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## THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC ASPECTS ON FISH CONSUMPTION TRENDS AMONG GENERATION Z IN KENDARI CITY

### PENGARUH ASPEK SOSIAL EKONOMI TERHADAP TREN KONSUMSI IKAN PADA GENERASI Z DI KOTA KENDARI

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#### Abstract

This study aims to analyze fish consumption trends among Generation Z in Kendari, focusing on the social and economic factors that influence these trends. Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, shows diverse consumption preferences. Factors affecting fish consumption patterns in this group include frequency, motivation, preference for fish types, knowledge of fish benefits, as well as social, cultural, and economic influences such as fish prices. The study found that most respondents consume fish at least once a week, with a preference for marine fish over freshwater fish. Health benefits are the primary motivation for fish consumption, although knowledge about the health benefits of fish remains limited. The influence of family, peers, and social media plays a dominant role in shaping fish-eating habits. Additionally, the price of fish is a significant barrier in consumption decisions among Gen Z. These findings are expected to contribute to policies aimed at increasing the consumption of nutritious fish among the younger generation.

**Keywords:** Fish consumption, Generation Z, Kendari, Social influence, Economic influence, Fish prices, Marine fish preference, Health motivation, Social media.

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#### Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis tren konsumsi ikan di kalangan Generasi Z di Kota Kendari, dengan fokus pada pengaruh sosial dan ekonomi. Generasi Z yang lahir antara tahun 1997 hingga 2012, menunjukkan preferensi konsumsi yang beragam. Faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi pola makan ikan pada kelompok ini meliputi frekuensi konsumsi, motivasi, preferensi jenis ikan, pengetahuan tentang manfaat ikan, serta pengaruh sosial budaya dan ekonomi seperti harga ikan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa sebagian besar responden mengonsumsi ikan setidaknya sekali seminggu, dengan ikan laut lebih disukai dibandingkan ikan air tawar. Kesadaran akan manfaat kesehatan menjadi motivasi utama dalam konsumsi ikan, meskipun pengetahuan mengenai manfaat kesehatan ikan masih terbatas. Pengaruh keluarga, teman, dan media sosial sangat dominan dalam membentuk kebiasaan makan ikan. Selain itu, faktor harga ikan juga menjadi kendala yang signifikan dalam keputusan konsumsi ikan di kalangan Gen Z. Temuan ini diharapkan dapat digunakan untuk

merancang kebijakan yang dapat meningkatkan konsumsi ikan yang bergizi di kalangan generasi muda.

**Kata Kunci :** Konsumsi ikan, Generasi Z, Kendari, Pengaruh Sosial, Pengaruh Ekonomi, Harga ikan, Preferensi ikan laut, Motivasi kesehatan, Media sosial.

## INTRODUCTION

Fish consumption is an integral part of a healthy diet, particularly among young people, including those in Generation Z (Gen Z). Generation Z, consisting of individuals born between 1997 and 2012, is a rapidly growing demographic group with diverse consumption preferences (Schwieger & Ladwig, 2018). In Kendari City, fish consumption trends among this generation have not been extensively studied, despite fish being recognized as a source of protein rich in omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins, and minerals that are highly beneficial for health (Diamahesa *et al.*, 2023). Therefore, it is essential to conduct an analysis of fish consumption patterns among Gen Z in Kendari City, focusing on various factors that influence their fish-eating habits.

This study aims to analyze fish consumption trends among Gen Z in Kendari City, identifying the frequency of consumption, motivations, preferred fish types, and their knowledge of the benefits of fish. Additionally, this study also explores the social and cultural influences, as well as economic factors such as fish prices, on consumption decisions. This information will provide a clearer picture of the consumption behavior of this age group and offer insights that can help design intervention strategies to increase the consumption of nutritious fish among the younger generation (Agustin *et al.*, 2025).

Generation Z has unique characteristics in terms of food preferences, where they are more likely to be influenced by social media, peers, and family when selecting food (Tawar, 2022). Additionally, they are increasingly aware of the importance of a healthy diet that supports an active lifestyle. As part of a healthy diet, fish is often regarded as a nutritious food with numerous health benefits (Malini, 2021). However, low fish consumption among certain groups may be due to a lack of knowledge about the benefits of fish, limited variation in preparation methods, or prices considered unaffordable.

The frequency of fish consumption among Gen Z can be influenced by factors such as family habits, the types of fish available, and how fish is prepared (Anwar *et al.*, 2024). Although fish is a readily available food source in Indonesia, the types of fish most preferred by Gen Z may vary, with some individuals preferring marine fish over freshwater fish or vice versa. This may relate to taste preferences, the diversity of fish preparation, or even specific cultural influences that dominate their eating habits (Arka & Lastariwati, 2023).

The motivation for consuming fish among Gen Z can vary, from health reasons to habits passed down from family. In this study, it is essential to identify their primary reasons for consuming fish, whether for health benefits or simply as part of daily eating habits. Moreover, knowledge about the nutritional content of fish also plays an important role in influencing their decision to consume it. This study aims to evaluate the extent of Gen Z's knowledge

about the benefits of fish, which can help increase their awareness regarding the importance of consuming nutritious fish.

Social and cultural influences also play a role in shaping Gen Z's eating habits. Family, peers, and social media are strong factors in shaping their food preferences (Amin *et al.*, 2023). Additionally, economic factors such as the price of fish cannot be overlooked, as the varying prices of fish can affect Gen Z's ability to access fish regularly. Therefore, this study will also examine the impact of fish prices on consumption decisions among Gen Z.

With this background, this study aims to provide a deeper understanding of fish consumption trends among Gen Z in Kendari City. The findings from this research are expected to serve as a basis for designing policies or public health programs that can increase fish consumption among the younger generation, enabling them to reap optimal nutritional benefits to support their health and development in the future.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a quantitative descriptive approach to analyze fish consumption trends among Generation Z in Kendari, with a focus on the social and economic factors influencing these trends. The study aims to identify factors affecting fish consumption in this group, including consumption frequency, motivation, preferred fish types, knowledge of the benefits of fish, as well as social, cultural, and economic influences such as fish prices. The research steps are as follows:

### 1. Population and Sample

The population of this study consists of Generation Z individuals residing in Kendari, specifically those born between 1997 and 2012. The sample consists of 150 respondents selected through stratified random sampling to ensure balanced representation based on age, gender, education, and employment status. Respondents include students, university students, and young professionals who are active on social media and actively engage in their everyday eating habits.

### 2. Data Collection

Data was collected using two techniques: questionnaires and in-depth interviews. The questionnaire comprises both closed-ended and open-ended questions, designed to measure fish consumption frequency, types of fish consumed, consumption motivation, social and cultural influences, and knowledge of the benefits of fish. In-depth interviews were conducted with 20 respondents to gain further insights into the factors influencing fish consumption decisions.

### 3. Research Instruments

The research instruments used were questionnaires designed to measure:

1. Frequency of fish consumption per week.
2. Preferred types of fish, including marine and freshwater fish.

3. Motivations for consuming fish (e.g., health reasons, family habits, or taste).
4. Knowledge of the benefits of fish, such as omega-3 content, vitamins, and other health benefits.
5. Social and cultural influences, including family, friends, and social media, have an impact on food choices.
6. Price influences the decision to purchase fish.

#### 4. Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics to describe the demographic characteristics of the respondents, their frequency of fish consumption, and preferences for various fish types. Further analysis was conducted using the chi-square test to examine the relationship between social and economic variables and fish consumption decisions. The interview data were analyzed through thematic analysis to identify key themes related to motivations and social influences on eating habits.

#### 5. Research Procedure

The study was conducted in two phases. The first phase involved distributing the questionnaire online to the selected respondents. The second phase involved conducting in-depth interviews to gather qualitative data on factors influencing fish consumption. All collected data were then analyzed to provide a comprehensive understanding of fish consumption trends among Generation Z in Kendari.

#### 6. Validity and Reliability

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, the research instruments were pre-tested on a small group of respondents outside the main sample. Experts assessed content validity, while reliability was measured using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient to ensure internal consistency of the instruments.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1. Research Results on Fish Consumption Trends Among Generation Z in Kendari**

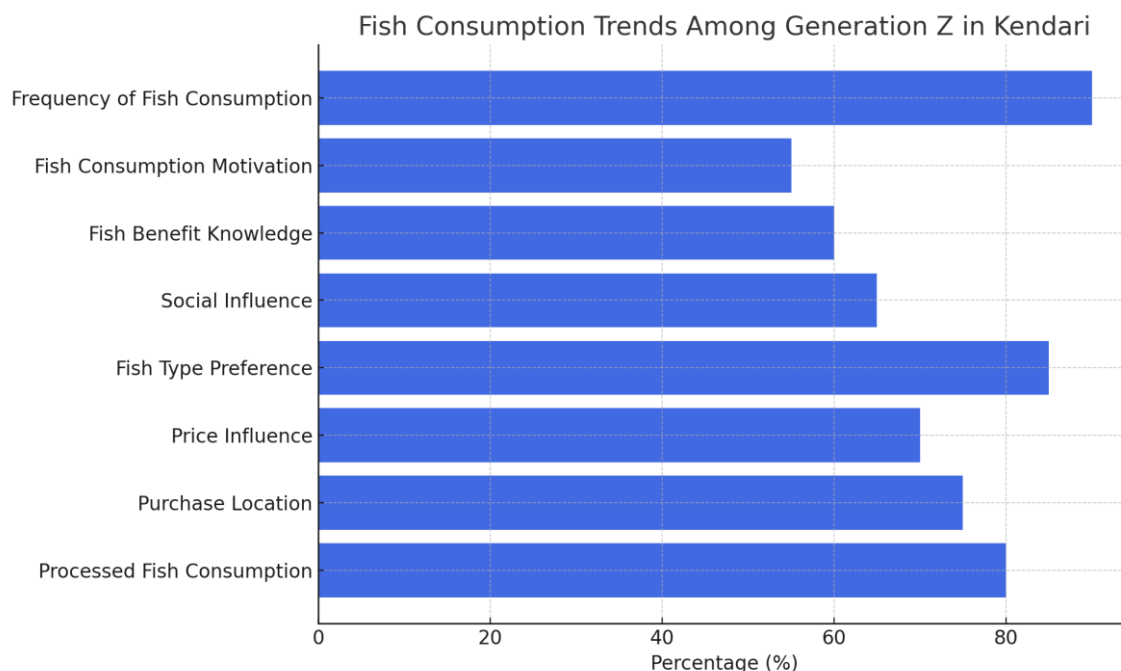
| No | Variable                      | Indicator  | Data Collection Method   | Data Source                  | Expected Results                                     |
|----|-------------------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| 1  | Respondent Characteristics    | Age, gender, education, occupation                       | Questionnaire, interview | Gen Z in Kendari             | Understanding the demographic profile of respondents |
| 2  | Frequency of Fish Consumption | Amount of fish consumed per week, types of fish consumed | Questionnaire            | Gen Z respondents in Kendari | Understanding fish consumption patterns              |

| No | Variable                              | Indicator   | Data Collection Method   | Data Source                  | Expected Results   |
|----|---------------------------------------|---|--------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| 3  | Motivation for Fish Consumption       | Reasons for consuming fish (health, taste, family habits)                 | Interview, questionnaire | Gen Z respondents in Kendari | Assessing factors influencing fish consumption decisions |
| 4  | Fish Type Preference                  | Most preferred fish types (marine fish, freshwater fish, processed fish)  | Questionnaire            | Gen Z respondents in Kendari | Identifying preferred fish types                         |
| 5  | Knowledge of Fish Benefits            | Understanding of the nutritional content and health benefits of fish      | Questionnaire, interview | Gen Z respondents in Kendari | Assessing respondents' knowledge about fish              |
| 6  | Social and Cultural Influence         | Influence of family, friends, or social media on fish consumption         | Questionnaire, interview | Gen Z respondents in Kendari | Summarizing the influence of social and cultural factors |
| 7  | Preference for Fish Purchase Location | Where fish is purchased (traditional market, supermarket, online)         | Questionnaire            | Gen Z respondents in Kendari | Understanding fish purchase location habits              |
| 8  | Price Influence on Fish Consumption   | To what extent do fish prices influence the decision to buy               | Questionnaire            | Gen Z respondents in Kendari | Assessing the impact of price on fish consumption        |
| 9  | Frequency of Consuming Processed Fish | How often fish is consumed in processed forms (canned fish, fish nuggets) | Questionnaire            | Gen Z respondents in Kendari | Assessing processed fish consumption habits              |

### Respondent Characteristics

The respondent characteristics in this study include age, gender, education, and occupation (Baihaqi *et al.*, 2023). These data are crucial for understanding the socio-economic context that may influence fish consumption habits. The majority of respondents in this study are students and university students, categorized as individuals still in the developmental stage, both physically and cognitively. This group is more likely to be exposed to health information and learn about healthy eating habits through social media, peers, and family.

The study results indicate that respondents with higher levels of education possess a better understanding of the benefits of fish consumption. This suggests that education level can significantly influence knowledge about nutrition and healthy eating patterns (Syuliswati, 2020). Additionally, most respondents come from families that have a regular fish-eating habit, which reflects the socio-cultural influence on their consumption patterns (Rais *et al.*, 2018).



**Figure 1.** Fish Consumption Trends Among Generation Z in Kendari

### Frequency of Fish Consumption

The frequency of fish consumption among Generation Z in Kendari shows quite varied results. The majority of respondents consume fish at least once a week, with a small portion consuming it more than twice a week. This relatively low frequency of consumption may be influenced by several factors, including time limitations and the ease of acquiring fish (Sinaga, 2025). Many respondents prefer fast food or ready-to-eat products, which are more accessible and require less preparation time.

However, some respondents show a strong preference for fish consumption due to health reasons. They acknowledge that fish is a healthy source of protein (Amelia et al., 2020), which supports body and brain growth, especially for young people undergoing development (Husnayaen *et al.*, 2021). Nevertheless, there is still a perception that fish consumption requires further promotion, particularly in relation to its health benefits. Educational programs emphasizing the importance of fish consumption for the health of the younger generation are crucial for increasing the frequency of fish consumption among Generation Z (Luhur *et al.*, 2020).

### Motivation for Fish Consumption

The motivations for consuming fish among Generation Z in Kendari vary, but the majority of respondents acknowledge that health is the primary factor influencing their decision to consume fish. This aligns with research findings indicating that awareness of the importance of healthy eating is increasing among the younger generation (Muchtar *et al.*, 2024), particularly in urban areas like Kendari. Fish is known as a high-quality source of protein, rich in omega-3 fatty acids, vitamin D, and minerals, all of which are essential for supporting physical growth and brain development in young people (Desniar *et al.*, 2023).

Moreover, some respondents also stated that they consume fish as part of family traditions that have been followed since childhood. This reflects the strong social and cultural influence in shaping eating patterns (Baihaqi *et al.*, 2024). Family plays a crucial role in shaping eating habits, including fish consumption (Hanum, 2018). This familial influence is also reflected in the types of fish consumed, with some respondents preferring marine fish, which they consider tastier and more nutritious than freshwater fish.

However, many also consume fish merely due to habit or a liking for fish dishes. This indicates that, in addition to health factors, taste also plays a role in determining food choices, including fish. Therefore, it is essential to diversify the variety of fish preparation methods to attract Generation Z, particularly in efforts to introduce fish as a delicious and nutritious food option.

### **Fish Type Preference**

The preference for fish types among Generation Z in Kendari reveals an interesting trend. The majority of respondents prefer marine fish over freshwater fish. Some of the most favored marine fish include tuna, grouper, and salmon. Marine fish is considered tastier and more nutritious due to its higher omega-3 fatty acid content (Asari *et al.*, 2021). These fish are also more easily found in both traditional markets and supermarkets in Kendari, although they tend to be more expensive than freshwater fish.

On the other hand, freshwater fish, despite being more affordable and easier to find, do not hold the same appeal. Some respondents view freshwater fish as less tasty and less nutritious than marine fish. Therefore, to increase the consumption of freshwater fish, efforts should be made to introduce the nutritional advantages of freshwater fish and creatively process them to make them more appealing to Generation Z.

### **Knowledge of Fish Benefits**

Knowledge of the benefits of fish among Generation Z in Kendari varies significantly. Most respondents have a basic understanding of the benefits of fish as a source of protein and other essential nutrients, such as omega-3 fatty acids. However, many are not well-informed about the more profound benefits of fish, such as their impact on heart health, brain function, and physical development. This suggests that, while most Generation Z individuals recognize fish as a nutritious food source, their understanding of its broader health benefits still needs improvement.

Education about the nutritional content of fish and its benefits is crucial, both in schools and through social media, which is the primary platform for Generation Z to obtain information. By providing more in-depth knowledge, fish consumption can be increased, allowing young people to experience its benefits optimally.

### **Social and Cultural Influence**

Social and cultural influences play a strong role in shaping the eating habits of Generation Z in Kendari. Family, friends, and social media are the main factors influencing their decision to consume fish. The majority of respondents indicated that they are more likely

to consume fish if it is a habit passed down by their families. Additionally, peers and influencers on social media also play an important role in shaping their food preferences.

This social factor indicates that fish consumption habits can be passed down from one generation to the next, particularly through family and peer influence. Therefore, educational programs involving family and peers can be an effective way to increase fish consumption among Generation Z.

### **Price Influence on Fish Consumption**

The price of fish is a significant factor influencing fish consumption decisions among Generation Z. Despite fish being an essential source of nutrition, its relatively higher price compared to other protein sources, such as chicken or tofu, can limit its consumption among young people. Some respondents mentioned that they only consume fish when it is affordable or when there are promotions at supermarkets. Therefore, to increase fish consumption, especially among Generation Z, who rely on pocket money or limited income, efforts should be made to stabilize fish prices or provide more affordable fish options without compromising quality.

Overall, this study reveals that several factors, including the frequency of consumption, preference for specific fish types, health motivation, social influence, and fish price, influence fish consumption among Generation Z in Kendari. While there is awareness of the importance of fish consumption for health, several challenges need to be addressed to increase fish consumption among young people, including enhancing knowledge of fish benefits, diversifying fish preparation methods, and implementing more affordable pricing policies. It is crucial to involve various parties, including families, peers, schools, and social media, in efforts to increase fish consumption among Generation Z.

## **CONCLUSION**

The study on fish consumption trends among Generation Z in Kendari reveals that various factors, including social, economic, and health aspects, influence the fish consumption habits of this age group. The majority of respondents consume fish at least once a week, with a preference for marine fish over freshwater fish. The primary motivation for consuming fish is health reasons, as fish is considered an important source of protein for physical and brain development. However, the understanding of the health benefits of fish among most respondents remains limited, highlighting the need for more intensive educational programs about the nutritional content of fish, particularly among the younger generation who are active on social media.

Fish consumption habits among Gen Z are also influenced by social and cultural factors, with family and peer influence playing a significant role in shaping their preferences. The majority of respondents indicated that their fish consumption habits are based on family traditions passed down since childhood. On the other hand, the price of fish is a significant barrier to consumption, as the relatively higher price compared to other protein sources, such as chicken or tofu, limits accessibility to fish, especially for Gen Z with limited income. These findings suggest that, while there is awareness of the importance of fish consumption, several challenges need to be addressed, including improving knowledge about the benefits of fish, introducing more appealing variations of fish preparation, and reducing economic barriers

related to price. Therefore, the involvement of various parties, including families, schools, peers, and social media, is crucial to increasing fish consumption among Generation Z, enabling them to obtain optimal nutritional benefits that support their health and development in the future.

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