

# Food Preferences of Generation Z Shaped by Lifestyle

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**Abstract:** Food is an integral part of one's daily life. It is something that provide nutrients to one's body that may bring growth, energy and even happiness to every individual. In line with that, food has variety of factors that aids to shaped a person's preferences with regards to the dish they will eat. This can be about one's financial capability, for how much they can spend on the foods that will suit their preferences. This research aspires to figure out the factors affecting a person's lifestyle in terms of food preferences. This study utilized a quantitative-style descriptive research design, where researchers interviewed 103 respondents from the Generation Z residing in Dasmariñas City, Cavite. As a result of completing the procedure, the researchers learned how the factors influenced the respondents as a person by shaping their lifestyle and how they come up with those preferences. Accordingly, this study increases one's understanding with regards to the food preferences in shaping their lifestyles and can also be used as a basis for future studies with similar topic.

**Keywords:** Food, daily life, Generation Z residing, lifestyle.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Food is one of the predominant things that develop human perceptions and shaped the senses and experiences of an individual in terms of various events. In culture definition, it is determined by the influences of various aspects such as attitudes, religion and tradition. Different cultures have varieties of food and ingredients and this is a fusion of foods with their culture, (Sibal, 2018). In this present time, food is merely not part of the basic necessities for human beings to live, but also became part of the great sources of pleasures, particularly in the matter of preferences. Through various aspects, it brings out the diversity of every individual that makes them uniquely different with one another that will create a whole new society. As food exerts influences on people, in sooth, it provides a huge contribution to their choices and preferences with regards to the meal they will take.

Human tastes have developed in many different ways. The ability of humans to taste and smell immensely benefit them to identify the various substances and food nutrients, as well as the contaminated one.

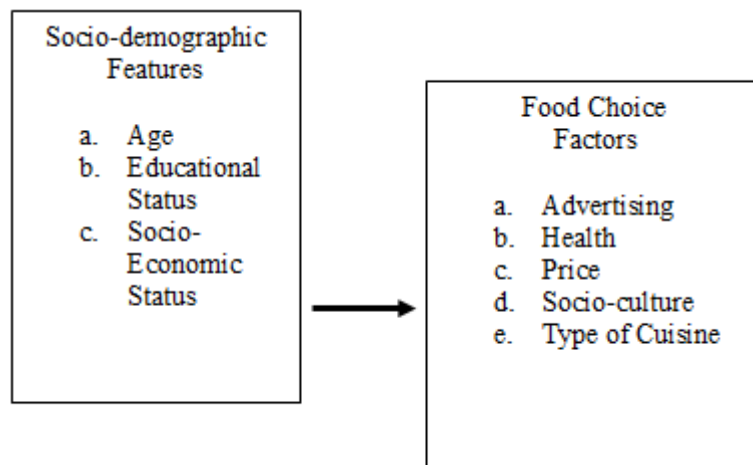
Through perceiving flavors, the development of food preferences slowly begins. A food preference is making a food choice based on what people enjoy most, find most satisfying, feel best eating, etc. based on their body's needs and desires, (Christensen, 2020). It includes attitudes expressed by human beings when it comes to different cuisines. As food preferences significantly formed by the taste, the assumption in determining one's lifestyle is getting prominent.

In this present time, Filipino people are very inclined to cook varieties of delicious and flavorful dishes each and every day, particularly in this situation where pandemic still occurs. Thus, sort of new and great dishes attracts people's palate, especially the Generation Z. These people who are raised in the world of cyberspace and social media, are most probably to be pickier with the foods they will eat in order to get satisfied. This newest generation were born between 1996 and 2010, and is also known as "Zoomers", (Tetrault, 2020). Also, this peer group is the most tech-savvy generation. (Aveard, 2018)

As becoming digital natives, social media enhances the food choices of this young generation by seeing savory foods, online. They were very open to various food experiences where their appetites will get satisfied. Those preferences can usually pertain to various factors that shaped their lifestyle, such as food advertisements, health, food prices, socio-cultural impact and different cuisine types. More than half of this generation usually explore different kinds of foods to satisfy their appetites and they were more likely to find food that will meet their choices. In these present times, young generations are very willing to put a great deal of spending for the experiences, and these includes their food preferences.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The figure shows the conceptual framework of the study. The demographic profiles of the respondents, Generation Z, such as Age, Educational Status, and Socio-Economic Status are considered as the independent variables, whereas food preferences factors, such as Advertising, Health, Price, Socio-culture, and Type of Cuisine are the dependent variables. Moreover, food preferences factors may depend on the demographic profiles of the respondents.



**Figure 1: Socio-demographic Features and Food Choice Factors**

### **Statement of the Problem**

This study aimed to assess the food preferences of the Filipino people in the newest generation including their food choice factors, which the purpose is to determine how factors shaped their lifestyles and how it is related to the socio-demographic profile of this generation. The researchers used the Quantitative type of research. The participants of the study will be the people included in the Generation Z that is born between 1996 and 2010 to furtherly gain substantial information to the participants that will be used as a sample in conducting a survey.

To fulfill the study, the researchers formulated three (3) problem statements to be able to get more profound results. The researchers obtained the demographic profile of the respondents that will help to determine the lifestyles of the said participants. The study has five (5) dependent variables that measured and identify the food preferences of the respondents.

The five (5) food choice factors were used to gather and collect the data of every respondent of the newest generation with regards to their preferences on food when it comes to advertisements, health, price, socio-cultural influences and type of cuisine.

The study would like to determine the significant relationship between the socio-demographic profiles of the respondents and their food assessment choice.

Specifically, the following questions were answered by the study:

1. What is the lifestyle of the Generation Z in terms of a. age b. educational attainment c. socio-economic status?
2. How do the respondents assess the food choice factors in terms of a. advertising b. health c. price d. socio-culture e. type of cuisine?
3. Is there any significant relationship between the socio-demographic profile of the respondents and their food choice assessment?

### *Significance of the Study*

The result of the study aims to bring an essential benefit to the following:

**Students.** The study will provide these individuals an enlightenment regarding what is good and not good to eat based on their ages, to practically avoid such complex diseases, particularly obesity since young people are high risk of it due to their personal preferences on foods.

**Professors.** The study will provide these professionals a substantial information on different food preferences and how it affects food choices, not just of their students but also the young people around them.

**Parents.** The study will give them a sufficient information concerning their children's health who are part of the Generation Z and to be able to make changes in their food preferences since they also have a large influence on the food choices of their children as they provide foods to feed them.

**Households.** The study will be able to bring knowledge to other people inside home regarding the effects of inappropriate intake of nutrients of several children due to personal food preferences.

**Future Researchers.** This paper may use by the researchers as a guide to set out another study in the future that corresponds to the food preferences of the people in Generation Z and how their choices shaped their lifestyle. This may use as a reference for more studies in the future.

**Community.** The study will help to lessen the impact of unhealthy foods such as junk foods that is commonly included to a person's food preferences that is usually high in salt, to the people of the newest generation. This study takes place in the community to have better access to healthy foods that will provide a benefit to physical health.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Evidence about the drivers of food choice among this audience is limited, but the evidence that does exist points to price being a strong influence on food purchase decisions, and a more important a factor compared to other age groups. Gen Z also say that social media is an influence on their decisions about where to eat. (Britain thinks insight and strategy, 2019)

According to Gunter (2016) reviews empirical evidence concerning the influences of food advertising on consumers' food preferences. The focus, again, is placed on what is known about how advertising can affect children's developing food choices. Although parents exert the greatest initial influences over children's diet before they start school children begin to develop an initial awareness of brand names and associate these with foods they like or dislike.

The determinants of food choice. These determinants include dietary components (e.g. highly palatable foods and alcohol), but also diverse cultural and social pressures, cognitive-affective factors (perceived stress, health attitude, anxiety and depression), and familial, genetic and epigenetic influences on personality characteristics. Our choices are influenced by how foods are marketed and labelled and by economic factors, and they reflect both habits and goals, moderated, albeit imperfectly, by an individual understanding of what constitutes 'healthy eating'. (Leng et al., 2016)

According to Santillan et al. (2019) This study focused on the significant differences in choosing a destination brought by the sociodemographic of DLSU-D employees using a theoretical framework formulated in relation to Push-Pull theory. Unlike other studies, this considered all the demographics in examining its differences. Through Analysis of Variance and t-test, income and religion were known to show a significant difference in destination selection.

## 3. METHODOLOGY

### *Research Design*

This study uses the quantitative-style descriptive research method in gathering the needed data that were collected online. This method is more suitable for this study as it requires numerical data from a certain population to come up with effective results as compared to opinionated responses received during qualitative studies.

### *Research Locale*

The researchers conducted the study in Dasmariñas City, Cavite. The respondents answered the survey questionnaires through Google Forms. The study was conducted in the first semester of the school year 2021 – 2022.

### *Participants of the Study and Research Sampling*

The target participants for this study are the people being part of Generation Z living in Dasmariñas City, Cavite, Philippines. There are total of 103 respondents for this study. According to Al-Balqa' Applied University (2018), researchers regard 100 participants as the minimum sample size when the population is large, which will be the case for this study. As for how the participants were selected, convenience sampling was used. Convenience sampling (also called accidental sampling or grab sampling) is where people included are those who are easy to reach. According to Barbara Sommer at UC Davis, "It's a matter of taking what you can get".

### *Research Instrument and Data Gathering Procedure*

The research instrument used for data gathering is a survey questionnaire held online via Google Forms. This survey has two parts, with the first part being the demographic profiling of the participant using Multiple Choice Demographic Questions and the second part being the assessment of their food preferences using the Likert Scale.

As stated previously, 100 participants are set as the minimum sample size when the population is large. Consequently, it is the case for this study which the target participants are a member of Generation Z living in the Philippines, specifically in Dasmariñas City, Cavite. For that reason, the researchers stucked with 100 participants as their minimum, and they managed to survey 103 respondents in total. The researchers selected the 103 respondents through convenience sampling (as stated in the research sampling portion of the paper) and they were informed about the purpose of the study. Each participant was given a letter of request to conduct the study. Once filled up and returned, an access to an online questionnaire was provided by giving them a link to Google Forms, where they answered the survey, starting with the demographic profiling down to the assessment of food preferences. The researchers collected the data gathered from all 103 respondents who answered the survey questionnaire online and undergone analyzation.

### *Statistical Treatment of Data*

The data gathered from this research is analyzed with the help of a statistician. According to Park (2021) The T-Test compares two groups, while ANOVA can do more than two groups. The data is calculated using the weighted mean to get the average of the variables collected. ANOVA or T-test is used for gathered demographic profiles and assessments for each participant.

## **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

This chapter presents the survey results in a tabular form gathered from the 103 respondents. The first section presents the demographic profile of Generation Z residing in Dasmariñas City, Cavite. The second section presents the data result of the respondents' assessment in their food choice factors in terms of advertising, health, price, socio-culture and type of cuisine. The third section presents the findings determining the significant relationship between the socio-demographic profile and food choice assessment of the respondents.

**Table 1: The lifestyle of Generation Z in terms of age.**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
18 - 20 years old	50	48.544
21 - 23 years old	38	36.893
24 - 26 years old	15	14.563
<b>Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>100</b>

The result shows that there were total of 103 respondents, classified by certain age group of 18 – 20, 21 – 23, and 24 – 26 years old. The frequency also shows that the age group of 18 – 20 years old has the largest data with 48.544%, whereas the age group of 24 – 26 years old has the smallest data of 14.563%. While the age group, 21 – 23 years old, has the frequency of 38 and a percentage of 36.893, leading to an average level.

Nowadays, youths are more likely to get snacks at different stores. They are more likely to eat lunch at fast food restaurants or coffee shops and to eat dinner out of the house. In accordance with that, it implies that the youth have a great number of participations in the matter of their food choice factors.

**Table 2: The lifestyle of Generation Z in terms of educational attainment.**

<b>Educational Attainment</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Highschool	26	25.243
College	67	65.049
Post-graduate	10	9.709
<b>Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>100</b>

As shown in the table, the highest educational attainment that the respondents have is at the college level. With that, Generation Z has a large rate of high school graduates with a percentage of 65.049 based on the result. While, the high school level obtained a percentage of 25.243 with a frequency of 26, followed by the post-graduate level with a frequency of 10 and a percentage of 9.709. This implies that most of the respondents are in the college level and that, food choices of college students are determined by a variety of factors including social class, time, cultural practices, media influences, and family structure.

**Table 3: The lifestyle of Generation Z in terms of socio-economic status.**

<b>Socio-economic Status</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
20,999 and below	65	63.107
21,000 and above	38	36.893
<b>Total</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>100</b>

The table shows that the majority of the socio-economic status of the qualified respondents range from 20,999 and below and has a frequency of 65 and a percentage of 63.107. While, respondents with 21,000 and above socio-economic status has the least data of 38 and 36.893%. This may implicit that people of Generation Z whose status are measured by the income of 20,999 and below were more likely to determine their food choices in different food factors. However, a study indicates that people with high socioeconomic status (SES) are more likely to have healthier food habits, whereas people with low SES have dietary profiles less consistent with nutritional recommendations or dietary guidelines, hence contributing to their poorer health status.

**Table 4: The respondents' food choice assessment in terms of advertising.**

<b>Advertising</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Verbal Interpretation</b>
Seeing the products being advertised online (Facebook, YouTube, etc.)	3.282	Strongly Agree
Watching TV Commercials.	2.864	Agree
Hearing about it from friends and other people who have eaten there.	3.612	Strongly Agree
<b>Overall Assessment of Advertising</b>	<b>3.252</b>	<b>Very Important/Very Satisfied</b>

The table presents the data gathered from the 103 respondents with regards to advertisements as their food choice factor. As it is shown, the highest data is the third option which is being informed by some friends or relatives who already experienced it and has a mean distribution of 3.612. The verbal interpretation shows that the respondents were strongly agreeing to this option. While, the least data collected is the second option which is from the TV commercials and has a mean distribution of 2.864. This may show that people of Generation Z are not that fond anymore of watching televisions, instead, they used to see advertisements through social media, which is shown in the first option. The overall assessment of the respondents in terms of advertising is 3.252 and has a high significance or satisfaction in verbal interpretation.

**Table 5: The respondents' food choice assessment in terms of health.**

<b>Health</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Verbal Interpretation</b>
Having food allergies (itchiness, breathing problems, etc.)	2.932	Agree
Undergoing a certain food intake diet (Vegetarian, pescatarian, etc.)	2.379	Agree
Have an eating disorder (not like certain food, binge-eating, anorexia, etc.)	2.291	Agree
<b>Overall Assessment of Health</b>	<b>2.534</b>	<b>Important/Satisfied</b>

The table presents the data gathered from the 103 respondents with regards to health as their food choice factor. As it is shown, the highest data is the first option which is having food allergies and has a mean distribution of 2.932. The verbal interpretation shows that the respondents were agreeing to this option. While, the least data collected is the third option which is having an eating disorder and has a mean distribution of 2.291. While, the second option of undergoing a certain food intake diet has a mean of 2.379 and verbal interpretation of “agree”. The overall assessment of the respondents in terms of health is 2.534 and has a moderate significance or satisfaction in verbal interpretation.

**Table 6: The respondents’ food choice assessment in terms of price.**

Price	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Buffets and other big restaurants	3.155	Agree
Fast Food Restaurants	3.359	Strongly Agree
Small Cafeterias	3.311	Strongly Agree
<b>Overall Assessment of Price</b>	<b>3.275</b>	<b>Very Important/Very Satisfied</b>

The table presents the data gathered from the 103 respondents with regards to price as their food choice factor. As it is shown, the highest data is the second option which is the fast-food restaurants and has a mean distribution of 3.359. The verbal interpretation shows that the respondents were strongly agreeing to this option. While, the least data collected is the first option which is the buffets and other big restaurants and has a mean distribution of 3.155. This implies that the respondents were more likely to eat in a restaurant with affordable prices, since most of the big resto offers prices per pax depending on the meal category. Nonetheless, the highest data is followed by the third option which is small cafeterias and has a mean distribution of 3.311. The overall assessment of the respondents in terms of price is 3.275 and has a high significance or satisfaction in verbal interpretation.

**Table 7: The respondents’ food choice assessment in terms of socio-culture.**

Socio-Culture	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Social Circle	3.146	Agree
Residential Area	3.019	Agree
Family	3.573	Strongly Agree
<b>Overall Assessment of Socio-Culture</b>	<b>3.246</b>	<b>Important/Satisfied</b>

The table presents the data gathered from the 103 respondents with regards to socio-cultural influences as their food choice factor. As it is shown, the highest data is the third option which is family and has a mean distribution of 3.573. The verbal interpretation shows that the respondents were strongly agreeing to this option. While, the least data collected is the second option which is the residential area and has a mean distribution of 3.019. While, the first option, which is the social circle, gathered a mean distribution of 3.146 and has an agreeable verbal interpretation. Overall, the total assessment of the respondents in terms of socio-cultural influences is 3.246 and has a moderate significance or satisfaction in verbal interpretation.

**Table 8: The respondents’ food choice assessment in terms of type of cuisine.**

Type of Cuisine	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
Local Filipino Food (Sinigang, Sisig, Adobo, etc.)	3.495	Strongly Agree
Asian-based foods (Japanese, Chinese, Korean, etc.)	3.544	Strongly Agree
Western-style Cuisine (American, Mexican, French, etc.)	3.369	Strongly Agree
<b>Overall Assessment of Type of Cuisine</b>	<b>3.469</b>	<b>Very Important/Very Satisfied</b>

The table presents the data gathered from the 103 respondents with regards to type of cuisine as their food choice factor. As it is shown, the highest data is the second option which is Asian-based foods (Japanese, Chinese, Korean, etc.) and has a mean distribution of 3.544. The verbal interpretation shows that the respondents were strongly agreeing to this option. Subsequently, it is followed by the option of Local Filipino Food (Sinigang, Sisig, Adobo, etc.) and gathered a mean distribution of 3.495 and has a strong agreeable verbal interpretation. While the least data collected is the third option which is the Western-style Cuisine (American, Mexican, French, etc.) and has a mean distribution of 3.369. Nevertheless, the respondents were strongly agreeing to this option. Overall, the total assessment of the respondents in terms of cuisine type is 3.469 and has a high significance or satisfaction in verbal interpretation.

Table 9: The significance between the respondents' socio-demographic profile and food choice assessment.

**Table 9.1: Age vs. Food Choice Assessment**

Age vs food choice assessment	Chi-square value	p-value	Verbal interpretation
Advertising	2.513	0.285	Not significant
Health	2.957	0.398	Not significant
Price	1.094	0.296	Not significant
Socio-Culture	0.442	0.802	Not significant
Type of Cuisine	1.158	0.282	Not significant
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	<b>2.98</b>	<b>0.225</b>	<b>Not significant</b>

There is no significant relationship between the age of the respondents and their food choice assessment. Specifically, there is no significant relationship between age of the respondents and their assessment of advertising, health, price, socio-culture and type of cuisine since the chi-square values of 2.513, 2.957, 1.094, 0.442 and 1.158 have p-values greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis of no significant relationship is not rejected.

Thus, age does not affect the assessment of the respondents on advertising, health, price, socio-culture and type of cuisine.

Likewise, there is no significant relationship between the age of the respondents and overall assessment of food choice since the chi-square value of 2.98 has a p-value greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis of no significant relationship is not rejected. Thus, age does not affect the overall assessment of the respondents of their food choice.

**Table 9.2: Educational Attainment vs. Food Choice Assessment**

Educational attainment vs food choice assessment	Chi-square value	p-value	Verbal interpretation
Advertising	1.468	0.226	Not significant
Health	1.16	0.763	Not significant
Price	0.583	0.445	Not significant
Socio-Culture	1.918	0.383	Not significant
Type of Cuisine	0.391	0.532	Not significant
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	<b>0.961</b>	<b>0.618</b>	<b>Not significant</b>

There is no significant relationship between the educational attainment of the respondents and their food choice assessment. Specifically, there is no significant relationship between educational attainment of the respondents and their assessment of advertising, health, price, socio-culture and type of cuisine since the chi-square values of 1.468, 1.16, 0.583, 1.918, and 0.391 have p-values greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis of no significant relationship is not rejected.

Thus, educational attainment does not affect the assessment of the respondents on advertising, health, price, socio-culture and type of cuisine.

Likewise, there is no significant relationship between the educational attainment of the respondents and Overall assessment of food choice since the chi-square value of 2.98 has a p-value greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis of no significant relationship is not rejected. Thus, educational attainment does not affect the overall assessment of the respondents of their food choice.

**Table 9.3: Socio-economic Status vs. Food Choice Assessment**

Socio-economic Status vs food choice assessment	Chi-square value	p-value	Verbal interpretation
Advertising	0.864	0.353	Not significant
Health	0.923	0.82	Not significant
Price	3.754	0.053	Not significant
Socio-Culture	1.875	0.392	Not significant
Type of Cuisine	0.033	0.855	Not significant
<b>Overall Assessment</b>	<b>4.694</b>	<b>0.096</b>	<b>Not significant</b>

There is no significant relationship between the socio-economic status of the respondents and their food choice assessment. Specifically, there is no significant relationship between socio-economic status of the respondents and their assessment of advertising, health, price, socio-culture and type of cuisine since the chi-square values of 0.864, 0.923, 3.754, 1.875 and 0.033 have p-values greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis of no significant relationship is not rejected.

Thus, socio-economic status does not affect the assessment of the respondents on advertising, health, price, socio-culture and type of cuisine.

Likewise, there is no significant relationship between the socio-economic status of the respondents and Overall assessment of food choice since the chi-square value of 4.694 has a p-value greater than 0.05. The null hypothesis of no significant relationship is not rejected. Thus, socio-economic status does not affect the overall assessment of the respondents of their food choice.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis of the socio-demographic profiling of the qualified respondents, in terms of age, the age group of 18 – 20 years had the largest amount of data answered in the survey conducted online. While, in terms of educational attainment, most of the respondents are said to be at the college level. Lastly, with regards to the respondents' socio-economic status, the result shows that the respondents with an income of 20,999 and below had the highest amount of data answered. In line with this, the following are the results of the respondents' food choice assessment. For the assessment of advertising, the mean value is 3.252 and showed a very important interpretation. As per the health assessment, it has a mean of 2.534 and a verbal interpretation of "important/satisfied". In the assessment of price, 3.275 is the mean value, resulted with a very important interpretation. For the socio-culture assessment, the mean value is 3.246 and has an "important/satisfied" as its interpretation. As per the assessment of cuisine types, 3.469 is the mean and has a verbal interpretation of "very important". Overall, the result of the survey says that in terms of the demographic profiling and the respondents' food choice assessment, there is no significant relationship between the variables. However, it does not affect the overall assessment of the respondents of their food choice.

## 6. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings and data gathered, we, the researchers, believed that all the information provided in this study can be of good use for the next generation. With that, the factors that was used to gather all data should be expanded as the next generation will have changes when it comes to their preferences, particularly on their food choices. The respondents, as well as the people in the next generation, should have more awareness when it comes to their food choices as it will not just shape their lifestyle, but may also bring some benefits to their overall health. This study may also be applied to other cities where people may have a variety of different food options compared to the ones living in Dasmariñas.

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