

The Meaning of Giving Food Souvenirs: From the Perspective of Generation Z Immigrants in Yogyakarta City

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ABSTRACT

Yogyakarta city's rich cultural history, historical significance, and developing tourism sector have led to a substantial demand for food souvenirs. This study aimed to assess the importance of food souvenirs obtained by Generation Z migrants in Yogyakarta City. The study conducted a quantitative descriptive analysis. The sample comprised 100 respondents who were Generation Z citizens, held non-DIY ID cards, and had personally purchased food souvenirs from Yogyakarta for giving to their family or friends in their homeland. This research employs dependent variables defined by the provided variables, while the independent components comprise emotional variables and cultural habits. The statistical analysis was employed to determine the extent to which the significance of a food souvenir motivates an individual's act of gifting. Multiple linear regression was used in the study, along with tests to look for deviations from common assumptions, including heteroscedasticity, multicollinearity, and autocorrelation. The research findings indicated that respondents had persisted in the tradition of giving food souvenirs to their families or loved ones. This illustrated that Generation Z has continued to maintain the tradition of presenting food souvenirs, reflecting the morals and traditions of Eastern culture.

ABSTRAK

Yogyakarta selain terkenal sebagai kota pendidikan, juga merupakan kota budaya, kota perjuangan, dan kota pariwisata yang berdampak pada permintaan akan oleh-oleh makanan yang sangat besar. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui makna oleh-oleh makanan yang dibeli para penduduk generasi Z (lahir pada 1997–2012) pendatang di Kota Yogyakarta. Jenis penelitian ini adalah deskriptif kuantitatif. Responden penelitian berjumlah 100 orang yang merupakan penduduk generasi Z di DIY yang memiliki KTP non-DIY dan pernah membeli oleh-oleh makanan dari Yogyakarta secara langsung (bukan melalui *e-commerce/marketplace*) untuk diberikan kepada keluarga/teman di tempat asalnya. Instrumen penelitian digunakan variabel memberi sebagai variabel dependen, sedangkan variabel emosional dan variabel budaya sebagai variabel independen. Analisis statistik dilakukan untuk mengetahui seberapa besar makna oleh-oleh makanan menjadi dasar seseorang memberikannya. Metode yang digunakan adalah regresi linear berganda didukung dengan pengujian penyimpangan asumsi klasik, yaitu *heteroscedasticity test*, *multicollinearity test*, dan *autocorrelation test*. Hasil penelitian diketahui bahwa responden masih menganut dan menerapkan budaya memberi oleh-oleh kepada keluarga atau seseorang yang spesial bagi mereka. Membuktikan bahwa generasi Z masih memegang teguh budaya memberi oleh-oleh makanan karena hal tersebut adalah cerminan budaya timur dan nilai-nilai kebaikan tersebut diajarkan juga dalam keluarganya.

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INTRODUCTION

Yogyakarta City as the capital of the Yogyakarta Special Region Province/Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta (DIY), having four districts (Sleman, Bantul, Gunungkidul, Kulon Progo) and one city (Yogyakarta City) within its jurisdiction. Yogyakarta City has the largest population density among the four major regions, with 11,958 people/km² (Telaumbanua and Pitoyo, 2015).

Yogyakarta is known as an education city, attracting students from many areas in Indonesia. Based on the data from BAPPEDA DIY, there are a total of 126 institutions, both public and private universities in the DIY area. These universities have a collective student population of 640,658 (Khafid, 2023). According to Zubaidah et al. (2015), the majority of students prefer to further their studies in DIY due to the city's pleasant atmosphere. These students and university students who migrate to DIY contribute to the migrant population, so directly increasing population density in Yogyakarta, particularly in urban areas which have universities or schools.

From a financial point of view, the presence of a significant immigrant population in DIY offers numerous opportunities for local residents (Sugiyanto, 2004). These opportunities range from providing accommodations and food services to transportation and various other necessities such as laundry services. A great business prospect is in offering souvenir, particularly those of the food/snack variety.

In addition to its reputation as an educational center, Yogyakarta is renowned for its cultural heritage, historical significance, and popularity as a tourist destination. Several tourist spots have effectively enticed a significant number of domestic and international tourists to visit DIY (Wijayanti, 2020). Hadi's (2018) research findings indicated

that many students and migrant residents of DIY have the potential to act as tourists at various tourist attractions and as consumers of various food souvenirs available at these locations in DIY. Consequently, this significantly affects the high demand for food souvenirs in Yogyakarta. Producers aim to expand their business by targeting consumer interest in traditional Yogyakarta food souvenirs. The target market for food souvenirs includes visitors, migratory residents who regularly return to their hometowns during school or college holidays, and local people who travel to visit family residing in different places.

Food is an essential requirement for human life. In addition to meeting basic needs, food can serve as a way of communication to express care for others, celebrate events, and more (Fibri et al., 2022). Stajcic (2013) asserts that food is a form of communication as it expresses meaning beyond words. Offering food to others can demonstrate empathy towards individuals of significance and extend friendliness to newly familiar individuals (Hamburg et al., 2014).

The emotions and cultural expressions through food can be facilitated by travel, tourism, and migrations (Aktas-Polat & Polat, 2020). Therefore, presenting food souvenirs to others might serve as an indication of the giver's emotional intimacy with the recipients. If the food souvenir is a unique traditional dish brought from a remote location by someone and becomes popularity among online users, it will undoubtedly enhance the uniqueness of the souvenir, as well as its importance of the recipient.

In the current era of advanced digital technology, there are significant and rapid developments occurring in the field of food innovation. Recent cultural and social changes have had an impact on the food industry, prompting producers to develop innovative food options that respond to

consumers' need for nutritious global food, visually appealing dishes for social media, and an increased awareness of environmental sustainability. Generation Z, the group that has succeeded the technological era, has significantly shaped food preferences of the younger generation. Generation Z refers to the group of individuals born between the years 1997 and 2012. Studying the consumer behavior of Generation Z is extremely interesting due to the fact that, according to the 2022 BPS census, Generation Z comprises 27.94% of the total population of Indonesia. [Wijaya et al. \(2019\)](#) stated that the main characteristics of Generation Z include a passion for innovation and entertainment, alongside a preference for security and comfort. According to [Kusumawati et al. \(2021\)](#), the preferences of Generation Z can accurately forecast upcoming industry trends.

The objective of this study was to determine the significance of the souvenirs bought by Generation Z immigrants in the city of Yogyakarta. According to [Britain Thinks \(2019\)](#), Generation Z is referred to as the the initial group of individuals who have grown up in a digital era, being exposed to the internet and social media from birth. They are influenced not only by local perceives and cultural values from their family and surroundings, but also by global cultural values from various parts of the world, which are easily accessible through social media. This research seeks to determine the extent to which Generation Z immigrants in Yogyakarta continue to adhere to simple cultural practices, such as gifting food souvenirs. Has this culture been gradually diminished in their life, leading them to prefer adopting Western culture as their major cultural perspective and standard of values?

The respondents of this study were Generation Z individuals residing in DIY who possessed non-DIY Resident Identity

Cards (KTP) and had purchased food souvenirs from Yogyakarta. These food souvenirs were bought directly, not through e-commerce or marketplace platforms, with the intention of giving them to family or friends in their hometown when returning home or during their holiday period.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Food is an essential requirement for human survival. Nevertheless, within a societal framework, food serves multiple purposes beyond simply satisfying fundamental human need. Delineates five distinct purposes of food within a community. These functions include its gastronomic role, its contribution to cultural identity, its involvement in religious and supernatural practices, its function as a medium of communication, and its ability to serve as a symbol of wealth, social esteem, influence, and power.

In the online Big Indonesian Dictionary/Kamus Besar bahasa Indonesia (KBBI) VI, souvenir is defined as items that are brought back after a vacation. Indonesians have a habit to bring along souvenirs for their family and friends when they travel outside the region or return from outside the city. These souvenirs serve as mementos/ keepsake of the journey ([Kusumawati et al., 2023](#)).

The term 'souvenir' originates from the French language and conveys the meanings of 'memory', 'keepsake', or 'symbol of recollection' ([Hitchcock, 2021](#)). According to [Swanson & Timothy \(2012\)](#), souvenirs are regarded as tangible goods that are manufactured, traded, and used. Souvenirs are crucial for both travelers and the tourism business as they provide as tangible proof of a tourist's distinct experience during their journey. Souvenirs have the ability to elicit an individual's recollections and perceptions of their journey. Souvenirs can contribute to the

development of social value among tourists, including feelings of pride, prestige, and social recognition (Suhartanto et al., 2018).

The food that travelers enjoy in a popular tourism destination not only satiates their appetite, but also leaves a lasting impression on their taste buds, which is then manifested in the form of food souvenirs available for purchase at the same destination. This is the beginning of food souvenirs assuming the role of representing the unique characteristics of a tourism destination. Food souvenirs have a strong connection to the historical, geographical, climatic, and natural resources of a tourism destination (Suhartanto et al., 2018). The growth of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) specializing in food souvenirs and gastronomic tourism will stimulate the expansion of diverse industries such as agriculture, fisheries, animal husbandry, and plantations in these tourism destinations. This, in turn, will create an economical multiplier effect within the local economy (Turgarini et al., 2018). The souvenirs sale in tourism destination worldwide has generated billions of dollars, contributing to the influx of foreign exchange in numerous countries (Yuksel, 2004).

RESEARCH METHOD

This study was a descriptive research design that utilizes primary data and used several quantitative methods to uncover established facts. The respondents in this study were migrant residents in DIY who did not own a DIY ID card and had purchased traditional DIY food souvenir for their family and friends when returning to their hometown.

This study had a sample of 100 respondents born between 1997 and 2012 who completed a questionnaire using the Google Form link. Respondents will be queried regarding their diverse views and

opinions that most accurately depict their own selves. The response to each question was assigned a numerical score based on the Likert scale, which includes the values of Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neutral (3), Agree (4), and Strongly Agree (5).

The sampling methodology employed was incidental sampling, which did not allow for the selection of every member of the population. This method was employed due to the challenge of selecting a representative sample from the population, as it offered greater flexibility and efficiency. When the population size was both unknown and infinite, the sample computation was conducted using the Lemeshow formula.

$$n = Z \times P \times \frac{Q}{L}$$

The following variables: n represented the minimum sample size, Z denoted the standard value of the normal distribution based on the desired level of confidence (e.g., $Z = 1.96$ for a 95% confidence level), P represented the prevalence or proportion of the population with specific characteristics (e.g., 50%), Q was the complement of P ($Q = 1 - P$), and L represents the level of precision or margin of error allowed (e.g., 5%).

$$\begin{aligned} n &= 1.96^2 \times 0.5 \times \frac{1 - 0.5}{0.1^2} \\ &= 3.8416 \times 0.5 \times \frac{0.5}{0.01} \\ &= 96.04 \end{aligned}$$

(96.04 was rounded to 100)

In this study, the giving variable was employed as the dependent variable, whereas the emotional variables and cultural variables serve as independent variables. Every variable possesses a research indicator. The giving variable indicator was "I frequently give food souvenirs" (G1). The independent factors encompass emotional variables and cultural variables. The emotional variable was measured by two indicators: "I enjoy

receiving food souvenirs" (E1) and "Souvenirs make me feel close/cared for" (E2). On the other hand, the cultural variable was measured by two indicators: "There is a tradition of giving food souvenirs in my family" (C1) and "Giving food souvenirs is a tradition that needs to be preserved" (C2).

For each indicator in the research sample, it was important to assess the validity of the operational data variables. Validity tests and reliability tests were conducted to assess the accuracy of the data. The validity test served as an analytical instrument to assess the trustworthiness and statistical validity of each statement item in the questionnaire. The validity test was conducted by comparing the Pearson product moment correlation at a significance level of 5%. The data was not only valid, but this research also conducted reliability tests as a statistical analytic tool to demonstrate consistency in each respondent's answer. This consistency was achieved through the combination of variables.

The statistical analysis used to determine the significance of food souvenirs as a basis for presenting a particular gift is multiple linear regression analysis. The utilization of multiple linear

regression was used to determine the presence of a correlated influence or association between emotion and culture in the context of giving food souvenirs. The study of this research involved doing tests for heteroscedasticity, multicollinearity, and autocorrelation to assess variations from classical assumptions. These tests were used to confirm that multiple linear regression analysis was the right model for the investigation. The investigation was expected for determining the meaning of food souvenirs for Generation Z immigrant resident in the city of Yogyakarta.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The multiple regression analysis approach, specifically the multiple linear regression model, was employed as an analytical methodology to ascertain the statistical and quantitative relevance of research instruments in the analysis of meaning. First, the validity of the study instrument was assessed by testing the outcomes for each indicator. The analysis confirmed that each statement provided valid results, with a significant 2-tailed Pearson correlation. The correlation value for each assertion was more than 0.05.

Table 1. Validity Test (*Correlations*)

| Question Item | Pearson Correlation (on $\alpha = 5\%$) | Sig.2-Tailed | Information |
|--|---|--------------|-------------|
| I frequently give food souvenirs (G1) | 0.646 | 0.000 | Valid |
| I enjoy receiving food souvenirs (E1) | 0.608 | 0.000 | Valid |
| Souvenirs make me feel close/cared for (E2) | 0.779 | 0.000 | Valid |
| There is a tradition of giving food souvenirs in my family (C1) | 0.702 | 0.000 | Valid |
| Giving food souvenirs is a tradition that needs to be preserved (C2) | 0.671 | 0.000 | Valid |

Source: Processed data, 2024

Second, research instruments that were determined to be valid conducted a reliability test, with the requirement that the total consistency, as measured by

Cronbach's alpha, exceeded 0.65. The data processing results indicated that Cronbach's alpha was calculated to be 0.710, which exceeds the threshold of 0.65.

This suggests that the statement items used in the study were credible.

Table 2. Reliability Test

| Cronbach's Alpha | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
|------------------|--|------------|
| 0.710 | 0.712 | 5 |

Source: Processed data, 2024

The multiple linear regression equation model was as follows:

$$Food\ Giving = \beta_0 + \beta_1 E1 + \beta_2 E2 + \beta_3 C1 + \beta_4 C2 + \varepsilon_t \dots\dots\dots(1.1)$$

The dependent variable in this study was food giving, while the predictor variable was the constant. The statements related to the predictor variable include "Souvenirs make me feel close/cared for" (E2), " Giving food souvenirs is a tradition that needs to be preserved " (C2), "There is a culture of giving food souvenirs in my family (C1)", and "I enjoy receiving food souvenirs " (E1).

The normality of the distribution of valid and reliable data was assessed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, which was based on the residual values of the multiple linear regression model. If the Asymp.Sig (2-tailed) value was greater than 0.05, the data was considered to be normally distributed. The data in Table 3 demonstrates that the Asymp.Sig.(2-tailed) value is 0.190, which is greater than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, we can concluded that the data was statistically normally distributed.

Table 3. Normality Test

| One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test | Unstandardized Residual |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| N | 100 |
| Test Statistic | 0.075 |
| Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) | 0.190 ^a |

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction.

Source: Processed data, 2024

In order to evaluate the multiple linear regression model, it was necessary for the model to have been assessed for goodness of fit and to satisfy the conditions of the Best Linear Unbiased Estimator (BLUE). The assessment of this situation involved examining three types of

variations from classical assumptions, namely heteroscedasticity, multicollinearity, and autocorrelation. If the multiple linear regression model was devoid of these three types of deviance, it was considered to be the ideal linear model.

Table 4. Classical Assumption Test

| Model | Breusch-Pagan Test for Heteroskedasticity ^{a,b,c} | | | Multicollinearity test | | Auto-correlation |
|-------|--|----|-------|------------------------|-------|------------------|
| | Chi-Square | df | Sig. | Tolerance | VIF | Durbin-Watson |
| E1 | | | | 0.795 | 1.258 | |
| E2 | 2.172 | 1 | 0.140 | 0.823 | 1.215 | 2.393 |
| C1 | | | | 0.767 | 1.305 | |
| C2 | | | | 0.644 | 1.552 | |

a. Dependent variable: I frequently give food souvenirs (G1)

b. Tests the null hypothesis that the variance of the errors does not depend on the values of the independent variables.

c. Predicted values from design: Intercept + E1 + C2 + C1 + E2 + E1 * C2 + E1 * C1 + E1 * E2 + C2 * C1 + C2 * E2 + C1 * E2 + E1 * C2 * C1 + E1 * C2 * E2 + E1 * C1 * E2 + C2 * C1 * E2 + E1 * C2 * C1 * E2

At the significance level value $\alpha = 5\%$ dan confidence level 95%.

Source: Processed data, 2024

Heteroscedasticity Test

The Breusch-Pagan Test model was used to perform a heteroscedasticity test in order to examine the difference in the variance of residuals across different observations in the 1.1 regression model. The results of the Breusch-Pagan Test for heteroscedasticity can be found in Table 4. The test indicated that the chi-square significance value was 0.140. According to the criterion, if the sig.Chi-square value was greater than 0.05 (with a confidence level of 95%), it was concluded that there was no heteroscedasticity. Conversely, if the sig.Chi-square value is less than 0.05, it indicated the presence of heteroscedasticity. The test findings indicated that the significance level of the Chi-square value was 0.140, which was greater than 0.05. This implies that there was no evidence of heteroscedasticity.

Multicollinearity Test

The regression model equation was analyzed for multicollinearity testing using the tolerance and Variance Inflation

Factor (VIF) criteria. The criterion for determining the presence of multicollinearity was a VIF value of less than 10 or a tolerance value greater than 0.01. If these conditions were met, it was concluded that multicollinearity was not present. Alternatively, if the VIF value exceeded 10 or the Tolerance value went below 0.01, multicollinearity was considered to be present (Ghozali, 2016). According to the findings of the multicollinearity test in Table 4, each instrument had a Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value less than 10 and a Tolerance value greater than 0.01. This indicated that there was no multicollinearity in the multiple linear regression model.

Autocorrelation Test

Performing the autocorrelation test examines whether there is a correlation between the error term in period t and the error term in the previous period within the linear regression model. The Durbin-Watson test is used for detection (Ghozali, 2016).

Table 5. Durbin-Watson's Decision Making Criteria

| Positive Auto correlation | No positive correlation (no decision) | No Autocorrelation | No negative correlation (no decision) | Negative Auto correlation |
|---------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| $0 < d < dL$ | $dL \leq d \leq du$ $dL = 1.592$ $du = 1.758$ | $du < d < 4 - du$ $4 - du = 2.242$ | $4 - du \leq d \leq 4 - dL$ $4 - dL = 2.408$ | $4 - dL < d < 4$ |

Source: Ghozali, 2016

The Durbin-Watson value in the multiple linear regression model was 2.393. According to the Durbin-Watson decision making criteria, the value falls within the range of 2.242 and 2.408, which was inconclusive. Therefore, no negative correlation can be determined.

Processing of analytical data in this regression model yields various statistical values, including coefficient values, T-

statistic values, Sig.T-stat values, F-statistic values, Sig.F-stat values, and R-square coefficient values. The results are displayed in Table 6 below.

Tabel 6. Multiple linear regression model result

| Dependent Variable: I frequently give food souvenirs (Food Giving) | | | | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------|
| Model | Coefficient | t-statistic | Sig. t-stat | F-statistic | Sig. F-Stat | R-Square |
| Constant (β_0) | 1.987 | 4.111 | 0.000 | | | |
| E1 (β_1) | -0.105 | -1.006 | 0.317 | | | |
| E2 (β_2) | 0.275 | 2.598 | 0.011* | 8.427 | 0.000** | 0.262 |
| C1 (β_3) | 0.284 | 3.134 | 0.002* | | | |
| C2 (β_4) | 0.078 | 0.951 | 0.344 | | | |

*Significant on $\alpha = 5\%$ and confidence level 95%

***Predictor*: (Constant), "I enjoy receiving food souvenirs" (E1), "Souvenirs make me feel close/cared for" (E2), "There is a tradition of giving food souvenirs in my family" (C1), "Giving food souvenirs is a tradition that needs to be preserved" (C2)

Source: Processed data, 2024

The regression model had a coefficient of determination (R-square) of 0.262 (Table 5). This means that 26.2% of the variations in changes in E1, E2, C1, and C2 can be explained by variations in changes in Food Giving ($K_d = 0.262 \times 100\%$). The remaining 73.8% ($100\% - 26.2\%$) was explained by other variables not included in the regression equation model 1.1.

The results of evaluating the multiple linear regression model indicated a statistically significant association between the independent variable and the dependent variable (Food Giving) in the T-stat test, with a significant level of 5% (or 0.05). The variable "Souvenirs make me feel close/cared for" (E2) has a significant T-stat value of 0.011, which was less than the confidence level of 0.05 (95% confidence level). Similarly, the variable "There is a tradition of giving food souvenirs in my family" (C1) has a significant T-stat value of 0.002, which is also less than the confidence level of 0.05 (95% confidence level). An F-test reveals that the variables E1, E2, C1, and C2 were all significantly related to the Food Giving variable.

Relationship between Variable E2 "Souvenirs Make Me Feel Close/ Cared For" on Food Giving

The phrase "Souvenirs make me feel close/ cared for" was statistically correlated with food giving in a favorable and significant manner. An increase of 1% in the emotional connection to souvenirs will result in a 0.275% rise in a person's likelihood to frequently provide food souvenirs (engage in food giving). Conversely, a 1% decrease in the emotional attachment to "Souvenirs make me feel close/ cared for" would result in a 0.275% reduction in a person's tendency to give food souvenirs. This is because giving food souvenirs is typically a way to demonstrate care, concern, and willingness to interact with family (Mohan, 2023) all of which related to emotions. Nurti (2017) stated that food serves not just as a gift, but also as a means of expressing compassion and providing assistance in times of illness or death within the family.

Chapman (2009) identifies one of the five love languages as the act of giving gifts. A gift is typically given to someone who was specifically intended as the recipient. A gift is a tangible representation of the emotions of the giver towards the recipient. However, Hamburg (2014) asserts that providing and even giving food is a way of how an individual may express their interest in others. This

might be compared to a mother expressing care and love for her child by providing and giving them food. A mother's behavior has an indirect impact on her child's perception and the desire to express kindness to others through the act of giving food.

During social interactions centered around food, individuals frequently use their own judgment in selecting companions with whom they prefer to dine and those they prefer not to dine with (Nurti, 2017). Regarding this study on food souvenirs, the selection of the recipient will primarily rely on the unique characteristics of each person.

The relationship between Variable C1 "There is a culture of giving souvenirs in my family" on Food Giving

The presence of the phrase "There is a tradition of giving food souvenirs in my family" was positively and significantly associated with the practice of giving food. An increase of 1% in awareness of the "There is a tradition of giving souvenirs in my family" will result in a 0.284% rise in the frequency of purchasing food souvenirs (food giving). Conversely, a lack of awareness regarding "There is a tradition of giving food souvenirs in my family" will result in a decrease of 0.284% in the act of giving food souvenirs. The act of giving food souvenirs has been passed down from parents to their children for decades, thereby becoming a cultural practice. Food has a role in maintaining familial relationships through the act of giving food throughout various social events and rites, such as marriages, deaths, and births (Mohan, 2023).

The Taji (901 AD), Pangumulan (902 AD), and Rukam (907 AD) inscriptions in Java documented various kinds of gastronomic items, such as "twak" or palm wine, skul liwet, beef jerky, salted fish, shrimp, and several meats employed in food preparations. The

last dish served at an event or social gathering during that era (Sholah, 2021). This inscription provides conclusive evidence of the significant role that food played in the cultural practices of Indonesian ancestors.

According to the responses to a series of survey questions about individuals' attitudes towards food souvenirs, respondents expressed pleasure when they received food souvenirs from their closest colleagues. By presenting them with food souvenirs, individuals will have a sense of emotional intimacy and perceive that they were being cared by someone. Indeed, the majority acknowledged the existence of a cultural or habitual practice within their families to purchase food souvenirs for their loved ones, including family members and friends. The overwhelming majority of respondents express their disagreement with the idea that purchasing food souvenirs for family and friends was burdensome. The majority of respondents acknowledged that they kept up dedicated cash for the purpose of purchasing food souvenirs to bring happiness to their family members or friends in their hometowns. The majority of respondents agreed that it was important to maintain the tradition of preserving the culture of purchasing food souvenirs.

The Meaning of Giving Food Souvenirs from Diverse Perspectives

The Meaning of Giving Food According to International Culture

Gift giving is a common habit in numerous cultures that has been in existence for generations, however the specific methods may differ among cultures. In Eastern culture, it is customary and even expected to purchase souvenirs for friends, coworkers, or relatives. This practice might be considered a habitual or obligatory tradition. Individuals from Eastern cultures may experience feelings

of guilt or embarrassment if they fail to provide proper souvenirs to their family or colleagues. Therefore, when purchasing food souvenirs, it is important to take into consideration the brand and packaging of the food in order to maintain their pride within their social group (Lin, 2017).

Japanese culture acknowledges the concept of "Omiyage," which refers to a local product. It is an accepted tradition for travelers who have recently visited a certain location to bring back souvenirs or items from that area to gift to their family, friends, or colleagues. This omiyage is presented to individuals who are held in high regard or who are engaged in a mutually beneficial relationship. A tourist who is an employee aims to please the people who temporarily replace his job role during his absence on vacation. The most remarkable omiyage for the receiver consists of food, agricultural products, or plantation products that are characteristic of tourist destination places. As an example, during the summer season, residents of major urban centers like Tokyo and Kyoto have a strong preference for omiyage, which often consists of fruits and refreshing beverages sourced from different area of Japan (Nastita, 2022).

A similar concept to the Japanese "omiyage" in Korean culture is known as "sunmul". The term "sunmul" includes a wide range of connotations and is not solely restricted to souvenirs acquired while trip. "Sunmul" is a broad phrase that combines gifts given on several occasions, including Christmas, birthdays, New Year, and souvenirs brought when visiting. In Korean culture, the act of presenting souvenirs is regarded as a way of expressing care and showing genuine sincerity. The act of giving souvenirs is seen as a means of maintaining relationships and expressing oneself. Consequently, Koreans are quite cautious when selecting gifts. The act of giving souvenirs begins with the selection of an

item that will bring pleasure to the receiver. For Koreans, souvenirs that endure over time are favored, as they are believed to serve as reminders of the giver and create long-lasting souvenirs (Park, 2000).

The act of presenting typical souvenirs from a tourism destination serves the purpose of establishing and preserving interpersonal relationships within Chinese culture. Chinese society strongly values family and traditional culture. According to Han (2018), Chinese tourists have a preference for purchasing practical items over luxury branded products. In Mandarin, there are two distinct categories of souvenirs: "ji-nian-pin" which refers to goods souvenirs, and "ban-shou-li" which refers to food souvenirs. Chinese people often consider food to be a preferred item to bring back as a souvenir. Food souvenirs are inexpensive, very functional, portable, and shareable. Moreover, their delicious flavor can bring pleasure to the recipient (Lin, 2017).

In Filipino culture, "pasalubong" refers to a souvenirs brought from a destination and given to the recipient. When someone from place A travels to place B, they bring back typical gifts (pasa) from area B to their relatives in place A (salubong). This happens in order to help their prior community in place A understand and embrace the new culture of B, which is reflected by the souvenirs (Agonos, 2019).

In contrast to Eastern culture, the practice of giving souvenirs is not commonly observed in Western culture. Yang (2018) states that Western culture and philosophy value individualism and personal growth, placing a high importance on individual ideals in Western countries. According to Mynttinen et al. (2015), the majority of Russian tourists who visited South Savo in Finland expressed a strong desire to taste a

wide range of native gastronomy in the region. They have a desire to purchase a beautifully designed gift as a souvenir, however it is not their primary interest. This statement contradicts the explanation provided by travellers from Eastern cultures, who consider giving souvenirs as a recommendation. In reality, the significance of souvenirs lies in the rise that they give to the self-esteem of tourists in the presence of their family or colleagues (Lin, 2017).

The Meaning of Giving Food According to Islam

Indonesia has the title of having the highest Muslim population globally. Bayu (2022) reported that as of December 31, 2021, the total number of Muslims in Indonesia amounted to 237.5 million individuals, which accounted for 86.9% of the country's overall population. Islamic teachings have a significant influence on the majority of Indonesian society. There are several hadiths that suggest the importance of giving food as an expression of kindness. 1) According to Abu Hurairah, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stated "Giving presents promotes the growth of feelings of affection between individuals." (Bukhori); 2) According to Ibn Abbas, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stated "Share food gifts among yourselves, as this act will increase the opportunities of livelihood."; 3) According to Abidzar, Rasulullah (peace be upon him) advised "O Abidzar, when you cook, add more sauce than give it to your neighbors"; 4) According to Ka'ab Ibn Ujroh, Rasulullah (peace be upon him) said that "Prayer serves as evidence of one's Muslim identity, fasting acts as a protective barrier, and giving gifts can erase mistakes or sins, similar to how water extinguishes fire (Tirmidzi).

These four hadiths provide evidence that providing presents or charity, particularly in the form of food, is

encouraged in Islamic beliefs, especially when given to close individuals. The essence of the first hadith lies in the fact that giving a gift generates a sense of affection and respect for the recipient from the giver. This matches the findings of the research, which indicate that the act of giving food souvenirs is strongly rooted in culture and has the ability to emotionally impact the recipient.

The Meaning of Giving Food in Indonesian Culture

Indonesia is a nation consisting of diverse tribes that contribute to cultural variety, including the practice of communal giving food. The 'ater-ater' tradition, observed by the Javanese people (Pangastuti et al., 2021), and the 'ter-ater' tradition, practiced by the Madurese people, involve the act of sending food to relatives or neighbors before holidays or celebrations. This tradition serves multiple purposes, including maintaining social connections, fostering intergenerational communication, blessings, reinforcing familial ties, and showing respect to neighbors.

In Minangkabau society, the tradition of 'maantaan pabukoan' requires a daughter-in-law to give food gift to her 'mintuo' (in-laws) throughout the month of Ramadan. The Minangkabau people follow a tradition that emphasizes friendship and mutual support between both sides of the family through a marriage system. This involves not only providing food to the house of the mintuo or mamak, but also following Islamic values such as giving, obedience, and respect towards the elderly. Additionally, it symbolizes the wife's obedience to her husband (Waryono & Syarif, 2021). Similarly, the Palembang community is renowned for its traditional dessert called maksuba cake. This delicious dessert is prepared using ingredients such as milk, butter, and eggs. It is typically reserved for special

occasions and serves as a heartfelt present from children to their parents or in-laws. Maksud cake is also served to honor guests during parties and official gatherings (Ernatip, 2010).

The practice of giving food as gifts, rooted in the archipelago's ethnic group's values of familial ties and emotional intimacy, has evolved into a widespread tradition of bringing food souvenirs for family and friends when returning home or after traveling outside their place of origin.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it was evident that the respondents continue to follow and practice the tradition of giving food souvenirs to their family members or important people in their lives. The act of giving food souvenirs was greatly influenced by emotional elements. The emotional closeness between generation Z and someone directly correlates with the intensity of generation Z's willingness to give food souvenirs onto them, and vice versa. The tradition of giving food souvenirs was also shaped by cultural influences and familial norms surrounding the act of gifting food. As the impact of family values on food-giving increases, so does the tendency of Generation Z to offer food souvenirs to their family members or friends. In addition, Islam and Eastern cultures also have a tradition of giving others food. Therefore, it indicated that Generation Z continues to embrace the tradition of giving food souvenirs since it was a manifestation of Eastern culture and these positive values were also rooted in their families.

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