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Characteristics of Generation Z Coffee Consumers in Surakarta: A Study of Behavior and Preferences

Rahmawati Setiyani^{1*}, Lathifah Khairani², Rajendra Agidya Putra³

^{1,3} Universitas Duta Bangsa Surakarta

² Universitas Bengkulu

Corresponding Author: Rahmawati Setiyani; rahmawati_setiyani@udb.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

One of the leading agricultural commodities in Indonesia's plantation subsector is coffee. Coffee consumption in Indonesia has shown year-over-year growth. The city of Surakarta is an urban area experiencing rapid development in various aspects, including the economy, social life, and the service sector, making it a promising location for the growth of coffee shop businesses. This study aims to analyze the characteristics, consumption behavior, and preferences of Generation Z coffee consumers in Surakarta. The study was conducted in Surakarta using a descriptive quantitative approach via a survey method. Based on the research findings regarding the characteristics of Generation Z coffee consumers in Surakarta, it can be concluded that these consumers are predominantly female, aged 17–21, are college students, and have a monthly income of less than Rp500,000. In terms of purchasing behavior, consumers prefer to make purchases in person (offline) rather than through other methods. Product price is the primary consideration in determining where to make a purchase, with consumers tending to choose coffee offered at relatively affordable prices. Additionally, the majority of consumers prefer their coffee served cold. These findings indicate that the respondents' coffee consumption preferences are related to demographic characteristics, purchasing power, and considerations

INTRODUCTION

One of the leading agricultural commodities in Indonesia's plantation subsector is coffee. The coffee plant (*Coffea* sp.) is a perennial plant native to Africa and South Asia and belongs to the Rubiaceae family. Generally, there are three well-known coffee species: *Coffea arabica*, *Coffea canephora*, and *Coffea liberica* (Fitriyah et al., 2021). The cultivation of coffee in Indonesia has a long history, with the first recorded introduction of coffee—specifically Arabica coffee—dating back to 1699. As one of the world's leading coffee producers, Indonesia plays a strategic role in supporting the dynamics and development of the global coffee trade (Fitriyah et al., 2021). Coffee consumption in Indonesia showed a 4.04% increase from the previous period, with total

consumption recorded at 4.81 million bags, each with a capacity of 60 kg (Raweroz et al., 2023).

Dried coffee bean production in Indonesia in 2024 was recorded at 813.34 thousand metric tons, an increase of 7.19% compared to the previous year's production (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2025). During the production process, coffee processing using various methods can influence the resulting flavor profile characteristics. These differences in characteristics can ultimately provide diverse added value to coffee products (Radjendra & Dewi, 2025). Coffee is a widely consumed and popular beverage among people in various countries, including Indonesia. A cup of coffee can be part of a social identity that coffee lovers use to express themselves and

demonstrate their presence and belonging within a social group (Ilham et al., 2019).

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Although coffee consumption in Indonesia is on the rise, particularly among younger generations, empirical research specifically examining Generation Z's coffee consumption behavior at the local level remains relatively limited. Previous studies have tended to focus on consumer preferences at modern coffee shops or on the marketing aspects of coffee products. Meanwhile, studies that examine Generation Z's consumption behavior more comprehensively still need to be developed. Given these circumstances, research on Generation Z's coffee consumption behavior in Surakarta is essential to gain insight into the characteristics and consumption patterns of this consumer group. The research findings are expected to provide useful information for coffee shop business owners in understanding their consumers' characteristics, while also serving as input for the development of the creative economy sector in Surakarta. This study aims to analyze the characteristics, consumption behavior, and preferences of Generation Z coffee consumers in Surakarta.

METHODS

This study was conducted in the city of Surakarta using a descriptive quantitative approach via a survey method. This approach was used to

obtain an overview of the characteristics, behaviors, and coffee consumption preferences of Generation Z based on data collected from respondents through a structured questionnaire. The data obtained were then analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify the distribution, trends, and patterns of the variables under study.

Respondents were selected using accidental sampling, which involves selecting respondents whom the researcher encountered by chance and who met the predetermined criteria. The criteria for respondents in this study included coffee consumers who belong to Generation Z and reside in Surakarta. Respondents who met these criteria were considered capable of providing information relevant to the research objectives (Sugiyono, 2013). A total of 30 respondents were included. This number was selected as the research sample, taking into account the descriptive nature of the study. Therefore, the results of this study are intended to describe the characteristics, behaviors, and preferences of the respondents studied and are not meant to generalize the findings to the entire Generation Z population in Surakarta.

The research data consists of primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected through interviews using a structured questionnaire administered to respondents. The questionnaire included questions regarding the respondents' characteristics, coffee consumption behavior, and preferences regarding coffee products and places of consumption. Secondary data was obtained from publications by the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), scientific articles, and other literature sources relevant to the research topic.

The collected data was then examined, grouped, and tabulated to facilitate processing and interpretation. Data analysis was conducted using percentage-based descriptive statistics. This analysis was used to describe the distribution of respondent characteristics, the frequency of coffee consumption, the time of consumption, the types of coffee chosen, and the preferred locations for purchasing or consuming coffee. The results of the analysis were then presented in the form of tables and descriptive narratives to provide an overview of the characteristics, behaviors, and coffee consumption preferences of Generation Z respondents in Surakarta.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics

Respondent Characteristics by Gender

Respondent characteristics by gender were used to determine the composition of coffee consumers included in the study. Respondents were classified into two categories, male and female, and then

analyzed to determine the proportion of each group. This information provides an overview of coffee consumer characteristics and serves as a basis for understanding potential differences in consumption behavior and preferences based on gender. Respondent characteristics by gender are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics by Gender

Characteristics	Total	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Women	17	57
Male	13	43
Total	30	100

(Source: Primary Data Analysis, 2026)

Coffee is a beverage consumed by both male and female consumers. According to the research findings, female respondents accounted for a larger proportion 57%, while male respondents accounted for 43%. This indicates that female coffee consumers are quite heavily involved in coffee consumption among the study's respondents. Gender is one factor that may be related to coffee consumption behavior, including preferences for specific types of coffee and frequency of consumption. Sawitri & Yuziani, (2021) states that gender can influence preferences for coffee, the types of coffee consumed, and the frequency of daily coffee consumption. The

increasing involvement of women in coffee culture and the coffee industry also indicates that coffee consumption is no longer dominated by men.

Characteristics of Respondents by Age

Age is one of the demographic characteristics that can influence consumer behavior patterns and decision-making. Differences in age can reflect varying levels of experience, needs, and behavioral tendencies among individuals. The characteristics of respondents by age in this study are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Respondent Characteristics by Age

Characteristics	Total	Percentage (%)
Age (Years)		
17-21	19	63
22-26	11	37
Total	30	100

(Source: Primary Data Analysis, 2026)

Previous research findings indicate that 70.72% of Indonesia's population falls within the productive age group that is, ages 15–64. This situation points to the potential for a demographic dividend, which is expected to be one of the factors supporting Indonesia's development momentum toward "Golden Indonesia 2045." Within this demographic

structure, Generation Z those born between 1997 and 2012, constitutes the largest generational group, accounting for 27.94% of Indonesia's total population, or approximately 74.93 million people (Sunaryanto & Idrus, 2025). The large proportion of Generation Z indicates that this group holds a strategic position in Indonesia's social and economic

dynamics, including in shaping consumption patterns and market preferences. Based on the research findings, respondents were predominantly in the 17–21 age group, accounting for 63%. This age group falls within early adulthood, a phase characterized by increasing independence in making choices and decisions. At this stage, individuals tend to have increasingly developed abilities to weigh various alternatives before making a choice, including in their coffee consumption behavior.

Respondent Characteristics by Status

Respondent characteristics by status are used to describe the main activities respondents engage in during their daily lives. In this study, respondents' status was classified into three groups: students, college students, and workers. This categorization aims to determine the composition of respondents based on their primary activities and to provide an overview of the respondents' backgrounds that may be related to their coffee consumption behavior. Differences in status may reflect variations in the respondents' needs, activities, and consumption patterns regarding coffee products. The distribution of respondents by status is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Respondent Characteristics by Status

Characteristics	Total	Percentage (%)
Status		
Student	2	7
College Student	27	90
Workers	1	3
Total	30	100

(Source: Primary Data Analysis, 2026)

College students are one consumer group that tends to consume coffee. The ease of preparation and consumption is one reason coffee is chosen as a beverage by college students. In addition, coffee consumption among college students may be related to academic activities, such as helping to maintain energy and reduce drowsiness while completing coursework. Lifestyle is one factor that can drive an increase in the consumption of caffeinated beverages, particularly coffee, including among college students (Raweroz et al., 2023).

Respondent Characteristics by Income

Respondent characteristics by income are used to describe the respondents' economic conditions and to determine the distribution of their income levels. Income level may be related to purchasing power and consumer considerations in choosing coffee products and determining purchase frequency. In this study, respondents' income was grouped into several categories based on their income sources, whether from allowance or wages. The distribution of respondent characteristics by income is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Respondent Characteristics by Income

Characteristics	Total	Percentage (%)
Income or Allowance		
Per Month		
Less than Rp. 500.000	20	67
Rp. 500.000 to Rp. 1.000.000	8	27
Rp 1.000.000 to Rp 2.000.000	1	3
More than Rp. 2.000.000	1	3
Total	30	100

(Source: Primary Data Analysis, 2026)

Based on personal income or monthly allowance, the majority of respondents, 67% have an income of less than Rp500,000.00. This indicates that the majority of respondents have a relatively low income level. Nevertheless, coffee remains a popular choice because it is readily available at various locations throughout Surakarta at relatively affordable prices. This situation allows consumers with limited incomes to still access and consume coffee.

Behavioral and Preference Studies

The coffee industry in Indonesia has shown steady growth year after year. Coffee is one of the most widely consumed and popular beverages among the Indonesian public. A study of consumer behavior and preferences was conducted to identify consumption patterns and the purchasing tendencies of Generation Z regarding coffee products in Surakarta. Table 5 presents data on the preferred methods of ordering coffee among Generation Z consumers in Surakarta.

Table 5. Preferred Methods of Ordering Coffee

Methods for Ordering Your Favorite Coffee	Total	Percentage (%)
Come in Person (Offline)	29	97
Through the App (Online)	1	3
Total	30	100

(Source: Primary Data Analysis, 2026)

Based on Table 5, the preferred method of ordering coffee among Generation Z consumers in Surakarta is visiting a coffee shop in person (offline), at a rate of 97%. This aligns with Ilham et al., (2019) research, which states that for some people, coffee consumption is not only related to its physiological function in helping to reduce drowsiness but also has social and symbolic dimensions. The high preference for in-person ordering indicates that for Generation Z, coffee consumption is not merely about obtaining the coffee product but is also tied to the social experiences and interactions they have while at the coffee shop. Consumers can enjoy the shop's atmosphere, interact with friends and other customers, and use the coffee shop as a space for socializing, discussing topics, or engaging in various

other activities. Thus, the high preference for offline ordering indicates that coffee shops serve a broader function for Generation Z, not only as a place to obtain and enjoy coffee, but also as a space for social interaction and the creation of consumption experiences. Based on interview results with respondents, more than half of Generation Z respondents in Surakarta have been drinking coffee for over three years. This finding suggests that coffee consumption has become a relatively established habit in the lives of Generation Z. This relatively long duration of consumption also indicates that coffee is not merely viewed as a beverage but has evolved into an integral part of this demographic group's lifestyle and daily routine.

Table 6 presents data on the reasons Generation Z consumers in Surakarta choose where to buy coffee.

Reasons for Choosing a Location to Buy Coffee	Total	Percentage (%)
It's a comfortable place	8	27
Relatively inexpensive	10	33
Close to home	5	17
Has amenities such as Wi-Fi	4	13
It tastes good	2	7
The coffee is of good quality	1	3
Total	30	100

(Source: Primary Data Analysis, 2026)

Based on the data in Table 6, the main reason consumers choose where to buy coffee is the relatively low price, cited by 33% of respondents, or 10 respondents. This indicates that price is an important consideration for consumers when deciding where to buy coffee. Furthermore, 27% of respondents chose a location because it was comfortable, while 17% considered a location close to home. Thirteen percent of respondents chose a coffee shop because it offered amenities such as Wi-Fi, which provides convenience for consumers to engage in various activities while at the shop. Meanwhile, 7% of respondents cited a comfortable atmosphere as their reason, and 3% considered the quality of the coffee. Overall, these findings indicate that consumers' decisions regarding where to buy coffee are influenced not only by price but also by the comfort of the venue, ease of access, and available amenities. Consequently, coffee shops that

can offer affordable prices while providing comfort and amenities that support customers' activities are likely to be more popular.

These findings indicate that coffee shop business owners need to consider broader aspects than just product quality. Offering competitive prices, creating a comfortable atmosphere, choosing easily accessible locations, and providing supporting facilities can serve as strategies to increase appeal and retain customers. Business owners need to closely monitor the pace of competitors' expansion to assess the extent of threats in their immediate environment and identify strategies to ensure the company's survival amid competition, which poses a significant threat if a competitive advantage is not established (Lubis et al., 2020).

Table 7 presents data on the preferred ways for Generation Z consumers in Surakarta to enjoy coffee.

Table 7. Preferred Ways to Enjoy Coffee

The Experience of Enjoying Your Favorite Coffee	Total	Percentage (%)
Warm	9	30
Cold	21	70
Total	30	100

(Source: Primary Data Analysis, 2026)

Based on the results of the primary data analysis in Table 7, the most preferred way to enjoy coffee among respondents was cold coffee, with 21 respondents, or 70%. Meanwhile, 9 respondents, or 30%, preferred warm coffee. These findings indicate that the consumption of cold coffee is more prevalent than that of warm coffee among the study's respondents. This preference may reflect a shift in coffee consumption patterns, where coffee is no longer consumed solely as a beverage to warm the body or reduce drowsiness, but also as a drink that can be enjoyed in various settings and circumstances.

The prevalence of cold coffee choices can also be linked to current coffee consumption trends among consumers, who tend to prioritize freshness, flavor, and the overall experience when enjoying coffee. Cold coffee, including various types of iced

beverages, offers a more refreshing sensation, making it a popular choice for daily consumption. Additionally, the diverse ways cold coffee is served provide consumers with a wider range of flavor and presentation options. Nevertheless, the fact that 30% of respondents chose hot coffee indicates that hot coffee still has its fans and remains part of consumer preferences. Overall, these results show that preferences regarding coffee temperature in this study lean more toward cold coffee; thus, presentation and product variety for cold coffee can be a key consideration for businesses in tailoring their products to consumer tastes. It is important for a business to maintain the flavor of its existing products and then develop them to achieve better quality, as quality significantly influences

consumers' purchasing decisions regarding a product (Rozak et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of a study on the characteristics of Generation Z coffee consumers in Surakarta, it can be concluded that these consumers are predominantly women aged 17–21, who are college students and have an income of less than Rp500,000 per month. In terms of purchasing behavior, consumers prefer to make purchases in person (offline) rather than through other methods. Product price is the primary consideration in determining where to make a purchase, with consumers tending to choose coffee offered at relatively affordable prices. Additionally, the majority of consumers prefer their coffee served cold. These findings indicate that the respondents' coffee consumption preferences are related to demographic characteristics, purchasing power, as well as considerations regarding price and the form of product presentation that align with consumer tastes. Further research is recommended to expand the scope of the study and increase the number of respondents in order to obtain more comprehensive results that can provide a broader picture of the situation.

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