



Comparison of Preferences for Japanese Food in Thailand, Malaysia, Taiwan, and Singapore

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ABSTRACT

Japanese cuisine has gained international acclaim, with dishes like sushi, ramen, and tempura widely available in restaurants around the world. Many Japanese foods are perceived as healthy; they contain fresh ingredients, seafood, and vegetables, which attract health-conscious consumers. The global spread of Japanese culture, including anime, manga, and traditional arts, has contributed to the increased interest in Japanese cuisine. The number of Japanese restaurants has surged globally, particularly in urban areas with diverse populations. As the economies of developing countries grow, a rising middle class with disposable income is emerging, leading to increased dining-out and a willingness to try international cuisines, including Japanese food. This study empirically examines the attitudes and preferences of people from different countries—two developing countries and two developed countries—for Japanese food in order to verify any significant differences. The results indicate that the preference for Japanese foods, as well as the frequency of visits to Japanese restaurants, is higher in developed countries than in developing countries. Since developing countries continue to experience economic growth, the future of Japanese restaurants in these regions looks promising, with numerous opportunities for growth and expansion. By understanding local markets, adapting to consumer preferences, and leveraging trends, entrepreneurs can successfully establish and grow Japanese dining establishments in these areas.

Keywords: Japanese cuisine, Japanese restaurant, Global, Thailand, Malaysia

INTRODUCTION

The increasing popularity of Japanese food stems from greater health concerns and a growing awareness of its health benefits. Japanese restaurants are springing up in large cities throughout the world, even in developing countries. Since December 2013, UNESCO, the United Nations' cultural organization, has included traditional Japanese cuisine (washoku) into its Intangible Cultural Heritage list. It was the second national traditional cuisine honored as such, after French food. The recognition is not only about the food itself, but also about the culture and traditions represented by the food. This recognition has led to a high boom in Japanese food worldwide. Japanese food culture has gained global attention. Although Japanese products, not only the food, have a stellar reputation in terms of quality worldwide, their prices are considered unexpectedly high, particularly in countries with low living standards. In recent years, several developing countries have seen a boost in their living standards, and citizens are willing to spend more on their daily consumption, such as food or other leisure goods. This may have significant effects on people's attitudes towards Japanese foods in those countries.

This research aims to understand the difference in preference for Japanese food according to economic status. It delves into various aspects, including consumer preferences, frequency of

restaurant visits, and the selection criteria of Japanese restaurants in sampled countries. Likewise, it identifies current and emerging trends, such as the growing popularity of Japanese foods in developing countries. Moreover, Japanese food producers or restaurants may find the results of this research insightful while reviewing their strategies and product offerings (JETRO, 2022).

To achieve the research aims, secondary data is first explored by reviewing previous relevant literatures and discussing related information on Japanese food. Primary data is then collected by conducting several surveys in selected countries, and information about current attitudes of the citizens towards Japanese cuisine is summarized. In addition, the criteria for choosing Japanese restaurants are clarified by comparing selected developing countries and developed countries. After an analysis of the survey data, this paper concludes with comments on the acceptance of Japanese foods in selected developing and developed countries, and with recommendations for business opportunities in these countries.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND BACKGROUND DISCUSSION

Attraction of Japanese Foods

When applying for UNESCO recognition for Japanese cuisine, the Japanese government indicated four main characteristics of Japanese foods or washoku. First, the diversity and freshness of the ingredients are the most impressive aspects of Japanese foods. Each region uses a variety of ingredients that have their roots in that particular region. Moreover, cooking methods and utensils that take advantage of the flavors of these ingredients are also highly developed. Secondly, nutritional balance is considered for each menu, and washoku fosters a dietary culture that makes minimal use of animal fats, which promotes longevity and prevents obesity among the Japanese. Thirdly, Japan has a diverse climate that is regulated by four distinct seasons, so fresh ingredients are readily available at specific times of the year. People who eat Japanese cuisine enjoy the seasonality by decorating the dishes with seasonal flowers or leaves and by using implements and plates that match the seasonal changes. Finally, as a country rich in history and culture, Japan offers a fascinating array of traditional events and ceremonies that provide deep insights into its heritage. Japanese culture emerged through a close relationship with annual events. These events foster strong family and regional bonds as they make it possible for families to spend mealtimes together and share meals (JETRO, 2022; Voltaire 2018).

Global Influences on Japanese Cuisine

In recent years, Japanese cuisine has embraced global influences to create new and innovative flavors. By integrating international cooking skills and ingredients, Japanese dishes continue to innovate and develop more choices while maintaining their traditional cultural heritage. Western cuisines have significantly influenced Japanese cuisine, in particular Western-style sauces. The Japanese alter the flavor profiles of dishes like okonomiyaki or chicken-namban by using tartar sauce. The fast-food boom also brought burgers and fried chicken franchises, pushing Japanese chefs to craft localized versions, such as teriyaki burgers. These adaptations maintain Japanese cuisine's commitment to balance and presentation (Shoko, 2010). On the other hand, neighboring Asian cuisines have reshaped Japanese culinary offerings, fostering inventive fusion dishes. Korean cuisine inspired spicy variations like kimchi nabe and spicy ramen. Chinese influences introduced chanpon noodles, which is famous in Nagasaki, and

gyoza, a pan-fried dumpling adapted for Japanese tastes. Thai and Indian flavors have also been adopted by Japanese chefs, resulting in dishes like green curry udon and soup curry. This cross-cultural exchange, rooted in shared ingredients, enriches the diversity of Japanese cuisine while upholding its traditional heritage. Japanese chefs serve as cultural ambassadors, blending Japanese culinary traditions with global cooking skills. Japanese culinary customs inherit traditional methods while also adapting to contemporary tastes and global influences. This evolution reflects a dynamic interaction between preserving cultural characteristics and embracing change (JETRO, 2022).

Popularity of Japanese Foods Worldwide

The popularity of Japanese cuisine is surging worldwide, and so is the number of Japanese restaurants established outside Japan. The number of Japanese restaurants outside Japan increased by around 20 percent from the previous survey in 2021, with the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries attributing some of the growth to increased interest from anime fans in Central and South America. By region, Asia and Europe both saw gains of around 20 percent from 2021, as the number of restaurants increased to 122,000 and 16,400, respectively, driving expectations for growth in Japan's agriculture and seafood exports as its food culture continues to spread. By country, China has the most Japanese restaurants (78,760), followed by the United States (26,040), and then South Korea (18,210). The number of Japanese restaurants in other countries increased more than threefold over the past decade to around 187,000 in 2023, as the country's eatery chains expanded worldwide. In 2023, while the number of Japanese restaurants in North America decreased by around 10 percent to 28,600 due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, the number of Japanese restaurants in Central and South America, at 12,900, was almost double the 2021 number. The above data included "real" Japanese restaurants (it is sometimes difficult to clarify the definition of Japanese restaurants, especially in countries other than Japan). In recent years, the number of Japanese restaurants owned by non-Japanese has been increasing as well, even though there are no official statistical record. For instance, many so-called Japanese restaurants in Canada and America are owned by Koreans and Chinese (Kyodo, 2023).

Some Chinese and Korean restaurateurs have been criticized for opening Japanese restaurants without paying any respect to the art of Japanese cuisine. The quality of foods and service are not the same as in "real" Japanese restaurants. In addition, the first priority of some of these non-Japanese owners is to make money under the guise of Japanese food, so to maintain their profit margins, they tend to cut cost, which invariably affects the quality of the foods. Considered from another perspective, it may be that these foreign-owned Japanese restaurants are becoming more common because the supply of Japanese restaurants owned by Japanese is far from meeting the global demand of Japanese cuisine, whose popularity is undeniably increasing worldwide.

Consumption Patterns in Developing and Developed Countries

People in low-income countries spend a greater proportion of their budgets on food than those in higher-income countries. As incomes rise with economic development and urbanization, the share of income spent on food tends to fall while discretionary spending on household goods, education, medical services, and recreation tends to increase. In some developing countries or emerging markets such as India, China, Thailand, and Malaysia, where incomes are rising, the

share of discretionary income spent on nonfood categories or good quality foods has increased. According to Our World in Data, the share of consumer expenditure on food for developing countries in 2023 was around 20% to 30%. Over the years, developing countries like Thailand and Malaysia have shown an increasing trend in consumer expenditure on food (Table 1).

Table 1: Share of consumer expenditure spent on food in Thailand and Malaysia

	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Thailand	24.3	24.3	22.4	24.8	28.3	26.8	25.9
Malaysia	21.5	21.5	22.5	25.2	27.5	24.5	26.4

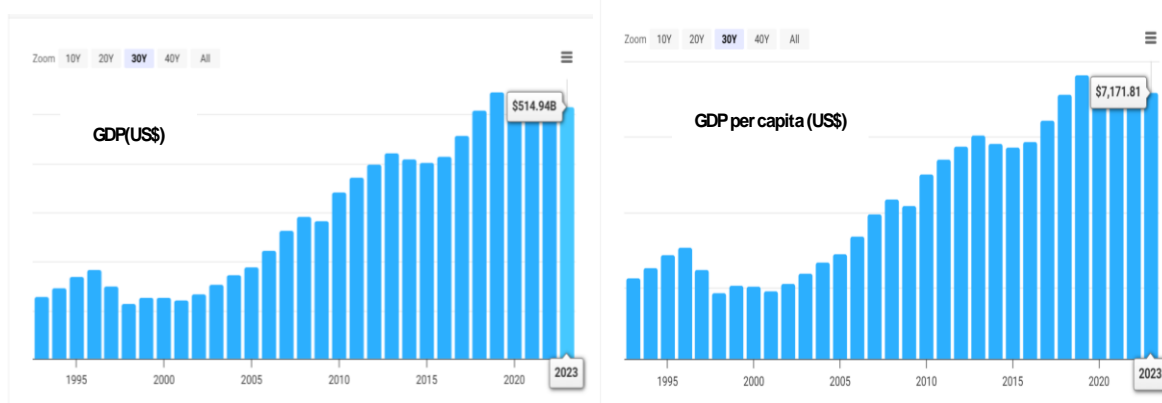
Data source: Share of consumer expenditure spent on food/ Our World in Data

Table 1 implies that people in Thailand and Malaysia are willing to spend more on luxury goods or quality products to improve their living standards. Japanese products are usually of good quality but costly. People in developing countries are able to purchase more high-quality goods if they can boost their consumption power. Developing countries have been growing much more rapidly in recent years, and this growth convergence has potentially very important implications for food demand.

Economic Backgrounds and The Popularity of Japanese Food in Four Selected Countries Thailand:

Thailand has developed rapidly, transitioning from an economy dominated by agriculture to one that is modern, industrialized, and export-led. Thailand's economy has grown at a steady annual rate, with a GDP and GDP per capita of USD514.948 billion and USD 7,172 respectively in 2023, leading to a commensurate improvement in living standards (Graph 1). Similarly, the trend of consumer spending in Thailand has also shown a dramatic increase, growing more than 3 times in the past 20 years from USD85 billion to USD297 billion.

Graph 1: Trend of GDP and GDP per capita in Thailand



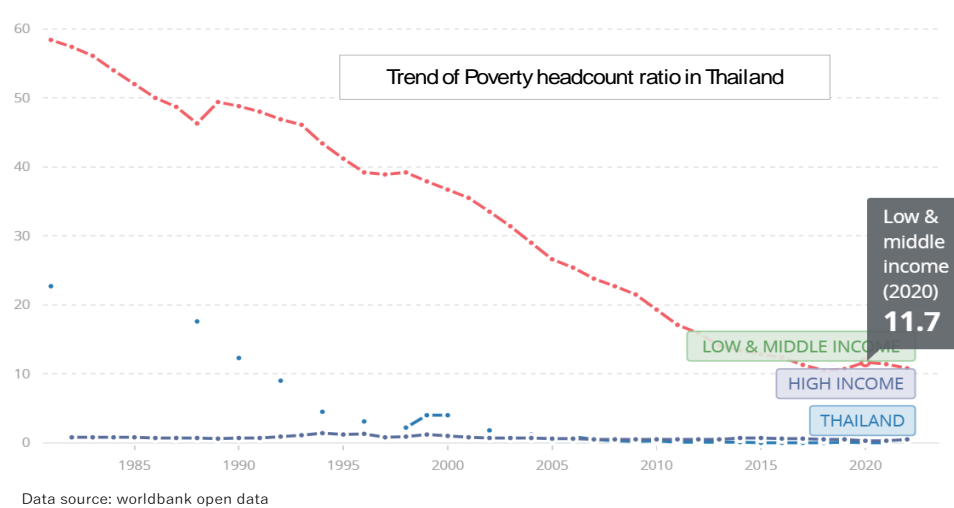
Data source: worldbank open data

New research by the McKinsey Global Institute (MGI) indicates that consumption in Thailand could grow sharply from US\$120 billion to US\$410 billion over the next decade (Noppamas, 2021). By 2030, the purchasing power of up to 90 percent of Thailand's population could improve to more than \$11 a day (up from 70 percent today and only 35 percent in 2000), which

means that that much percentage could afford not only basics like food and housing, but also discretionary spending (Graph 2).

In the statistical survey of ASEAN countries, Thailand is categorized as a promising market with a large market size and a high potential for continuous market growth rate. In addition, the trend of poverty headcount ratio in Thailand shows a big drop in the past thirty-five years, reflecting an increasing number of middle- to high-income people. These people can afford cross-cultural products, which are typically more expensive than local products. Therefore, the sale of cross-cultural products in Thailand tends to increase.

Graph 2: Trend of Poverty headcount ratio in Thailand



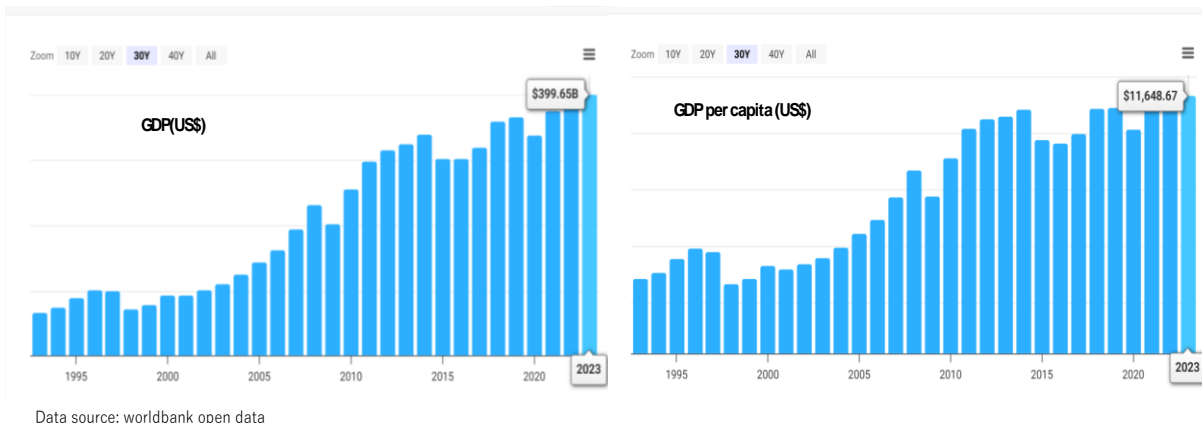
In cities, more people tend to eat out than cook at home. With the increasing popularity of Japanese culture, various kinds of Japanese food are now sold in restaurants and food courts, especially at city centers.

In Thailand, especially Bangkok, various kinds of Japanese restaurants that are focused on healthy and fresh cuisine have been opened in department stores. The number of Japanese restaurants in Thailand has been steadily increasing over the past decade, with estimates suggesting thousands of establishments across major cities like Bangkok, Chiang Mai, and Phuket. This study reveals that the number of Japanese restaurants in Thailand increased by 2.9% from 2023, reaching 5,916 establishments, reflecting the growing popularity of Japanese cuisine among locals and tourists. The popularity of Japanese food in Thailand continues to soar, with the number of Japanese restaurants approaching 6,000 nationwide in 2024, according to a survey by the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO, 2025).

Malaysia:

Malaysia has also experienced a rapid transformation in their economy similar to Thailand's. Malaysia's economy has grown at a steady annual rate, with a GDP and GDP per capita of USD400 billion and USD 11,649 respectively in 2023, leading to a commensurate improvement in living standards (Graph 3). Similarly, the trend of consumer spending in Malaysia has also shown a dramatic increase, rising by almost 5 times in the past 20 years, from USD49 billion to USD242 billion.

Graph 3: Trend of GDP and GDP per capita in Malaysia



In comparison with Thailand, Malaysia has less Japanese restaurants (approximately 1,900), which are located at major cities like Kuala Lumpur, Penang, and Johor Bahru. The popularity of Japanese cuisine continues to grow, influenced by local tastes and an increasing number of Japanese expatriates. Many restaurants offer a fusion of traditional Japanese dishes with local Malaysian flavors (UKEssays, 2018).

Malaysia has a multicultural and multiracial population consisting of three main groups—including Malays, Chinese, and Indians—and numerous indigenous peoples. With such a varying ethnic composition, there is a great diversity of religions prevalent throughout Malaysia. Because the vast majority of Chinese Malaysians are descendants of immigrants from southern China, Malaysian Chinese cuisine is predominantly based on an eclectic repertoire of dishes with roots from Fujian, Teochew, Cantonese, Hakka and Hainanese cuisines. Although the vast majority of Indian Malaysians are descendants of immigrants from southern India, Malaysian Indian cuisine is a mixture of north-south Indian and Sri Lankan dishes that can be differentiated by drier or wetter curry dish preparation. An increasing number of Japanese restaurants are being opened in Malaysia. This may be because of the similarities between Malaysian and Japanese cuisines that make latter easier to accept in Malaysia (Haliz, 2023).

The Japanese ambassador to Malaysia, Katsuhiko Takahashi, once noted that Japanese cuisine has gained popularity in Malaysia due to the strong bilateral relations between both countries. This, coupled with the growing acceptance of Japanese food among Malaysia's diverse population, including Malay consumers, creates a positive environment for Japanese halal food products. Japan's venture into Malaysia's halal market represents a unique fusion of Japanese culinary traditions and Islamic dietary practices. This fosters a new gastronomic experience while strengthening economic ties between the two countries. Through the universal language of food, Japan and Malaysia can promote cultural exchange and understanding. With consumers becoming more price conscious, restaurateurs are looking for ways to minimize costs and retain their profit margins and market shares. In the Malaysian market, restaurant owners rely on innovation as a crucial tactic to appeal to customers as well as minimize costs. As more consumers seek novel experiences, foodservice operators must continuously innovate their menu choices, providing superior taste and quality along with a diverse selection of dishes (The Borneo Post, 2024).

Singapore and Taiwan:

Taiwan and Singapore are both dynamic economies in Asia known for their robust trade and technology sectors and their unique political statuses. In 2022, Taiwan, with a GDP of \$1,622B, was the 21st largest economy in the world, while Singapore, with a GDP of \$499B, was the 29th. The GDP per capita of Singapore and Taiwan in the same 2022 were \$84.7K and \$32.6K respectively, with respective global rankings of 29th and 21st (**Table 2**). In comparison with Thailand and Malaysia, people in Singapore and Taiwan are expected to consume more high-quality products, even at higher prices (WorldData, 2025).

Table 2: Economic Indicators Comparison between Singapore and Taiwan in 2022

	Singapore	Taiwan
GDP (USD)	499	1,622
World ranking	29	21
GDP per capita (USD)	84.7	32.6
Area (Km ²)	719	35,980
Income Tax Rate	22%	45%
Corporate Tax Rate	17%	20%
Population:	5,918,000	23,889,000

Historically, high-income countries have established many expenditure patterns, profoundly influencing agricultural and food production practices across the globe. With large populations in low-income countries advancing economically, there is an increasing curiosity about whether their food demand patterns will echo those of their more affluent counterparts. Food as a percentage of household budgets is significantly higher in developing countries than in developed countries. Several studies indicate that globalization, income growth, and changing cultural trends are prompting consumers in lower-income countries to adopt a more affluent dietary pattern, commonly referred to as the 'Western diet', which prioritizes meats, dairy products, refined grains, and pre-packaged foods and beverages. Singapore and Taiwan are considered as developed countries, and people living there have strong consumption power. Since both Taiwanese and Singaporean people are so enamored of Japanese cuisine, the demand for Japanese restaurants in both countries keep growing.

Singapore:

Singapore is known for its diverse food scene with influences from cultures all over the world. Among the many cuisines available, Japanese food stands out as one of the most beloved choices for both locals and tourists. One of the major reasons Japanese restaurants are popular in Singapore is their commitment to high-quality ingredients and freshness. Japanese cuisine is made from the finest ingredients, whether it is premium-grade sushi fish, marbled Wagyu beef, or handmade soba noodles. The demand for quality food aligns with Singaporeans' preference for fresh and premium ingredients, making Japanese restaurants an attractive choice for diners who value taste and quality. Health-conscious Singaporeans are drawn to Japanese cuisine because of its reputation for being healthy and well balanced (Admin99, 2025).

Popular Japanese food chains like Genki Sushi, Sushi Express, and Ichiran Ramen offer affordable yet delicious options for the masses. This ensures that Japanese cuisine is not just reserved for special occasions but can be enjoyed daily. The popularity of Japanese cuisine in

Singapore is the result of a harmonious blend of cultural affinity, culinary excellence, and strategic promotion. The respect for quality, health-consciousness, and diversity exemplified by Japanese food resonates well with Singaporeans, making Japanese cuisine a beloved part of the local food culture. As Japanese cuisine continues to evolve and adapt to local tastes, its popularity in Singapore is likely to grow even more.

Taiwan:

Japan colonized Taiwan for about a generation; thus, elements of Japanese culture persist. Many scholars explain that the recent boom in Japanese culture in Taiwan is due to Lee Teng-hui's policies (1988–2000), which made the country more amenable to Japanese values and rescinded many anti-Japanese laws that had been in effect since World War II. Actually, Taiwan and Japan have a long period of multifaceted relationship as a result of their shared history, common values, and economic ties. This is believed to be the real reason behind the boom in Japanese culture. Close political contacts between Taiwan and Japan have only served to increase this phenomenon.

Modern Japanese popular culture also exerts a broad influence on everyday life in Taiwan. Very often, the tastes of Taiwanese young people in entertainment are shaped by trends in Japanese popular music, fashion, fast food, television soap operas, movies, computer games, manga, and karaoke. Interest in Japanese culture and language in Taiwan has been constantly growing since the late 1990s. Taiwanese businessmen widely exploit the sympathy of Taiwanese customers to Japanese products and pop culture. Modern influences of Japanese culture on Taiwan work in a snowball effect (David, 2009).

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

The popularity of Japanese foods is increasing in both developed and developing countries. In addition, the number of Japanese restaurants in other countries is also increasing. To evaluate the differences in the preference for Japanese foods in developing and developed countries as well as the criteria of selecting which Japanese restaurants to patronize in these two groups of countries, two different groups of people are analyzed by using descriptive research methods to test the data obtained from the quantitative analysis.

The respondents in this study were customers of food courts in the four selected countries. These respondents were selected by convenient sampling. At each food court, the researchers randomly interacted with the target respondents using questionnaires. The questionnaires that did not meet the requirements were discarded. Four hundred questionnaires were collected in total, where 100 samples were used for each selected country.

Research Questions

Based on reviews cited above, the preference of people for Japanese restaurant may be assumed to be different if the economic conditions or living standards in their countries vary. To investigate the preference for Japanese food among the respondents from developing and developed countries, the following three research hypotheses were proposed:

1. There are significant differences in the preference of people from developing and developed countries for Japanese food.

2. There are significant differences in the frequency of visits to Japanese restaurants by people from developing and developed countries.
3. There are significant differences in the selection criteria for Japanese restaurants by people from developing and developed countries.

Participants and Procedures

Thailand and Malaysia were chosen as developing countries, while Singapore and Taiwan were selected as developed countries. Surveys were conducted in each of these countries, where the samples (respondents) for the study were randomly selected by using a systematic sampling method consisting of 100 people from each country. Students of the Business Faculty of Yahata University, Japan assisted with this study.

Measurements

Besides providing some personal information, the respondents had to answer questions about their preference for Japanese food and the frequency of their visits to Japanese restaurants. A 5-point Likert scale was used for the questions. For example, interviewees were asked to indicate how much they like Japanese foods on a scale of 1–5 (where 1 = Very much and 5 = Not really). A lower score implied a higher degree of preference for Japanese food. Questions about the frequency of visits to Japanese restaurants and the criteria of choosing which Japanese restaurants to visit were also asked to collect more data about the respondents' attitudes towards Japanese cuisine.

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to compare the means of two or more groups. Descriptive statistical analysis was used to corroborate the data. The Microsoft Excel software package was used to transform the primary data into useful information. To fully represent the data, information was summarized, categorized, and calculated using means, standard deviations, and variances (Cooper & Schinder, 2011). Based on the preliminary results, further quantitative analysis was performed using an independent sample to verify any significant differences between the means of each group of data.

FINDINGS and DISCUSSIONS

Table 3 shows the attitudes of people from each country under study towards Japanese food. It can be seen that the respondents from developed countries had a weighted mean of 1.73 (Singapore) and 1.78 (Taiwan). The two developing countries, Thailand and Malaysia, showed a weighted mean of 2.18 and 2.32 respectively.

Table 3: Summary of Statistical Result of Analysis
(The preference of people towards Japanese food)

	Developing Countries			Developed Countries		
	Thailand	Malaysia	Total	Singapore	Taiwan	Total
Count	100	100	200	100	100	200
Mean	2.18	2.32	2.245	1.73	1.78	1.755
Standard Derivation	1.2901	1.0433	1.1883	0.9085	0.9596	0.9324
Variance	1.6642	1.0885	1.4120	0.8254	0.9208	0.8693

This result shows that those in the developed countries of Singapore and Taiwan have stronger preference for Japanese food than those in the developing countries of Thailand and Malaysia. This implies that people from developed countries, with higher purchasing power, are more willing to spend on good-quality food even at a higher price.

To further determine how the groups, differ from one another, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the means of the two groups (developing countries and developed countries). In this case, the P-Value is almost 0 (far below 0.05), as shown in Table 4. Thus, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between the means of the two groups. On the other hand, the overall F value was compared to the F critical value to determine if the null hypothesis should not be rejected. Since the overall F value (21.049) is greater than the F critical value (3.865), we reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference between groups.

Table 4: ANOVA Result (Test of the preference of people towards Japanese food)

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-Value	F crit
Between Groups	24.01	1	24.01	21.049	0.000	3.865
Within Groups	453.99	398	1.141			
Total	478	399				

A similar analysis was conducted to understand the frequency of visits to Japanese restaurants (1=more than once per week, 2=once per month, 3=once per few months, 4=once per year or longer, 5=never). Table 5 shows that respondents from developed countries (Singapore, with a mean of 2.07, and Taiwan, with a mean of 1.81) visited Japanese restaurants more frequently than those from developing countries (Thailand, with a mean of 2.20, and Malaysia, with a mean of 2.49). This result reflects the tendency of people who like Japanese foods to visit Japanese restaurants more frequently. One-way ANOVA was used to evaluate the differences between the mean values, giving a P-Value of 0, which is far below 0.05, as shown in Table 6. Thus, there is sufficient evidence to conclude that there is a statistically significant difference between the means of the two groups.

Table 5: Summary of Statistical Result of Analysis
(The frequency of people visiting Japanese restaurant)

	Developing Countries			Developed Countries		
	Thailand	Malaysia	Total	Singapore	Taiwan	Total
Count	100	100	200	100	100	200
Mean	2.20	2.49	2.345	2.07	1.81	1.94
Standard Derivation	0.8165	0.8468	0.8423	0.6854	0.4861	0.6068
Variance	0.6667	0.7171	0.7095	0.4698	0.2363	0.3682

Table 6: ANOVA Result (Test of the frequency of people visiting Japanese restaurant)

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-Value	F crit
Between Groups	16.4025	1	16.4025	30.438	0	3.865
Within Groups	214.475	398	0.539			
Total	230.8775	399				

To find out which criteria influence the choice of Japanese restaurants to visit, respondents were asked to rate how certain criteria influence their decisions. The scores for such criteria as taste of food and price were summarized and analyzed to see if there were any significant differences between groups. Like for earlier questions, lower scores indicate higher importance (1=very important, 2=important, 3, average, 4=not too important, 5=not important). Tables 7 and 8 indicate that respondents from developed countries consider taste of food more highly than those from developing countries (Mean value: Singapore (1.4), Taiwan (1.45), and Thailand (2.13), Malaysia (2.31)). The differences between developed and developing countries are not too significant when considering price (Mean value: Singapore (1.88), Taiwan (1.9), and Thailand (2.35), Malaysia (1.98)). From the one-way ANOVA for the results of the criteria of taste of food and price, it can be concluded that there is a statistically significant difference between the means of the two groups, since both P-values are lower than 0.05.

Table 7: Summary of Statistical Result of Analysis

(The selection criteria when people visit Japanese restaurant- Taste)

	Developing Countries			Developed Countries		
	Thailand	Malaysia	Total	Singapore	Taiwan	Total
Count	100	100	200	100	100	200
Mean	2.13	2.31	2.22	1.4	1.45	1.425
Standard Derivation	1.4189	1.2202	1.1883	0.6667	0.7961	0.9324
Variance	2.0132	1.4888	1.4120	0.4444	0.6338	0.8693

(The selection criteria when people visit Japanese restaurant- Price)

	Developing Countries			Developed Countries		
	Thailand	Malaysia	Total	Singapore	Taiwan	Total
Count	100	100	200	100	100	200
Mean	2.35	1.98	2.165	1.88	1.9	1.89
Standard Derivation	1.1492	0.8874	1.1883	0.8561	1.1849	0.9324
Variance	1.3207	0.7875	1.4120	0.7329	1.4040	0.8693

Table 8: ANOVA Result (Test of the criteria of selecting Japanese restaurant)

Taste

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-Value	F crit
Between Groups	63.2025	1	63.2025	55.261	0	3.865
Within Groups	455.195	398	1.143706			
Total	518.3975	399				

Price

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-Value	F crit
Between Groups	7.5625	1	7.5625	7.047	0.008	3.865
Within Groups	427.135	398	1.073204			
Total	434.6975	399				

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is obvious from the foregoing that the preference of for Japanese foods is higher in developed countries than in developing countries. This leads to higher frequency of visits to Japanese

restaurants in developed countries than in developing countries. While choosing which restaurants to dine in, people from developed countries place a high value on the taste of food than those in developing countries, but there is no significant in how price of food influence restaurant choice for people in both groups. This may imply that even though the purchasing power of people in developed countries' is high, they are still concerned about high spending.

One of the objectives of this study is to evaluate the different attitudes towards Japanese food and restaurants among people from countries with different economic conditions. Developing countries are expected to further develop and improve their consumption power in future. Therefore, a lot of business opportunities abound for Japanese restaurants to expand further in local markets in developing countries, including Thailand and Malaysia. The key to growth in the restaurant business is to offer delicious food and develop unique flavors that are tailored to local consumers. Even though people like the taste of traditional Japanese foods, their local preferences cannot be ignored. Comprehensive market research is another key to success as it will help restaurateurs recognize the unique needs customers in different countries. Eating habits, religious concerns, or even cultural differences can greatly influence the choice of cuisine when people dine out. On the other hand, the price setting strategy cannot be neglected since most people would like to enjoy delicious food at affordable price. Since the number of Japanese restaurants in other countries are increasing, restaurant management teams must adopt strategies to boost their competitiveness.

This paper provides invaluable insights into people's preferences for Japanese foods in different countries. Japanese restaurant owners who intend to expand their businesses in developing countries like Thailand and Malaysia will find the results of this study beneficial. Despite the benefits of this study, it is not devoid of limitations. One glaring limitation is that only two countries each were selected to represent developing and developed countries, so it may be an overreach to extrapolate the findings to other countries. Future research may adopt similar approaches to study attitudes to Japanese cuisine and restaurants in countries not included in this study.

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