

Z-Generation's Perception on Surabaya Traditional Food

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ABSTRACT

One's perception of food drives a person to choose, use, or consume the food that he/she prefers. The researchers intended to determine how the Z-generation perceives traditional Surabaya food in modern society. This research focuses on Z-generation dwellings in Surabaya, specifically targeting freshman students enrolled in the second semester of the culinary program at Surabaya State University. The investigation took eight months and was conducted in Surabaya City, which is known for its abundance of traditional food. The data collection approach used in this study employed questionnaires distributed through a Google form with 133 respondents. The findings indicate that availability, advertising, image, and diversity both partially and simultaneously have positive and significant effects on students' decisions to purchase traditional Surabaya food products. The advertising component has the biggest influence at 0.24 points. However, advertising was the most influential factor, highlighting the importance of modern marketing strategies for promoting traditional foods.

Keywords: *purchasing decision, traditional food, Z-generation.*

1. Introduction

Traditional food is often defined as food that reflects the characteristics of a region and the values within that region (Adiasih and Brahmana, 2015). Traditional food in Surabaya such as Rawon, Lontong Balap, Rujak Cingur, Tahu Tek, and so forth, are not yet considered rare but needs to be anticipated to prevent this distinctive cuisine from being eroded by modern food. The development of modern food itself is not exempt from the contributions of various parties, including the younger generation (Z-generation). The Z-generation, born after 1997 and growing up in the Internet era (Barak, 2020), plays a crucial role by innovating traditional foods so that they can compete with modern food. The Z-generation in Surabaya also needs to preserve traditional food in Surabaya so that this type of food is not forgotten. Moreover, the Z-generation can contribute to both producers and consumers of Surabaya's traditional food. Currently, teenagers often consider traditional food not interesting and classy enough, while traditional food stalls are often abandoned because they are perceived as less comfortable.

Perception is a process preceded by sensation, which is the stimulus received by an individual through their senses (Pinaryo, 2014). An individual's perception of food refers to thoughts that underlie their choice, use, or consumption of the desired type of food. Several factors influence an individual's perception of food consumption and purchase, such as availability, advertising, image, and product diversity. Derhami (2013) defines availability as an effort to consistently and efficiently meet the needs and expectations of consumers.

Furthermore, Susanto's (2014) findings indicate that advertising and pricing influence purchasing decisions. Both variables had a positive impact on purchasing decisions. This suggests that a business unit must engage in advertising or promotions to make its products known to many. Another factor that influences purchasing decisions is image. According to Kotler (2002), an image cannot be implanted in a consumer's mind overnight or disseminated through a single medium; instead, it must be conveyed through every available means of communication and continually disseminated. Significantly, product diversity can also enhance satisfaction levels and attract buyers (Safitri, 2017). This aligns with Tumbel et al. (2015), indicating that product diversity and quality significantly impact purchasing decisions to capture a large market share. Perceptions of product quality influence the frequency of visits to coffee shops (Ayunintyas et al. 2022). Product quality, price, and promotion had a positive and significant impact on consumer satisfaction at the Nasi Bebek Buma Restaurant, Perintis Kemerdekaan Branch, in which the promotion variable was the most dominant in influencing consumer satisfaction at the restaurant (Putri et al., 2022).

This study sought to delve into the perception of traditional Surabaya food among the Z-generation, employing multiple linear regression analysis to understand the influence of various factors. We explored how factors such as availability, advertising, image, and product diversity shape the Z-generation's perception of traditional Surabaya cuisine. By utilising regression analysis, we aim to quantify the extent to which these independent variables impact the perception of traditional Surabaya food among the Z-generation. This methodology allowed us to provide nuanced insights into the intricate relationship between these factors and the perception of traditional culinary heritage. Such insights are crucial for informing strategies aimed at preserving and promoting traditional Surabaya food in the face of modernisation trends, thereby ensuring the continued appreciation and enjoyment of this cultural heritage by future generations. Details of the methodology used to elicit these relationships are explained in the subsequent section.

2. Methods

The study was conducted over a period of eight months at the Faculty of Engineering, Culinary Program, State University of Surabaya (UNESA). It was designed as quantitative research with a focus on analysing the Z-generation's perception of traditional Surabaya food. Data were collected through questionnaires distributed to Z-generation individuals in Surabaya. The questionnaire was divided into two sections: the first gathered personal information, and the second explored the variables of availability, advertising, brand image, and product diversity. Responses were gauged on a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5, with 1 signifying 'strongly disagree' and 5 signifying 'strongly agree'. The collected data were then analysed using multiple linear regression with Stata 17 software. It reveals not only the relationship, but also quantifies their strength and direction. The regression equation is as follows:

$$\text{Buying Decision} = \beta_0 + \sum \beta_i x_i + \mu_i$$

Our study focuses on the buying decision, particularly the intention to purchase or consume traditional food from Surabaya. The independent variables, denoted as $\sum \beta_i x_i$, encompass factors like product availability, advertising, image, and diversity. Additionally, the term μ_i represents the error terms, which are residual variables that could also impact our dependent variable.

The sample consisted of 133 participants. The sampling technique employed was purposive sampling. According to Sugiyono (2013), purposive sampling is a technique in which samples are selected based on specific considerations. Additionally, purposive sampling is suitable for quantitative research or studies that do not involve generalisation. Based on these criteria, the population of the respondents in this study was 200 students. The sample size calculated for the research used the Slovin formula with a confidence level of 95% and margin of error of 5%. Here, is given by the following formula:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2} = \frac{200}{1 + 200(0.05)^2} = 133.3$$

where n is the sample size, N is the total population, and e is the error margin. Based on the calculation, the result was 133.3, rounded to 133 respondents.

3. Result and Discussion

The perception of the Z-generation towards traditional Surabaya food was assessed through a questionnaire survey. The total number of questions presented to the respondents was 34, covering five sub-indicators. A questionnaire was distributed to 133 students. The gathered data were subsequently compiled into a table to provide a general overview of the respondents.

Table 1. Descriptive Table

Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	61	45.86
Female	72	54.14
Total	133	100.00
Age		
18 years old	50	37.59
19 years old	78	58.65
20 years old	5	3.76
Total	133	100.00
Monthly Allowance		
< 1 million	40	30.08
1 – 2 million	47	35.34
2 – 3 million	30	22.56
3 – 4 million	11	8.27
> 4 million	5	3.76
Total	133	100.00

Based on Table 1, it can be observed that the respondents in this study were predominantly female, accounting for 54.14%, and the majority of them were 19 years old, constituting 58.65%. Concerning their monthly allowance, many of them received an allowance ranging from 1 to 2 million, making up 35.34%, and less than 1 million, comprising 30.08%. Further details are provided in the table below.

Table 2. Multiple Linear Regression Result

Buying decision	Coefficient	Standard error	t-value	p-value	[95% CI]		Significance
Availability	0.178	0.043	4.10	0.000	0.092	0.264	***
Ads	0.240	0.043	5.61	0.000	0.155	0.325	***
Image	0.175	0.040	4.39	0.000	0.096	0.254	***
Diversity	0.134	0.019	6.89	0.000	0.095	0.172	***
Constant	-0.233	0.816	-0.29	0.775	-1.848	1.382	
Mean dependent var		19.917	SD dependent var		2.111		
R-squared		0.898	Number of obs		133		
F-test		282.198	Prob > F		0.000		
Akaike crit. (AIC)		281.336	Bayesian crit. (BIC)		295.788		

Note: *** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$

Next, we present a table of the multiple linear regression results. Multiple linear regression is a statistical method that examines the relationship or influence of two or more independent variables on a dependent variable; it is commonly referred to as classical regression (Gujarati, 2003). Multiple linear regression allows for hypothesis testing regarding the significance of individual coefficients, aiding the interpretation of the impact of each variable (Table 2).

Based on the regression test results, several conclusions can be drawn. First, all the independent variables simultaneously influenced the dependent variable. This conclusion was drawn based on the significance of the F-test, which yielded a value below 0.05. Therefore, it can be inferred from this study that the constructed regression model is suitable for use, and all independent variables collectively influence our dependent variable.

Second, the r-squared value in this study falls into the strong category according to Chin (1998), who states that an r-squared value is considered strong if it exceeds 0.67. The r-squared value ranges from 0 to 1. The larger the value, the better is the ability of the independent variables to explain changes in the dependent variable, as explained by Fathia (2016). Therefore, in this study, the independent variables consisting of product availability, advertising, image, and diversity collectively influenced the dependent variable (decision) by 89.80%. The remaining 10.20% were explained or influenced by other variables outside the model we constructed.

Another important consideration is the independent variable. As observed in the regression test results table above, all independent variables exhibit a positive and statistically significant influence on the decision to purchase traditional food. This is evident from the p-values approaching zero, denoted by the three asterisks in the table. However, there exists variation in the extent of their impact on the dependent variable varies, as indicated by the coefficient values.

3.1 The Impact of Availability Variable on The Decision to Purchase Traditional Food

The availability variable positively and significantly influenced the decision variable by 17.8 units. This implies that each additional unit of diversity can affect preferences in purchasing traditional food by 17.8 units. This aligns with Kotler and Keller (2006), who state that product availability is a crucial factor influencing purchases. Furthermore, a study by Walia et al. (2020) found that a product's availability enhances consumers' intentions to purchase it. Consumers tend to buy when the desired product is widely available and easily accessible in many places. According to Tjiptono (2008), measuring consumer satisfaction can be simplified by assessing the ease with which consumers obtain a product or service. Therefore, product availability is a key factor in accurately maintaining consumers' repeat buying behaviour towards a product.

3.2 The Impact of Advertising Variable on The Decision to Purchase Traditional Food

Advertising was the variable with the highest coefficient recorded at 24 units. This suggests that each additional unit of advertising can affect preferences in purchasing traditional food by 24 units. This result is consistent with earlier research, as seen in the findings of Yazia (2014), who asserts that advertising has a positive and significant effect on purchase decisions, although specific coefficient values may differ. According to "Bandwagon Effect" theory, a cognitive bias in humans, as cited in Arif et al. (2020), individuals tend to adopt, imitate, or engage in something simply because the majority of others are doing it, regardless of their own beliefs or values that they may overlook. This is also in line with the study by Lim et al. (2020), which states that the bandwagon effect impacts consumers' demand not only because of the behaviour of influential figures, but also because of the extent to which the desire for a product increases because others are also seen consuming that commodity.

In the modern era, where almost every Z-generation individual owns a smartphone with social media applications that connect them, enabling them to search for and share information, this behaviour is amplified. In Indonesia, according to data from we are social, as curated by Kemp (2023) from dateportal.com, the average Internet usage is 7 hours and 42 minutes per day, with approximately 3 hours and 18 minutes spent on social media. Therefore, something that is happening or going viral in society will spread rapidly, ultimately influencing or being followed by others. Hence, the researcher posits that this phenomenon could explain the substantial and superior role of advertising in influencing preferences or decisions to consume traditional food. Consequently, this factor warrants careful consideration in the pursuit of preserving traditional food.

3.3 The Impact of Image Variable on The Decision to Purchase Traditional Food

The image variable positively and significantly influenced the decision variable by 17.5 units. This means that each additional unit of diversity can affect preferences in purchasing traditional food by 17.5 units. This finding is supported by previous research by Fiani and Japariato (2012), who demonstrated that food quality and brand image collectively influence the purchase decision variable.

Kotler, as cited in Simamora (2003), asserted that brand image is a strong brand condition. Brand image itself is crucial for consideration. Through a good brand image, emotional value can be instilled into consumers, creating positive feelings when purchasing a product. Therefore, it is crucial for researchers to enhance the image of Surabaya's traditional food by implementing the results of this study in teaching materials that will serve as a review of culinary tourism development.

3.4 The Impact of Diversity Variable on The Decision to Purchase Traditional Food

The diversity variable positively and significantly influenced the decision variable by 13.4 units. This means that each additional unit of diversity can impact preferences for purchasing traditional food by 13.4 units. This result is supported by previous research by Favalli (2013), indicating that food diversity, such as appearance and texture, can influence the attractiveness of the overall product evaluation, thereby affecting the purchasing decision. Moreover, increasing the diversity of traditional foods needs to be maximised, because it is one of the determining factors for success in the food industry and can also influence consumer satisfaction. Ultimately, satisfied consumers tend to have a high interest in repurchasing traditional foods (Prasasti & Maisara, 2022).

4. Conclusion

This study provides insights into the perceptions of the Z-generation in Surabaya regarding traditional Surabaya food. Through multiple linear regression analysis, we identified key factors influencing purchasing decisions: availability, advertising, image, and product diversity, all of which have a positive and significant impact. Product availability has emerged as a crucial factor, supporting the idea that making traditional Surabaya food more accessible can boost its consumption among the Z-generation. Advertising was the most influential factor, highlighting the importance of modern marketing strategies in promoting traditional foods. The positive impact of brand image on purchasing decisions underscores the need for a strong and appealing image of traditional Surabaya food, aligning with the idea that perceived value drives consumer preferences. The diversity of traditional food products also plays a critical role, suggesting that offering a wide range of options can enhance consumer satisfaction and encourage repeat purchases.

Practically, these findings suggest that targeted advertising campaigns, improved product availability, strategic brand management, and increased diversity in traditional food offerings are effective strategies for preserving and promoting traditional Surabaya food. This study contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence on the factors

shaping the Z-generation's perception and purchasing decisions, offering a foundation for future research and strategies to sustain traditional culinary heritage amid modernisation.

This study serves as a starting point for identifying the perceptions of the Z-generation regarding traditional foods in Surabaya. The researcher acknowledges that this study has some limitations. First, the generalisability of these results should not be generalised and applied to the entire population, given that the subjects were limited to Z-generation students majoring in Culinary Arts at the Faculty of Engineering, Universitas Negeri Surabaya in the second semester. Consequently, the application of these methods to a broader population may result in bias. Future research should sample a broader demographic group to draw more robust conclusions. Second, the independent variables included in this study were limited to availability, advertising, image, and diversity in relation to purchasing decisions. To gain a more comprehensive understanding of this subject, further exploration of variables beyond the model that could impact the intention to purchase traditional Surabaya food is necessary. Thus, by delving deeper into the factors influencing the desire to buy traditional Surabaya food, and using a larger sample size, more comprehensive insights can be obtained and applied to a wider population. This, in turn, is expected to boost public interest in purchasing or consuming traditional Surabaya food, thereby helping preserve it.

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