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Taiwanese Concept of Indian Curry

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Abstract

The study aimed to investigate whether Taiwanese know what Indian curry is, whether Taiwanese like Indian curry, and whether Taiwanese know the benefits of Indian curry. From the results of the study, it is found that most Taiwanese don't really understand what Indian curry is; some even have never eaten or heard of Indian curry. Moreover, most Taiwanese don't know Indian curry is beneficial to people's health. They know spices are necessary in Indian curry dishes but most of them don't know many of the spices and the effect of the spices on human health. This study suggested that the benefits of Indian curry can be promoted by TV programs. In addition, the Department of Taipei Culture Affairs can invite Indian restaurants in Taiwan to hold Indian curry dish festivals, making people have more chances to taste Indian curry and understand its merits and traditions.

Keywords: Indian Curry, Spices

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I. Introduction

I.1. Background and Motivation

Spices are necessary in Indian food. Basically Indians can't live without them. Indians use spices in food because their main dishes are mostly related to curry, and curry is combined with many spices. The spices play an important role in Indian curry and curry is a history to Indians. Curry is related to Indian tradition, culture, and features (Chang, 2014). On the other hand, some spices used in Indian curry are reported to have some benefits to human health. However, it seems that not many of the people in Taiwan accept the flavor of Indian curry; people usually eat Japanese-flavored curry in Taiwan. Therefore, this study aimed to know whether Taiwanese accept Indian curry and if the benefits of Indian curry are known to Taiwanese. .

I.2. Research Questions

The study aimed to investigate whether Taiwanese know what Indian curry is and whether Taiwanese like Indian curry. The research questions are as follows:

1. What is Taiwanese basic concept about Indian curry?
2. What is Taiwanese knowledge about the benefits of Indian curry?
3. What is Taiwanese concept about the spices in Indian curry?

I.3. Literature Review

I.3.1 Comparison between Indian Curry and Japanese Curry

In Indian curry, there are two types. One is Garam, which means "spicy. The other is Masala, which means "spice." There are three kinds of spices in Indian curry: spicy spices, fragrance spice, and color spices. There are chilly, black pepper, ginger, and mustard in the spicy spice. There are cardamom, fennel, star spice, and curry leaf in the fragrance spice. There are saffron chilly, and turmeric in the color spice. These are the ingredients in Indian curry or even in their traditional food or drink.

In Japanese curry, people usually use curry chunk to cook. They cook curry with fruits and vegetables, and use wheat flour, or flour to thicken the curry. Therefore, the taste of curry sauce would be dense and creamy, and has a sleek taste. Japanese curry doesn't taste as spicy as Indian curry and the flavor is not heavy but has a sweetness taste of fruits and vegetables.

I.3.2 Benefits of Indian Curry

Spices are needed in Indians' daily life because they can't live without curry. They believe spices can strengthen their body and they can become healthier. Indians believe that their curry has many healthy spices, which bring them more advantages than disadvantages. If women eat curry, they can have a beautiful look. If men eat curry, they can prevent the illness of reproductive organ. If the elder people eat curry, their intelligence can be enhanced. If children eat curry, it can help them have better memory and become smarter. The reason why Indians think curry has the above-mentioned benefits is that the spices used in Indian curry are proved to be effective in preventing some diseases.

The mostly used spices are turmeric, cardamom, and fennel. The spices are related to health promotion and illness prevention. Some of the spices can strengthen the stomach, prevent the cold, raise the appetite, and stimulate the brain. In the report, it is also reported that Indian curry is effective in lessen the cholesterol, prevent Alzheimer, and to keep down the cancer cells (Lin, 2008; Bernardini, 2014).

In Taiwan, people usually eat Japanese-flavored curry because the flavor is familiar. The acceptability of Japanese curry is higher than Indian curry. As a result, this study aimed to know Taiwanese acceptance of Indian curry and their knowledge about Indian curry. The study would give some suggestions based on the findings.

II. Research Methods

II.1 Instrument and Procedures

The study aimed to know Taiwanese acceptance of Indian curry and their knowledge about Indian curry. A Chinese questionnaire with 11 questions was designed to investigate the subjects' opinions. The subjects had to read each statement and checked one of the five options (strongly agree, agree, no comment, disagree, strongly disagree.)

The procedures of the study were as follows. The first step was to design a questionnaire. The second step is to distribute the questionnaire. The third step is to collect all the copies of the questionnaire. The fourth step is to analyze the statistics shown in the questionnaire.

II.2 Participants

There were 77 subjects participating in the study. They are 27 males and 50 females from a co-ed private senior high school in central Taiwan.

II.3 Limitation

There are two main limitations of the study. One is that we were unable to prepare Indian curry dishes to treat all our subjects first before they filled out our questionnaire. If we could do so, we could ensure that all our subjects know what Indian curry taste like and they could answer the questions in the questionnaire without hesitation. The other is that it is not sure that all our subjects know what the spices used in Indian curry is. Hence, the statements listed in the questionnaire could be general questions, instead of specific questions about a particular spice.

III. Results

In the study, totally 77 copies of the questionnaire were distributed, collected, and analyzed. The results of 11 statements in the questionnaire would be shown and explained with the following figures.

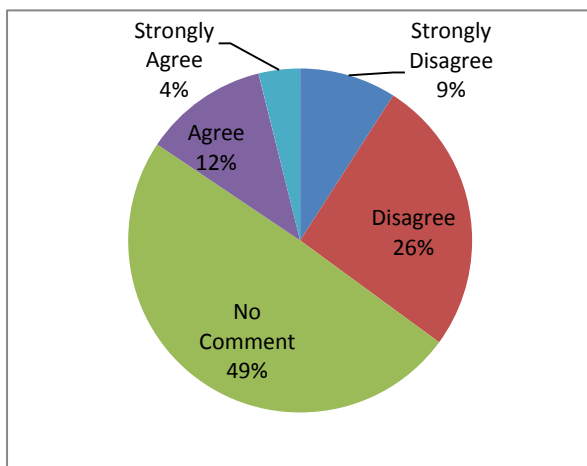


Figure 1. Basic Concept of Indian Curry

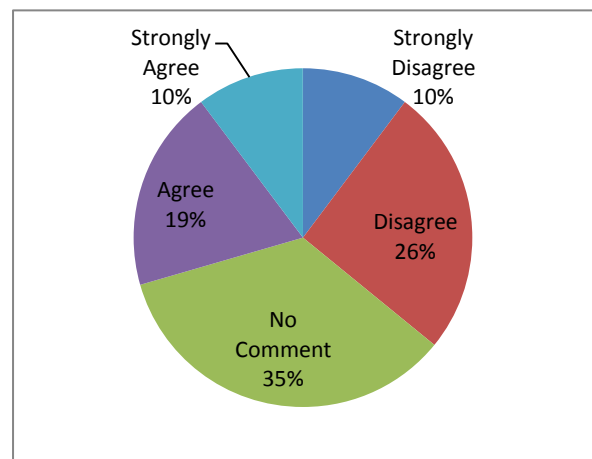


Figure 2. Eating Experiences of Indian Curry

Figure 1 showed that when asked "I have basic concept of Indian Curry," only 16% of the subjects agreed with the statement; 35% disagreed and almost half of the subjects had no comment. Figure 2 showed that regarding the statement "I have ever eaten Indian curry dishes or heard of the sources of Indian curry," 36% of the participants disagreed with it, 35% had no idea and 29% agreed with the statement.

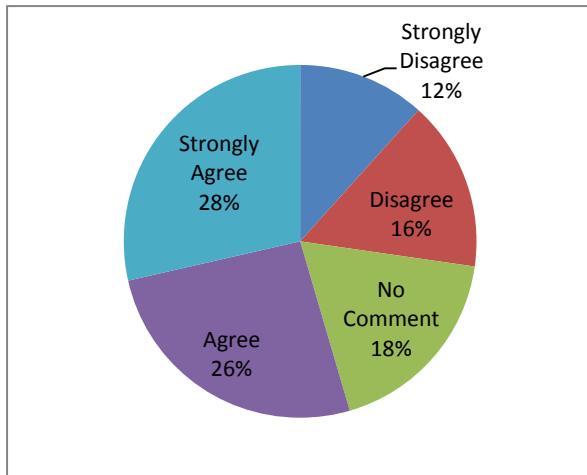


Figure 3.
Concept of the Spices in Indian Curry

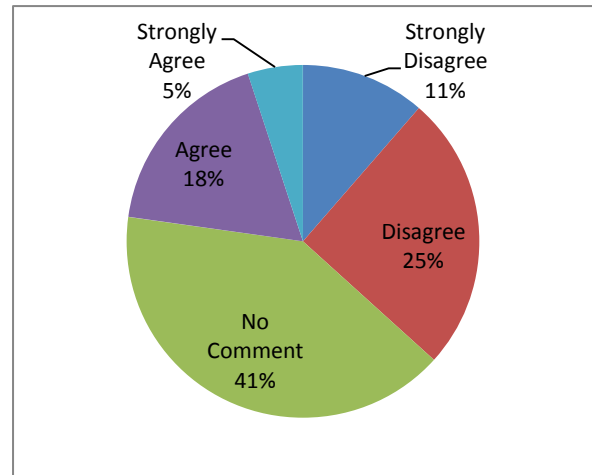


Figure 4. Benefits of Indian Curry

Figure 3 showed that asked “I know Indian curry dishes are made with various spices,” over half of the subjects agreed with the statement, 28% disagreed and only 18% had no idea. In Figure 4, concerning the statement “Indian curry is beneficial to human health,” only 23% of the subjects agreed with it, 36% disagreed, and 41% had no idea.

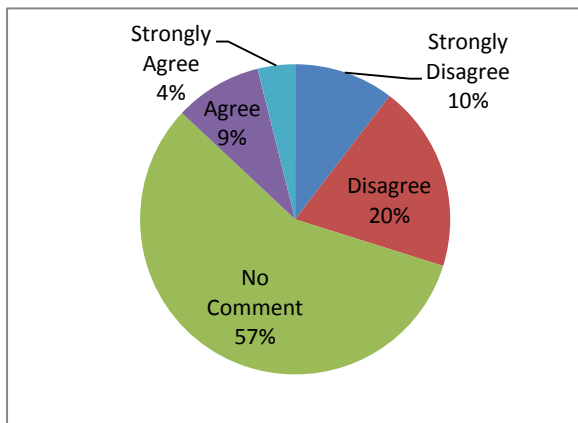


Figure 5. Ideas about Indian Curry’s Effects
on Preventing Alzheimer

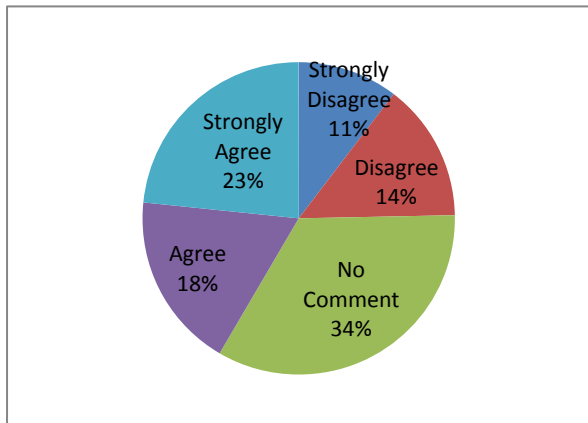


Figure 6. Willingness to Eat Indian Curry

Figure 5 showed that asked “I know Indian curry is effective in prevent Alzheimer,” only 13% of the subjects agreed with the statement, 30% disagreed, and up to 57% had no idea with the statement. Figure 6 showed that regarding the statement “Comparing Japanese-flavored curry dishes, I want to give Indian curry dishes a try,” 41% of the subjects agreed, 25% disagreed, and 34% had no comment.

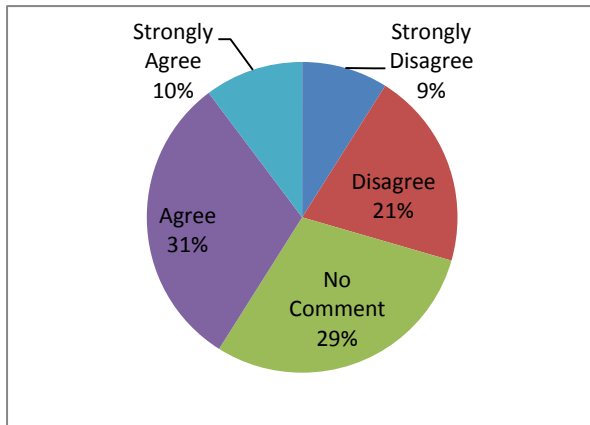


Figure 7. Willingness to Accept Indian Curry

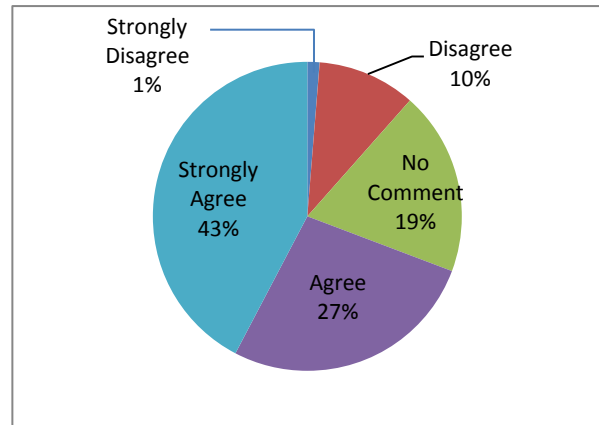


Figure 8. Understanding of the Role of Spices in Indian Curry

Figure 7 showed that asked “Even if I dislike the flavor of some spices in Indian curry, I am willing to eat Indian curry after knowing the taste of it,” 41% of the subjects agreed with the statement, 30% disagreed and 29% had no idea. Figure 8 showed that concerning the statement “I understand that spices played an essential role in Indian curry,” 70% of the subjects agreed with it, only 11% disagreed, and 19% had no idea.

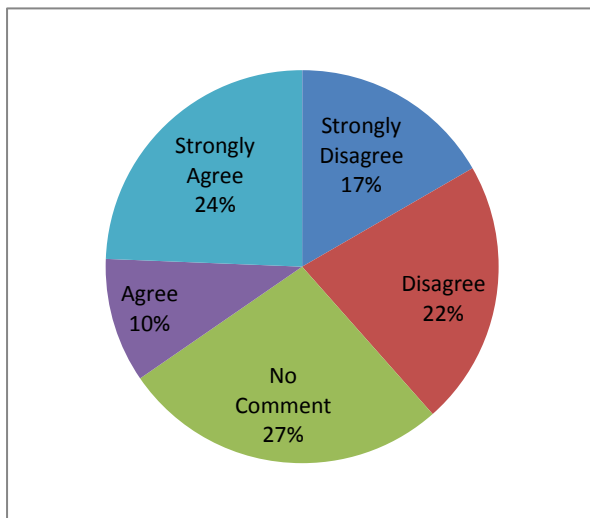


Figure 9. Knowledge about the Spices

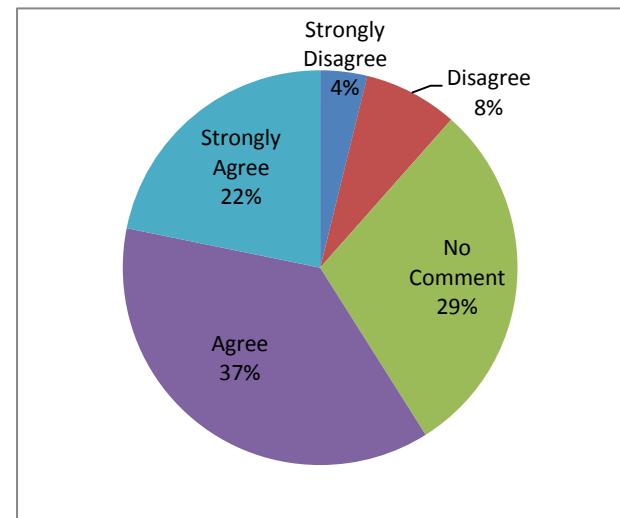


Figure 10. Knowledge about the Benefits of Spices

Figure 9 showed that asked “I know more than five spices used in Indian curry,” 34% of the subjects agreed with the statement, 39% disagreed and 27% had no idea. Figure 10 showed that with regard to the statement “I believe that taking in a proper of natural spices is good for human health,” 59% of the subjects agreed with it, 29% had no idea, and only 12% disagreed.

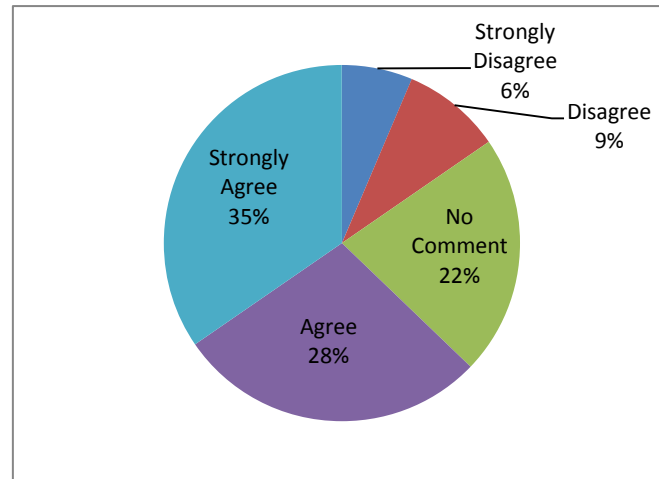


Figure 11. Acceptance of Indian Curry

Figure 11 showed that asked “After knowing the health benefits of Indian curry, I would like to eat Indian curry dishes,” 63% of the subjects agreed, 22% had no comment, and only 15% disagreed.

IV. Discussion and Conclusion

In response to the first research question, which aimed to know Taiwanese basic concept of Indian curry, Figure 1 and Figure 2 showed that most Taiwanese don’t really understand what Indian curry is; some even have never eaten or heard of Indian curry. In response to the second research question, which aimed to investigate Taiwanese knowledge about the benefits of Indian curry, Figure 4 and Figure 5 showed that most Taiwanese don’t know Indian curry is beneficial to people’s health, let alone to know Indian curry can prevent Alzheimer. Concerning the third research question about Taiwanese knowledge of spices in Indian curry, Figure 8 and Figure 9 showed most people know spices are necessary in Indian curry dishes but most of them don’t know many of the spices and the effect of the spices on human health.

Moreover, from the results shown in Figure 10 and Figure 11, the subjects knew that the spices in Indian curry are good for health and they responded that they would be more willing to eat Indian curry dishes afterwards. This showed that except that people dislike the flavor of some dishes, they would like to eat those dishes if they know the benefits of them. People’s knowledge and understanding of Indian curry are limited; hence, most of them can’t tell Indian curry from Japanese curry and they don’t eat Indian curry frequently. Some people even don’t think that Indian curry can prevent many illnesses such as Alzheimer and cancer. Therefore, it is suggested that the benefits of Indian curry can be promoted by TV programs. In the programs, people can not only know the benefits of Indian curry, but know how to

cook tasty Indian curry dishes, which can strengthen people's willingness to taste the dishes.

In addition, most people in Taiwan rarely know Indian culture or their traditions. However, if people know more about Indian culture and the role of Indian curry in the life of Indians, they are more likely to accept the flavor or smell of Indian curry. Consequently, it is suggested the Department of Cultural Affairs in each local government invite Indian food restaurants in Taiwan to hold Indian curry dish festivals, making people have more chances to taste Indian curry and understand its merits and traditions.

In sum, by means of carrying out the above-mentioned suggestions, people in Taiwan can have more access to know Indian curry and its benefits. They will willingly eat Indian curry dishes. Since that some spices in Indian curry are proved to be able to strengthen people's health and prevent diseases, a proper amount of Indian curry can be included in the meals. It is hoped that by taking in Indian curry dishes regularly, Taiwanese health can be enhanced.

V. References

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