

# Indonesian Food and Health Issues

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## Abstract

Health issues in developing countries are crucial. Because developing countries often have lower education standards compared to developed countries, people tend to not have enough knowledge of the relationship between food and health. When we arrived to Indonesia and ate Indonesian food for the first time, we noticed that the number of calories and the amount of sugars and oil used was way beyond our standards. Thus, we decided to do a research on Indonesian eating habits and compare it to the worldwide standard which institutions such as World Health Organization (WHO) recommends. By thoroughly understanding the problems of Indonesian eating habits, we aim to know more about Indonesian lifestyle. This poster will analyze the collected data of Indonesian eating habits and sugar consumption to explain the Indonesian's attitude towards health, as well as comparing it to the world's guideline and find the issues behind it.

## Method and Location

In this research, we have interviewed people in every destination of the field trip; Lenteng Agung, Pesantren Darunnajah, Pasar, Universitas Indonesia, Seribu Islands, and Islamic University. The total amount of response we had was 35. We analyzed the data achieved and organized it in charts and graphs. The interview consists of **5 questions**, which follows below.

- Q1. What Indonesian food do you like the most?
- Q2. Do you think Indonesian food is healthy?
- Q3. How many times do you eat in a day?
- Q4. How often do you buy a kilogram of sugar?
- Q5. How many hours do you exercise in a week?

We also individually asked the Indonesian students about their attitude towards food and health.

## 3. Indonesian's Sugar Consumption

In Indonesia, people often use sugar for tea, no matter what type of tea it is. They add sugar to green tea, which a lot of the EBA students were surprised about. The average amount of sugar added in tea is approximately **2~3 teaspoons per cup**. Indonesians often drink tea with, or after the meal, which makes it 6~9 teaspoons of sugar a day, just from tea, if they eat 3 times a day. Each teaspoon holds roughly 4g of sugar, so **drinking 3 cups of tea a day, would end up taking 24~36g of sugar**. Ready-made tea contains even more sugar which is 25g/330ml. In the interview, 9 out of 23 people answered that they buy a kilogram of sugar once a week. By simply dividing this amount of sugar by 7days, it could be said that each households consume more than 140g a day. Sugar is also contained in other products. For example, a 250ml mango juice sold in Indonesia contains 23g of sugar. Interviewee in Islamic University, Zuhaira said that because there is an Islamic teaching "**too little is bad, too much is bad**" in Indonesia, people do not actively try to reduce their amount of everyday sugar.

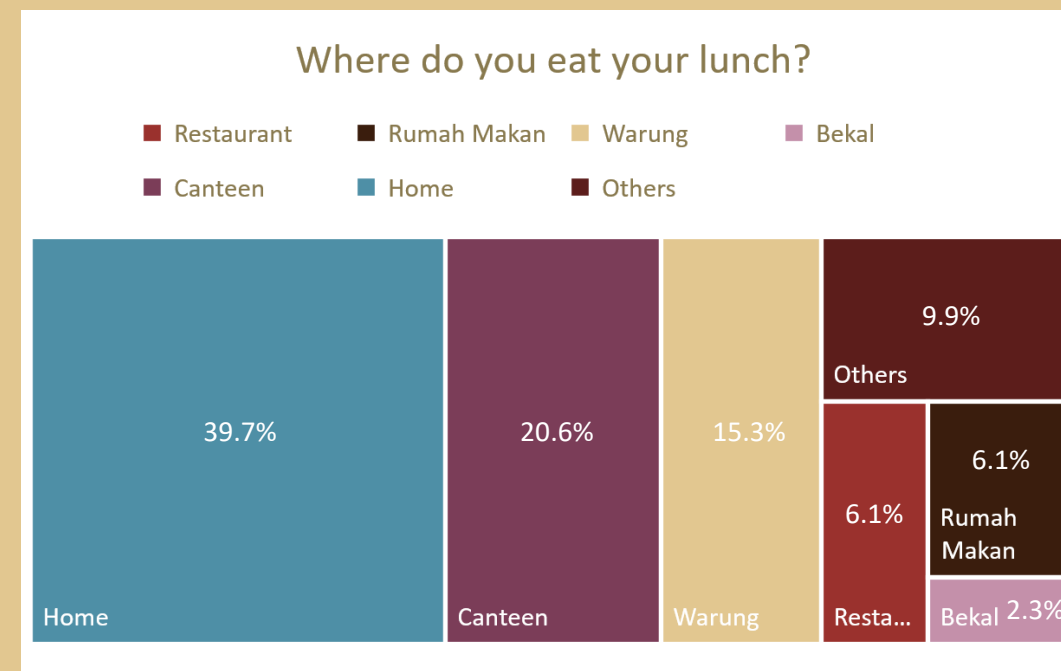
INFORMASI NILAI GIZI / NUTRITION FACTS	
Takaran Saji: 250ml Jumlah Sajian per Kemasan: 1	
Jumlah per Sajian / Amount per Serving	
Energy Total 190 kkal	Energy dari Lemak: 0 kkal
Lemak Total 0g	0%
Lemak Jenuh 0g	0%
Protein 0g	0%
Karbohidrat Total 30g	10%
Serat Pangan 0g	0%
Gula 23g	1%
Natrium 135mg	3%
Vitamin A 95%	35%
Vitamin C 30%	30%
Vitamin B1 30%	30%
Vitamin B2 30%	30%
Vitamin B3 20%	20%
Vitamin B6 20%	20%
Vitamin B9 20%	20%

↑ Nutrition facts of mango juice containing 23g/250ml of sugar

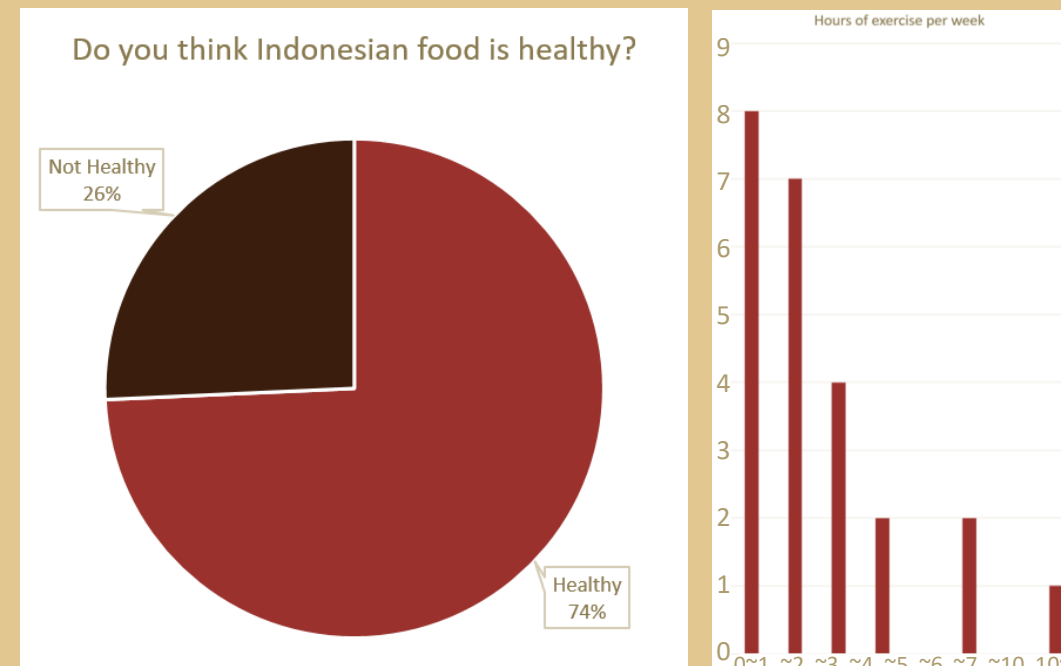
Once a day	1
3 times in 2 days	1
Once in 2 days	1
Once a week	9
Once in 2 weeks	1
Once a month	5
Once in 2 months	1
Once in 3 months	1
Once in 6 months	1
Once in 8 months	1
Once a year	1

Result of Q4. ↑

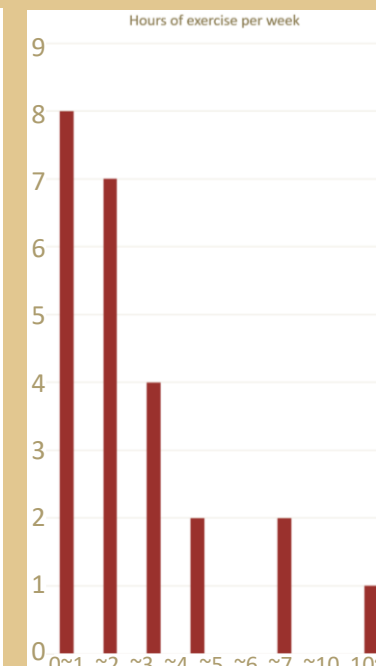
## 1. Indonesian Eating Habits



Where students eat their lunch ↑  
Result of Q2. ↓



Result of Q5. ↓



According to the results, **74%** of the interviewees thought that **Indonesian food is healthy**. Only 39.7% of the students eats lunch in their home, which suggests that **more than 60% of the students like to eat outside**. Furthermore, in individual interviews in Pesantren Darunnajah, most students chose to increase the amount of exercise instead of reducing the amount of oil or sugar. This is because students often live in dormitories or homestays so they do not cook for themselves, which makes it **difficult for them to adjust the amount of ingredients**. Indonesian's hours of exercise per week are mostly 0~2 hours. Indonesian Cuisine is influenced by oily Chinese Cuisine and Islam (Arab) Cuisine which includes a lot of sugar to preserve more calories easily. As a fact, Indonesian's intake calories are highly located in the world ranking.

## 2. Recommended Eating Habits

Recommended intake calories ↓

Age	Male	Female
0 to 3 months	545	515
4 to 6 months	690	645
7 to 9 months	825	765
10 to 12 months	920	865
1 to 3 years	1230	1165
4 to 6 years	1715	1545
7 to 10 years	1970	1740
11 to 14 years	2220	1845
15 to 18 years	2755	2110
<b>19 to 50 years</b>	<b>2550</b>	<b>1940</b>
51 to 59 years	2550	1900
60 to 64 years	2380	1900
65 to 74 years	2330	1900
74+ years	2100	1810

The recommended intake calories in the world are **2550 calories for male** and **1940 calories for female**. (age 19- 50)  
According to a research by National Cancer Institute of US and Harvard University, by **exercising 90 minutes per day**, one would have a longer life by a relatively higher chance. Jakarta Post mentions that "body weight will increase again unless we manage our eating habits," and that "**Managing eating habits is more effective than exercising.**" This means that

Managing eating habits is more effective



than exercising



World Health Organization

## 4. Recommended Sugar Consumption

WHO suggests that a healthy diet contains, "less than 10% of total energy intake from free sugars which is equivalent to 50 g (or around 12 level teaspoons) for a person of healthy body weight consuming approximately 2000 calories per day, but ideally **less than 5% of total energy** intake for additional health benefits (5). Most free sugars are added to foods or drinks by the manufacturer, cook or consumer, and can also be found in sugars naturally present in honey, syrups, fruit juices and fruit juice concentrates," although they strongly suggest to not take over **25g of sugar a day**.



Because the excessive consumption of sugar has recently attracted a great deal of attention of WHO, they are urging all member nations to **tax sugary drinks** and reduce the amount of sugar consumed. Sugary drinks are one of the most easiest ways of taking sugar, so UK have decided to introduce the taxation in 2018, and Philippines and South Africa are now considering it as well, The Guardian (2016) says.

## Conclusion

Nearly **75%** of the Indonesian interviewees believe **Indonesian food is healthy**, and have small attitude to make their food healthier.

Indonesian students **tend to not cook for themselves** so they have a hard time controlling the calorie intake and the amount of oil or sugar.

Although Indonesians don't manage the eating habits, they **exercise 1~2 hours a day**, which is considered as decent amount for a healthy life.

In Indonesia, people drink tea with approximately 2~3 spoons of sugar, and **drinking 3 cups of tea a day, would end up taking 24~36g of sugar**.

WHO says **25g of sugar a day** is the appropriate amount one person should take.

They also think that **taxing sugary drinks** would be a solution to excessive consumption of sugar.

## Reference

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