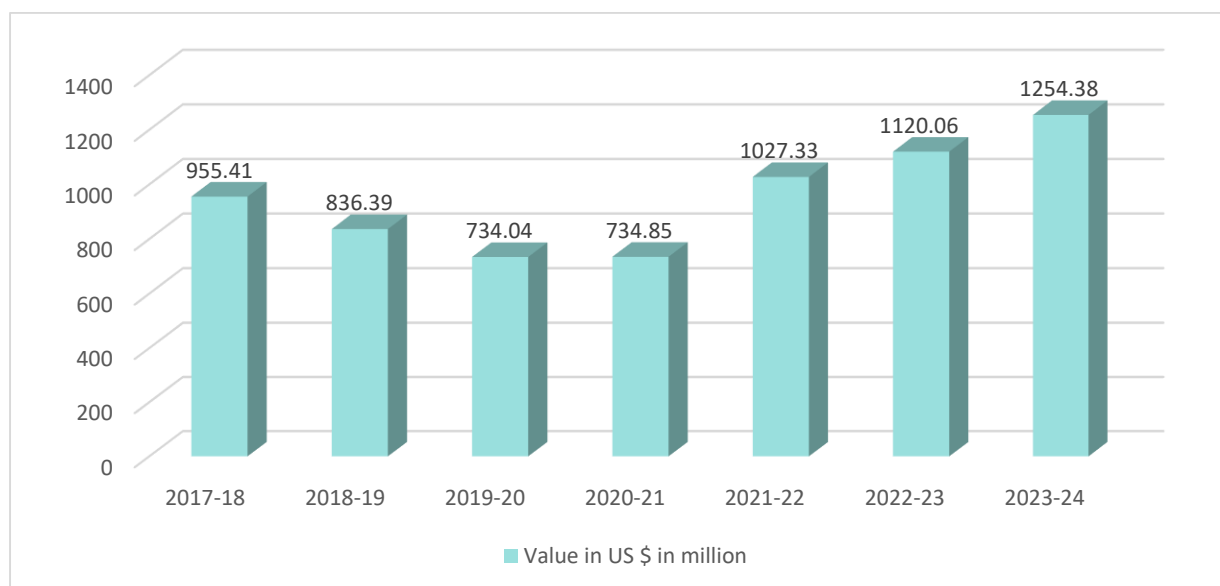
Sl. No.	Destination	Quantity GBE (In MT)	Percentage to total	Value in Lakhs	Unit value/ Tonne	US \$ (In Mn)
01	Italy	28,363	18.41	1,00,980	3,56,026	121.05
02	Germany	22,313	14.48	82,338	3,69,017	98.69
03	Russian Federation	9,262	6.01	26,771	2,89,038	32.08
04	Belgium	9,007	5.85	32,678	3,62,797	39.15
05	United Arab Emirates	8,114	5.27	28,246	3,48,129	33.86
06	Turkey	4,752	3.08	11,256	2,36,890	13.49
07	Netherlands	4,748	3.08	16,946	3,56,942	20.31
08	Libya	3,594	2.33	12,507	3,47,946	14.99
09	U.S.A.	3,582	2.32	13,207	3,68,703	15.83
10	Poland	3,242	2.10	9,476	2,92,266	11.36

\* Based on export permits up to 31.07.2024, (GBE- Green bean equivalent)

Source- Coffee Board, 2024.

India's coffee exports in FY 2024–25 (up to July 2024) were led by Italy and Germany, with Europe dominating in both volume and value. High unit prices in Germany and the USA suggest strong demand for premium or specialty coffee. The UAE, Russia, and Libya represent key non-European markets with consistent demand. Emerging markets like Turkey and Poland offer growth potential despite lower volumes. A dual export strategy—focusing on volume in traditional markets and value in premium ones—can enhance earnings. Emphasizing quality, traceability, and branding could further boost India's position in global coffee trade.

**Fig. 1:** Export Earnings of India from Coffee by Countries – FY 2017-18 to 2023-2024



\*FY - Financial year (April to March). Includes re-exports,

Source- Coffee Board, 2024.

Fig. 1 indicated that the value export earnings of India from Coffee by countries, the value of these exports have seen a significant rise from 955.41 million US dollars to 1254.38 million US Dollars, demonstrating a CAGR of 4.56 per cent during the period 2017-18 to 2023-24. This trend not only reflects not only an increase in the volume of exports but also an enhanced unit value of coffee, indicating their growing economic importance in India’s export earnings.

**1. Strengthening Brand Identity: "Indian Coffee" as a Global Brand**

A major hurdle for Indian coffee on the global stage is the lack of strong brand recognition. Brazilian or Colombian coffee is a household name in many parts of the world, while Indian coffee remains relatively obscure.

**Strategy-**

- Build a national brand identity
- Promote 'Indian Coffee' as a premium, exotic, and sustainable brand, highlighting its origin, biodiversity, and unique cultivation methods.
- Use Geographical Indication (GI) tags like Monsoon Malabar, Coorg Arabica, and Bababudangiri beans to create product differentiation.
- Launch a "Coffee India" campaign in international markets, similar to the "Incredible India" tourism campaign, showcasing heritage, aroma, and sustainability.

**2. Product Diversification and Innovation**

Consumers across the world are increasingly interested in specialty and value-added coffee products, from cold brews and capsules to coffee-based skincare and chocolates.

### **Strategy-**

- Invest in product innovation
- Encourage value addition at source—ready-to-drink coffee, coffee concentrates, and roasted & ground retail packs.
- Foster partnerships between farmers and startups for developing coffee-infused beauty products, wellness teas, and gourmet items.
- Explore organic and fair-trade certifications, catering to health-conscious and ethically driven consumers in markets like the EU and USA.

### **3. Expanding Presence in Emerging Markets**

While traditional markets like the United States of America, Germany, and Italy are saturated, emerging markets in Asia and Africa offer huge untapped potential.

#### **Strategy-**

- Target emerging economies focus on countries like South Korea, China, the UAE, South Africa and Scandinavian countries, where coffee consumption is growing.
- Promote Indian coffee at trade expos, food & beverage fairs, and cultural events in these regions.
- Offer tailored product portfolios based on regional taste preferences—for instance, flavoured coffees in East Asia and instant blends in Africa.

### **4. Strengthening Digital and E-Commerce Channels**

The global shift towards online purchasing has opened up vast opportunities for direct-to-consumer exports.

#### **Strategy-**

- Partner with international e-commerce platforms like Amazon, Alibaba, and Etsy to sell Indian coffee to global customers.
- Support small and mid-size coffee entrepreneurs in India to build D2C (Direct to Consumer) export brands with global shipping.
- Use social media influencers, baristas, and YouTubers to promote Indian coffee as a lifestyle choice.

### **5. Public-Private Partnerships and Government Support**

Government initiatives play a crucial role in global trade expansion. India's Coffee Board and agencies like APEDA (Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority) have a pivotal role.

**Strategy-**

- Policy-level interventions
- Simplify export procedures, reduce red tape, and provide digital tools for registration, licensing, and logistics.
- Expand financial support for branding, packaging, and certification costs under schemes like Market Access Initiative (MAI).
- Provide export incentives to MSMEs and cooperatives producing high-quality coffee.

**6. Quality Enhancement and Sustainable Practices**

Global buyers increasingly demand traceability, sustainability, and ethical sourcing.

**Strategy-**

- Invest in certification and traceability
- Encourage farmers and exporters to obtain Rainforest Alliance, UTZ, Fair Trade, and USDA Organic certifications.
- Use blockchain and QR code traceability to assure consumers about origin, farmer welfare, and environmental compliance.
- Conduct training programs for farmers on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), residue management, and biodiversity protection.

**7. Collaborating with Global Coffee Chains**

International coffee chains like Starbucks, Costa Coffee, and Tim Hortons play a dominant role in shaping consumer preferences.

**Strategy-**

- B2B partnerships with coffee chains
- Collaborate with global chains to feature Indian blends in their menus and sell Indian-origin beans in their stores.
- Position India as a premium source for specialty and estate-grown coffee, through consistent quality and branding.
- Offer white-label roasting partnerships for smaller global roasters who want ethical sourcing with quality.

**8. Skill Development and Farmer Training**

Global competitiveness starts at the farm. Training farmers on international quality requirements and post-harvest handling is crucial.

**Strategy-**

- Upskill the coffee value chain
- Launch capacity-building programs in collaboration with universities, NGOs, and Agri-tech startups.
- Provide hands-on training in coffee cupping, processing, roasting, and packaging aimed at export standards.
- Develop cluster-based models where farmers can access shared infrastructure and expertise.

**9. Promoting Coffee Tourism and Agri-Culture Exports**

Coffee tourism is a growing trend. India can use its scenic coffee plantations in Coorg, Chikmagalur, and Wayanad to boost global visibility.

**Strategy-**

- Research by Pambudi *et al.* (2018) highlights the importance of agrotourism in showcasing natural wealth and cultural heritage. Integrating agriculture with tourism is essential for economic growth of the community in regions as well as benefits for local ecology.
- Promote eco-resorts and homestays in coffee plantations to attract global tourists and influencers.
- Use tourism to promote souvenir packs, coffee-tasting kits, and experiential gifting for global travellers.
- Build coffee museums, festivals, and barista contests that draw international attention and improve cultural branding.

**10. Data-Driven Export Intelligence**

Many small producers lack access to real-time market data and buyer insights.

**Strategy-**

- Build market intelligence platforms
- Create digital dashboards with export trends, international demand forecasts, pricing alerts, and trade policies.
- Encourage exporters to use AI-driven analytics to identify niche buyers, adapt pricing strategies, and forecast demand.
- Promote coffee export incubation centres that guide new exporters through the entire process with data support.

**Challenges to Overcome**

- Fragmented supply chains and middlemen reduce value for farmers.
- Inconsistent quality due to climatic variations and limited post-harvest tech.
- Low awareness among global consumers about Indian coffee's unique offerings.

- Trade barriers and stringent phytosanitary norms in certain regions.

## **CONCLUSION:**

### A Global brew with local roots

India's journey toward becoming a top-tier coffee exporter depends on its ability to blend tradition with innovation. By combining strong branding, value addition, technology, and strategic diplomacy, Indian coffee can unlock immense potential in the global marketplace.

What's needed is a coordinated push involving farmers, exporters, government bodies, startups, and international partners. The global palate is evolving, and the world is ready to savour India's unique, flavourful coffee-if we serve it right.

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