

# OVERVIEW OF LOCAL FOOD CONSUMPTION PATTERNS AMONG TODDLERS AT THE HOUSEHOLD LEVEL IN THE VILLAGE OF ULANTHA BONE BOLANGO REGENCY

Rizkadayatrina A.I. Lamase<sup>1)</sup>, Niluh Arwati<sup>2)</sup>, Jamaludin Abdi Purwanto<sup>3)</sup>

<sup>1,2,3)</sup> Bina Mandiri University Gorontalo, Indonesia

Email: [riskadayatrina@gmail.com](mailto:riskadayatrina@gmail.com), [niluharwatiskm@gmail.com](mailto:niluharwatiskm@gmail.com),  
[jamaludinabdipurwanto@gmail.com](mailto:jamaludinabdipurwanto@gmail.com)

## ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the pattern of local food consumption among toddlers at the household level in Ulanta Village, Bone Bolango Regency. The type of research used is quantitative descriptive with a cross-sectional approach. The research sample consisted of 30 respondents who were housewives with toddlers, selected using purposive sampling techniques. Data collection was conducted through questionnaires and direct interviews, then analyzed descriptively to obtain frequency distributions and percentages. The results showed that most people still consume local foods such as bananas (90%), local fish (90%), fruits (83.3%), and vegetables (76.7%), while the consumption of cassava (46.7%) and sago (26.7%) is relatively low. Most respondents had good knowledge about the benefits of local foods (53.1%) and considered local foods to be easily available and affordable. A total of 75% of respondents had good eating habits. This study concludes that while local foods are pivotal for toddler nutrition and household food security, their utilization remains suboptimal, particularly for maize and sago, which recorded the lowest consumption levels. Therefore, it is recommended that Posyandu cadres in Ulanta Village prioritize education and processing innovations specifically for these two commodities. These interventions should focus on transforming maize and sago into attractive, nutrient-dense complementary foods (MP-ASI) to enhance acceptability among toddlers and optimize the use of locally available resources.

**Keywords:** Local Food, Consumption Patterns, Toddlers, Households, Nutrition.

## INTRODUCTION

As an agricultural nation, Indonesia possesses a diverse wealth of regional commodities that serve as strategic assets for national food self-sufficiency, as seen in various regions including Grokgak [1]. However, a critical gap remains between the abundant physical availability of these local resources and their actual integration into household nutritional practices. While potential for security is high, the practical application and processing of these commodities often lack specific

interventions. This study addresses this gap by analyzing the optimization of localized food systems to ensure sustainable consumption patterns. However, Indonesian consumption patterns still do not reflect optimal utilization of local food. Data from the Ministry of Agriculture's Food Security Agency (2019) shows that staple food consumption is still dominated by grains, especially rice and wheat. Rice consumption increased from 261.3 grams per capita per day in 2017 to 265.9 grams

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in 2018, while root vegetable consumption actually decreased [2].

Indonesia's food system has been developed using a centralized approach, as evidenced by the dominant role of the Logistics Agency (Bulog) in the procurement and distribution of food commodities. The consequence of a centralized food system is a lack of diversification in food sources. According to the Food Security Agency (2020), rice accounted for 82.98% of the Indonesian people's consumption of cereals in 2019, with per capita consumption of 114.3 kg per year—exceeding the recommended 110.4 kg [3]. BPS data for 2021 shows that rice production in Indonesia is dominated by central regions such as East Java, Central Java, and West Java, which cumulatively contribute more than 50% of national production with above-average productivity [4].

Despite Indonesia ranking 89th out of 113 countries in the 2020 Global Food Security Index—reflecting low dietary diversity—Gorontalo Province achieved a food security level of 81.95% in 2024 [5]. Bone Bolango Regency significantly contributes to this stability through its vast agricultural potential in rice, corn, coconut, and underutilized crops like sago. However, a critical paradox exists: high regional food security and abundant local commodities do not automatically translate into optimal nutritional outcomes for toddlers. At the household level, sub-optimal feeding practices and a shift in consumption preferences away from traditional staples like sago (tumba) create a disconnect between resource availability and actual intake. This gap underscores the urgent need for this study, as it investigates why these nutritional assets

are overlooked in toddler diets and how they can be strategically reintegrated to mitigate malnutrition risks.

One area with significant local food potential is Ulantha Village in Suwawa Subdistrict, Bone Bolango Regency. This village is known for its abundant banana production and other natural resources such as water and plant diversity that have not been fully utilized. This potential is in line with the government's program to achieve food self-sufficiency, as demonstrated by the simultaneous corn harvest in Bone Bolango Regency [6].

In addition to the urgency of utilizing local food, early human resource development is also an important aspect of national development. Early childhood (0–59 months) is a critical period that determines the physical, cognitive, and social-emotional growth and development of children. During this golden age, children's brains develop very rapidly, requiring optimal nutrition, growth and development monitoring, and appropriate parenting [7]. If these needs are not met, there is a risk of growth and development problems such as stunting, which can have an impact into adulthood.

## **METHOD**

This study uses a descriptive survey approach with the aim of observing patterns of local food consumption among toddlers at the household level. This type of study is quantitative. Quantitative research can be defined as a research method based on positivism, used to study a specific population or sample. This study aims to determine and describe local food consumption patterns among toddlers

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at the household level in Ulantha Village, Suwawa District, Bone Bolango Regency.

Data collection was conducted through a systematic procedure to ensure the acquisition of accurate and relevant research information. The sampling technique used in this study was purposive sampling, where participants were selected based on specific criteria—specifically mothers with toddlers in Ulantha Village—to ensure the data directly addresses the research objectives. This approach allows for a focused analysis of household food security and consumption patterns within the targeted demographic.

The research instrument used in this study was the Food Frequency Questionnaire (FFQ). The FFQ is a technique for collecting data on food consumption by asking respondents about the frequency and types of food consumed by toddlers within a certain period, usually weekly or monthly. Through this method, researchers can determine local food consumption patterns, including how often toddlers consume certain types of food, the variety of food provided, and food consumption trends over a longer period.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1.1** Food groups of local foods consumed by toddlers

No	Category	n	Percentage(%)
1	Corn	4	13,3%
2	Sweet Potato	19	63,3%
3	Cassava	14	46,7%
4	Banana	27	90,0%
5	Sago	8	26,7%
6	Fish Mujair	27	90,0%
7	Local Vegetables	23	76,7%

8	Local Fruit	25	83,3%
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Source: Primary Data, 2025

Table 1.1 shows that of the 30 respondents studied, the types of local foods most consumed by toddlers were bananas and tilapia, each consumed by 27 respondents (90.0%). This shows that these two types of food are the main sources of nutrition because they are easily obtained and popular with the community. Furthermore, papaya is also widely consumed by 25 respondents (83.3%), followed by local vegetables by 23 respondents (76.7%) and sweet potatoes by 19 respondents (63.3%).

Meanwhile, the types of local foods with relatively low consumption levels were cassava, with 14 respondents (46.7%), and sago, with 8 respondents (26.7%). It was also found that most respondents did not consume sago, namely 22 people (73.3%), and did not consume cassava, namely 16 people (53.3%).

**Tabel 1.2** Frequency of Local Food Consumption Types a Week.

Type of Food	Weekly Local Food Consumption								Total	
	1-2X		3-4X		>5X		NO		N	%
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		
Corn	4	13.3	-	-	-	-	2	86.7	3	10
		3	-	-	-	-	6	7	0	0
Sweet potato	1	56.7	2	6.7	-	-	1	33.3	3	10
	7	7					1	3	0	0
cassava	1	40.0	1	3.3	1	3.3	1	53.3	3	10
	2	0					6	3	0	0
Pisang	9	30.0	1	36.7	7	23.3	3	10.0	3	10
		0	1	7		3		0	0	0
Sagu	6	20.0	2	6.7	-	-	2	73.3	3	10
		0					2	3	0	0
Ikan mujairs	7	23.3	1	40.0	8	26.7	3	10.0	3	10
		3	2	0		7		0	0	0
Sayur	7	23.3	9	30.0	7	23.3	7	23.3	3	10
		3		0		3		3	0	0

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		26.	1	43.	4	13.	5	16.	3	10
Buah	8									
Pepaya		7	3	3		3		7	0	0

Source: Primary Data, 2025

Table 1.2 shows that the consumption of local foods by toddlers in a week varies for each type of food. The least consumed food is corn, with 26 respondents (86.7%) not consuming it at all, and only 4 respondents (13.3%) consuming it 1–2 times a week. A similar situation is seen with sago, where 22 respondents (73.3%) do not consume it. Meanwhile, sweet potatoes and cassava were still consumed by some respondents, although at low levels, with sweet potatoes being consumed 1–2 times per week by 17 respondents (56.7%) and cassava being consumed 1–2 times per week by 12 respondents (40.0%). The most commonly consumed foods are bananas, fish, local vegetables, and papaya. Bananas are consumed quite frequently, with 11 respondents (36.7%) consuming them 3–4 times per week and 7 respondents (23.3%) consuming them more than 5 times per week. Tilapia is also a dominant food source, with 12 respondents (40.0%) consuming it 3–4 times per week and 8 respondents (26.7%) consuming it more than 5 times per week. Overall, consumption patterns show that locally available foods commonly consumed daily, such as bananas, fish, vegetables, and fruit, have a high frequency of consumption. Conversely, local foods such as corn and sago tend to be consumed less frequently, possibly due to changes in family dietary patterns, limited access, or preferences for modern foods.

### Research Results Discussion

This study aims to determine the pattern of local food consumption among toddlers at the household level in Ulantha Village, Bone Bolango Regency. Referring to the results of a study of 30 respondents, it was found that most people still consume various types of local foods such as bananas, local fish, vegetables, and fruit. However, consumption of traditional foods such as corn, cassava, and sago has declined. This indicates a shift in people's eating patterns due to changes in consumption habits, preferences for modern foods, and the availability of food in the surrounding environment.

Based on the results of the study, the most widely consumed local foods are bananas and tilapia, at 90% each, followed by papaya (83.3%) and local vegetables (76.7%). This shows that the people of Ulantha Village still maintain the habit of consuming local foods that are easily available, affordable, and have high nutritional value. Bananas as a source of energy and vitamins, and tilapia as a source of animal protein, are important foods in meeting the nutritional needs of toddlers.

These findings are in line with the research by Simanjuntak et al (2023), which states that the consumption of local foods based on fish and traditional ingredients plays an important role in meeting the protein, fat, and carbohydrate needs of toddlers in coastal areas[8]. This condition also illustrates that local foods can be a major alternative in maintaining family food security while supporting children's nutritional status.

The consumption of cassava (46.7%) and sago (26.7%) remains critically low, reflecting a shift in sociocultural perceptions in Ulantha Village. These traditional staples are increasingly marginalized by a "stigmatization" phenomenon, where younger mothers perceive sago and cassava as "food for the poor" or "outdated" compared to the modern prestige of wheat-based products like noodles and bread [9]. This nutritional transition toward practical, processed foods suggests that local crops are losing their place in the household diet, not due to lack of availability, but due to a perceived lack of social status and culinary variety.

The most striking finding, however, is the minimal consumption of corn at 13.3%. This is largely driven by the local economic orientation, where corn is treated strictly as a cash crop for sale rather than a nutritional resource for the family. Furthermore, a physical barrier exists: the local corn varieties possess a hard texture that is developmentally inappropriate for a toddler's digestive system. To bridge this gap, there is an urgent need for food technology interventions, such as processing local corn into fine flour or soft fortified porridge. Such innovations would transform a physically inaccessible commodity into a viable, "added-value" complementary food, ensuring that Bone Bolango's agricultural wealth actually reaches the plates of its most vulnerable population.

Wijayati (2019) revealed the cause: for her, changes in modern lifestyles and

increasing public preference for processed foods have led to a decline in the consumption of traditional foods such as cassava, corn, and sago [9]. These findings are relevant to the results of research in Ulantha Village, which showed low consumption of cassava, sago, and corn, even though all three are local foods. Wijayati explained that modern foods are considered more practical and appealing, so traditional local foods are beginning to be marginalized. This is in line with field findings that corn is sold more than it is consumed, and its texture is less suitable for toddlers. Thus, this previous study reinforces the evidence that the decline in consumption of traditional foods is not only influenced by availability, but also by changes in people's preferences and eating habits.

According to Faharuddin et al (2017), people's food consumption behavior is greatly influenced by their level of nutritional knowledge, purchasing power, and the availability of food in their surrounding environment [10]. People with good nutritional knowledge tend to choose foods that are more nutritious and safe for consumption by family members, especially toddlers.

In addition, the results of the study also show that 90.7% of respondents stated that their toddlers liked local foods, especially bananas, local fish, fruits, and vegetables. This proves that some local foods are still acceptable to children, especially if they are processed with a variety of flavors and attractive appearances. The research by Mashar et al. (2024) also supports this, stating that education on the processing of local food

ingredients such as kelakai (a plant native to Central Kalimantan) can increase children's interest in consuming nutritious local foods. Therefore, it is important for housewives to have the skills to process local foods in a more varied and appealing way for children [11].

Most respondents (75%) had good eating habits. This shows that families in Ulantha Village have implemented balanced nutrition principles by utilizing a variety of local foods, such as bananas, fish, and vegetables. Good eating habits are an important factor in preventing nutritional problems in children, especially stunting.

This study also supports the opinion of Puspitasari et al (2023), who state that local foods contain high nutritional content because they do not undergo lengthy processing, making them more natural and healthier than fast food [12]. Thus, increasing local food consumption

can be an important strategy in improving food security while also improving community nutrition.

The research by Simanjuntak et al (2023) also confirms that consumption of local foods based on seafood, fruits, and traditional vegetables contributes significantly to meeting the protein, fat, and carbohydrate needs of toddlers in coastal areas. These results are in line with the conditions in Ulantha Village, where bananas and local fish are the two types of local foods most frequently consumed by toddlers. The research by Simanjuntak et al. confirms that locally sourced foods that are easily accessible and nutritionally rich remain an important part of the community's diet, thereby playing a role in maintaining household food security and supporting children's nutritional status. This reinforces the findings of the current study that the majority of toddlers in Ulantha Village still have good exposure to nutritious local foods.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of research on local food consumption patterns among households with toddlers in Ulantha Village, Bone Bolango Regency, it can be concluded that the types of local foods most consumed by households with toddlers are bananas and local fish (90%), followed by fruits (83.3%), local vegetables (76.7%), and sweet potatoes (63.3%). Meanwhile, the consumption of cassava (46.7%), sago (26.7%), and corn

(13.3%) is relatively low due to limited availability and lack of public interest in these foods. This shows that the people of Ulantha Village have a fairly good awareness of the importance of local food for family health and nutritional needs, especially for toddlers. Thus, local food plays an important role in efforts to maintain family food security while supporting the nutritional needs of toddlers in Ulantha Village.

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