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THE INFLUENCE OF CULTURAL DIFFERENCES ON STREET FOOD CONSUMPTION BEHAVIOR

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to 1) examine the influence of cultural differences on street food consumption behavior among foreign tourists in Thailand, and 2) determine the extent to which cultural differences significantly predict such behavior. The sample group consisted of foreign tourists from various countries who had experience consuming street food in Thailand. A total of 400 respondents were selected as the sample using purposive sampling, which is considered appropriate for multivariate statistical analysis, including multiple regression analysis.

The research instrument was a self-administered questionnaire consisting of five sections covering general information, tourist behavior, gastronomy knowledge, gastronomy experience, and attitude toward street food consumption. Content validity was assessed by three experts in tourism and hospitality studies, yielding an Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) of .84. The instrument was subsequently refined and pilot-tested with 30 respondents, and reliability analysis produced a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .91, indicating high internal consistency. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, and inferential statistics, namely multiple regression analysis.

The findings reveal that cultural-related factors, including gastronomy knowledge, gastronomy experience, and attitudes toward street food consumption, significantly influenced foreign tourists' street food consumption behavior in Thailand. Among these factors, gastronomy experience demonstrated the strongest predictive power, followed by gastronomy knowledge, suggesting that experiential and cognitive dimensions play a critical role in shaping tourist behavior. Positive street food experiences - particularly enjoyment,



cultural learning, perceived quality, and expectation confirmation were found to enhance favorable attitudes and behavioral intentions toward street food consumption.

Overall, the results highlight the importance of cultural differences and experiential engagement in understanding foreign tourists' street food consumption behavior, offering valuable implications for tourism policy, destination management, and the sustainable development of street food tourism in Thailand.

Keywords: Cultural Differences; Street Food; Gastronomy Tourism

INTRODUCTION

Thailand has high potential in enhancing Gastronomy Tourism. Thailand's Gastronomy Tourism market has high value and has an upward trend which corresponds with international tourists' interest in tasting local cuisine and Thai tourists' activity in searching for local restaurants in different tourist destinations. Thailand is best known for its cuisines which has unique taste and characteristic that could be used as a selling point in enhancing Gastronomy Tourism (TAT, Online, 2023). Street food has become one of the most distinctive cultural representations of tourist destinations, particularly in countries with rich culinary heritage such as Thailand. Thai street food is internationally recognized for its diversity, affordability, unique flavors, and accessibility, making it a significant attraction for foreign tourists. In recent years, street food consumption has evolved beyond a basic food choice and has increasingly been associated with cultural exploration, experiential tourism, and gastronomy-based travel (Jeaheng & et al., 2023, p. 223).

However, street food consumption behavior among foreign tourists is not solely influenced by food availability or destination image. Cultural differences play a crucial role in shaping tourists' perceptions, preferences, and decision-making processes related to food consumption. Tourists from different cultural backgrounds may differ in their openness to unfamiliar foods, perceptions of hygiene and safety, levels of gastronomic knowledge, prior food experiences, and attitudes toward local street food (García-Pérez & Castillo-Ortiz, 2024, p. 18). These differences may directly influence their willingness to consume street food while traveling in Thailand. Despite the growing global interest in street food as a tourism product, the existing body of literature reveals several notable gaps. First, previous studies have largely focused on street food in terms of food safety, hygiene standards, vendor practices, and



destination image, without sufficiently addressing the role of cultural differences as a determinant of consumption behavior. Second, while some research has examined tourist food consumption behavior, limited attention has been given specifically to how cultural backgrounds shape street food consumption behavior among foreign tourists in the Thai context. Third, most prior studies tend to investigate food-related behavior using isolated variables, without integrating cognitive, experiential, and attitudinal dimensions within a unified analytical framework. These gaps collectively highlight the need for an integrative study that examines cultural differences alongside knowledge, experience, and attitude variables to better explain foreign tourists' street food consumption behavior in Thailand. To address this gap, the present study integrates three key theoretical perspectives tourist behavior, gastronomy knowledge, and gastronomy experience together with attitude toward street food consumption, as core variables to explain consumption behavior (Jeaheng & et al., 2023, p. 224).

Tourist behavior theory provides insights into tourists' decision-making processes and consumption patterns while traveling. Gastronomy knowledge reflects tourists' awareness, understanding, and familiarity with local food culture, which can reduce uncertainty and perceived risk associated with street food consumption. Gastronomy experience represents tourists' prior encounters with local cuisine, which may enhance confidence, curiosity, and emotional engagement with street food. Attitude theory further explains how positive or negative evaluations toward street food influence behavioral intentions and actual consumption. Although these theoretical perspectives have been widely applied in tourism and hospitality research, few empirical studies have examined their combined influence under the lens of cultural differences, particularly in the street food context in Thailand. This represents a significant research gap, as the interaction between cultural differences and tourists' knowledge, experience, and attitudes toward street food remains underexplored. Understanding these interactions is essential for developing more effective gastronomy tourism strategies that are sensitive to the diverse cultural backgrounds of international visitors. At the international level, the World Tourism Organization emphasizes gastronomy tourism as an important instrument for linking culture, sustainability, and local economic development. Conclusions from the 7th UNWTO World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism highlight that the development of gastronomy-based tourism should incorporate both sustainability standards and the preservation of cultural heritage (UNWTO, Online, 2022).



Similarly, at the national level, recent research underscores the role of key stakeholders within the street food system, including vendors, local authorities, and policymakers, in establishing management standards that support a sustainable street food ecosystem. Effective coordination among these actors has been found to directly influence food safety, tourist confidence, and the consumption behavior of foreign tourists. (Phukamchanoat, 2025, p. 226).

Therefore, this study aims to investigate the influence of cultural differences on street food consumption behavior among foreign tourists in Thailand by employing a quantitative approach and regression analysis. Specifically, the study examines how cultural differences interact with gastronomy knowledge, gastronomy experience, and attitude toward street food to predict consumption behavior. The findings are expected to contribute to both academic and practical perspectives by extending the literature on gastronomy tourism and tourist behavior, while also providing empirical evidence to support the strategic development of street food as a tourism product. Furthermore, promoting street food as a form of culinary soft power can enhance Thailand's cultural image, stimulate tourist motivation, and strengthen Thailand's position as a leading gastronomy tourism destination.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the influence of cultural differences on street food consumption behavior among foreign tourists in Thailand.
2. To determine the extent to which cultural differences significantly predict street food consumption behavior among foreign tourists in Thailand.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

H1: Gastronomy knowledge and experience significantly influences tourists' attitudes toward street food consumption behavior.



RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

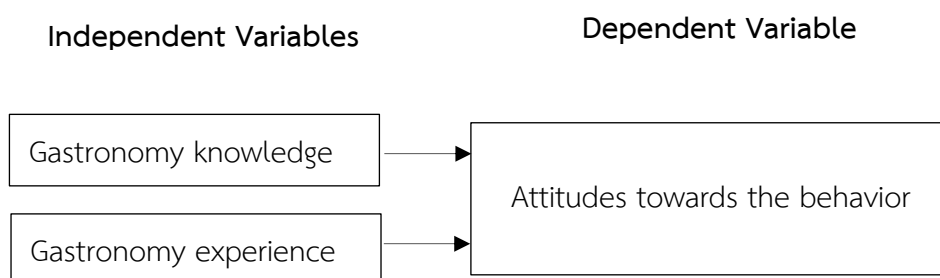


Figure 1. Research framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Population and sample: The population of this study consisted of foreign tourists from various countries worldwide who visited Thailand. The sample size of 400 respondents was determined based on the criteria proposed by Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson (2019, pp. 265-270), who recommended a minimum ratio of 10 respondents per predictor variable for multiple regression analysis. Given that this study employed four predictor variables, a sample of 400 respondents was considered appropriate and sufficient for multivariate statistical analysis. Data were collected using purposive sampling, targeting foreign tourists who had direct experience consuming street food in Thailand.

Research instrument: The research instrument was a self-administered questionnaire, developed based on a review of relevant literature and previous studies related to tourism behavior and gastronomy. The questionnaire consisted of five sections, as follows: 1) General Information-checklist questions 2) Tourist Behavior-checklist questions 3) Gastronomy Knowledge-rating scale questions 4) Gastronomy Experience-rating scale questions and 5) Attitude toward Street Food Consumption-rating scale questions

Sections 1 and 2 were measured using checklist items, while Sections 3 to 5 employed a five-point rating scale format to measure respondents' levels of knowledge, experience, and attitudes toward street food consumption. To ensure content validity, the questionnaire was evaluated by three experts in tourism and hospitality research. The Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) yielded a value of .84, indicating acceptable content validity (Rovinelli &



Hambleton, 1976, p. 49). The questionnaire was subsequently revised according to the experts' suggestions.

After revision, the finalized questionnaire was subjected to a pilot test with 30 respondents who shared similar characteristics with the target population, namely foreign tourists with street food consumption experience in Thailand, in order to examine the reliability of the instrument prior to actual data collection. The reliability analysis produced a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .91, which exceeded the threshold of .70 recommended by Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson. (2019, pp. 265-270), indicating a high level of internal consistency.

Data collection: Data were collected from foreign tourists at major street food areas and popular tourist destinations in Thailand, including Yaowarat Road (Chinatown), Khao San Road, and Chatuchak Weekend Market in Bangkok, during [Month, Year]. The researcher and research assistants distributed the self-administered questionnaires directly to eligible respondents who met the inclusion criteria, namely foreign tourists who had consumed street food in Thailand at least once during their current visit. Completed questionnaires were collected on-site. Of the 420 questionnaires distributed, 400 were returned and deemed complete and usable, yielding a response rate of 95.20%.

This study adhered to ethical principles in human research. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, their right to refuse or withdraw from participation, and the confidentiality of their personal information.

Data analysis: Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation. The interpretation of mean scores was based on the criteria proposed by Best (1977, p. 191), which classified the levels as follows: 4.21-5.00=very high level, 3.41-4.20=high level, 2.61-3.40=moderate level, 1.81-2.60=low level, and 1.00-1.80=very low level. This classification was consistently applied throughout the manuscript, including in the interpretation of findings presented in Tables 2 and 3. Inferential statistics, particularly enter method multiple regression analysis, were employed to examine the influence of cultural differences on street food consumption behavior among foreign tourists. The enter method was selected as it allows simultaneous entry of all predictor variables, enabling a comprehensive assessment of their combined and individual contributions to the dependent variable (Hair, Black, Babin & Anderson, 2019, pp. 265-270).



RESEARCH RESULT

Profile of the respondents: Based on the analysis of demographic data from 400 respondents ($n=400$), the majority of participants were male (52.50%). Most respondents were aged between 26 and 35 years (40.80%). The highest proportion of respondents held a bachelor's degree (35.00%). In terms of occupation, most respondents were engaged in personal business or freelance work (35.00%). Regarding income, the majority reported an average monthly income of more than USD 1,515 (37.30%). Additionally, most respondents were from Europe (44.30%), with the largest proportion originating from the United States (12.60%).

Results of gastronomy knowledge: From survey to analysis of cultural differences on street food consumption behavior of among foreign tourists in Thailand analysis.

Table 1. Overview of factors influencing cultural differences of gastronomy knowledge.

Gastronomy knowledge	$\bar{X}$	SD	Level of Agreement
1. I have read about the street food before I travel in Bangkok.	3.91	0.92	High level
2. I am aware of the street food eating customs.	3.76	0.97	High level
3. I know a lot about the street food.	3.57	0.99	High level
4. I know the street food that is popular in Bangkok.	4.00	0.99	High level
5. I know the locations to have popular street food in Bangkok.	3.67	0.95	High level
6. I know which destinations have the best street food.	3.53	0.95	High level
7. I am an expert of street food compared with my friends.	3.38	0.91	Moderate level
8. I know the representative street food of most Bangkok destinations.	3.41	0.96	High level
9. I can describe my knowledge of street food before visiting Bangkok.	3.53	0.92	High level



Table 1. (Continue)

Gastronomy knowledge	$\bar{X}$	<i>SD</i>	Level of Agreement
10. I can be described as someone who is knowledgeable about street food.	3.51	0.98	High level
Total	3.62	0.71	High level

Table 1, the results indicate that the overall level of respondents' gastronomy knowledge was at an high level ($\bar{X}=3.62$, $SD=0.71$), suggesting that respondents possessed a relatively high level of knowledge regarding street food in Bangkok. When considering individual items, the highest mean score was found for knowing popular street food in Bangkok ($\bar{X}=4.00$, $SD=0.99$). This was followed by having read about street food before traveling to Bangkok ($\bar{X}=3.91$, $SD=0.92$) and being aware of street food eating customs ($\bar{X}=3.76$, $SD=0.97$), all of which were rated at the high level. In contrast, the lowest mean score was observed for considering oneself an expert in street food compared with friends ($\bar{X}=3.38$, $SD=0.91$), which was rated at a moderate level. This finding indicates that while respondents generally perceived themselves as knowledgeable about street food, they did not strongly identify themselves as experts.

Overall, the findings suggest that respondents demonstrated a relatively high level of gastronomy knowledge related to Bangkok's Street food. Such knowledge may play an important role in shaping tourists' perceptions, perceived value, and decision-making regarding street food consumption in Bangkok.

Table 2. Overview of factors influencing cultural differences of gastronomy experience

Gastronomy experience	$\bar{X}$	<i>SD</i>	Level of Agreement
1. I enjoyed my street food experience.	4.33	0.75	Very high level
2. I had good experience with the street food service provider.	4.15	0.82	High level
3. I get to know more about the local culture through street food experience in Bangkok	4.14	0.79	High level



Table 2. (Continue)

Gastronomy experience	$\bar{X}$	SD	Level of Agreement
4. In general, I found street food in Bangkok to be what I anticipated.	4.02	0.82	High level
5. I close the street food that was prepared with local ingredients and/or techniques.	3.97	0.89	High level
6. I have eaten the street food in holidays.	4.14	0.91	High level
7. The quality of street food makes me come back to eat again here.	4.19	0.83	High level
8. I will remember the street food experiences in Bangkok.	4.28	0.83	Very high level
9. When traveling, my important to me is the street food experience in Bangkok.	4.05	0.93	High level
10. The street food experiences have made me more knowledgeable.	4.06	0.83	High level
Total	4.13	0.52	High level

Table 2, the results reveal that the overall level of respondents' gastronomy experience was rated at a high level ($\bar{X}=4.13$, $SD=0.52$), indicating a high level of positive experience with street food in Bangkok. At the item level, the highest mean score was observed for enjoying street food experiences ($\bar{X}=4.33$, $SD=0.75$), followed by remembering street food experiences in Bangkok ($\bar{X}=4.28$, $SD=0.83$). Both items were rated at a strongly high level, reflecting the memorable and enjoyable nature of street food experiences among respondents. Additionally, respondents reported positive perceptions regarding the quality of street food encouraging revisit intention ($\bar{X}=4.19$, $SD=0.83$) and having good experiences with street food service providers ($\bar{X}=4.15$, $SD=0.82$), which were rated at the agree level. Furthermore, respondents indicated that street food experiences contributed to a better understanding of local culture ($\bar{X}=4.14$, $SD=0.79$) and enhanced personal knowledge ($\bar{X}=4.06$, $SD=0.83$). The item with the lowest mean score was preferring street food prepared with local ingredients and/or techniques ($\bar{X}=3.97$, $SD=0.89$) however, this item was still rated at the high level.



Overall, the findings suggest that respondents experienced a high level of satisfaction and meaningful engagement with Bangkok's Street food. Such positive gastronomy experiences may strengthen tourists' cultural learning, memory formation, and intention to revisit, highlighting the important role of street food in enhancing the overall tourism experience in Bangkok.

Table 3. Overview of factors influencing cultural differences of attitudes towards the behavior.

Attitudes	$\bar{X}$	<i>SD</i>	Level of Agreement
1. Street vendors in Bangkok use fresh ingredients.	4.03	0.81	High level
2. Street food in Bangkok is natural and free of additives.	3.86	0.92	High level
3. Street food in Bangkok is unique and exotic.	4.16	0.87	High level
4. Street food in Bangkok is healthy and nutritious.	3.87	0.93	High level
5. I feel trying street food in Bangkok is a fun experience.	4.23	0.87	Very high level
6. I think that purchasing street food in Bangkok is interesting.	4.24	0.82	Very high level
7. I think that purchasing street food in Bangkok is a good idea.	4.23	0.85	Very high level
8. I think that purchasing street food in Bangkok is important.	4.08	0.84	High level
9. I think that purchasing street food in beneficial.	4.01	0.93	High level
10. I think that purchasing street food in Bangkok is favourable.	4.18	0.86	High level
Total	4.08	0.58	High level

Table 3, the findings indicate that respondents' overall attitudes toward street food purchasing behavior in Bangkok were at a high level ($\bar{X} = 4.08$, $SD=0.58$), reflecting generally positive attitudes toward street food consumption. At the item level, the highest mean scores



were observed for perceiving street food consumption in Bangkok as an interesting experience ($\bar{X}=4.24, SD=0.82$), feeling that trying street food in Bangkok is a fun experience ($\bar{X}=4.23, SD=0.87$), and believing that purchasing street food in Bangkok is a good idea ($\bar{X}=4.23, SD=0.85$). These items were rated at a very high level, indicating strong positive affective and cognitive evaluations toward street food consumption. Respondents also expressed favorable perceptions of street food characteristics, including its uniqueness and exotic nature ($\bar{X}=4.16, SD=0.87$) and the use of fresh ingredients by street vendors ($\bar{X}=4.03, SD=0.81$), which were rated at the high level. In contrast, comparatively lower mean scores were reported for perceiving street food as natural and free of additives ($\bar{X}=3.86, SD=0.92$) and considering street food to be healthy and nutritious ($\bar{X}=3.87, SD=0.93$); however, these items remained within the high level.

Overall, the results suggest that respondents held positive attitudes toward street food purchasing behavior in Bangkok. Such favorable attitudes may contribute to stronger behavioral intentions and actual purchasing behavior, underscoring the importance of street food as a meaningful component of the tourism experience in Bangkok.

H1: Gastronomy knowledge and experience significantly influences tourists' attitudes toward street food consumption behavior.

Table 4. Analyze the factors of gastronomy knowledge that influence of attitudes towards the behavior.

Gastronomy knowledge	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Standardized Coefficients Beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	2.78		18.63*	.00		
1. I have read about the street food before I travel in Bangkok.	0.06	0.11	2.20*	.02	0.72	1.39



Table 4. (Continue)

Gastronomy knowledge	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Standardized Coefficients Beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Tolerance	VIF
2. I am aware of the street food eating customs.	-0.00	-0.00	-0.02	.97	0.62	1.60
3. I know a lot about the street food.	0.04	0.07	1.06	.28	0.48	2.06
4. I know the street food that is popular in Bangkok.	0.14	0.24	4.14**	.00	0.60	1.65
5. I know the locations to have popular street food in Bangkok.	-0.02	-0.03	-0.51	.60	0.44	2.26
6. I know which destinations have the best street food.	0.03	0.06	0.90	.36	0.41	2.43
7. I am an expert of street food compared with my friends.	-0.06	-0.11	-1.66	.09	0.43	2.30



Table 4. (Continue)

Gastronomy knowledge	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Standardized Coefficients Beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Tolerance	VIF
8. I know the representative street food of most Bangkok destinations.	0.02	0.04	0.68	.49	0.46	2.17
9. I can describe my knowledge of street food before visiting Bangkok.	0.06	0.12	1.88	.06	0.47	2.11
10. I can be described as someone who is knowledgeable about street food.	0.03	0.07	1.02	.30	0.43	2.30
$R=.430^a$, $R^2=.185$, Adjusted R Square=.164, Durbin-Watson=1.76						

* $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$

Table 4, the multiple regression analysis revealed that the set of gastronomy knowledge variables significantly explained the variance of the dependent variable. The model showed a moderate relationship ($R=.430$), with an explanatory power of 18.5 percent ($R^2=.185$) and an adjusted R^2 of .164. This indicates that gastronomy knowledge factors collectively accounted for approximately 16.40 percent of the variance in the outcome variable. The Durbin-Watson statistic was 1.76, suggesting no serious autocorrelation problem in the



residuals. At the individual predictor level, the findings indicated that knowing popular street food in Bangkok had a positive and statistically significant influence on the dependent variable ($\beta=0.24$, $t=4.14^{**}$, $p=.00$). In addition, having read about street food before traveling to Bangkok also showed a significant positive effect ($\beta=0.11$, $t=2.20^*$, $p=.02$). These results suggest that prior information acquisition and familiarity with popular street food play an important role in influencing the dependent variable. The remaining gastronomy knowledge variables did not demonstrate statistically significant effects ($p>.05$). This implies that although respondents generally perceived themselves as knowledgeable about street food, not all dimensions of gastronomy knowledge contributed equally to explaining the dependent variable. Furthermore, multicollinearity diagnostics indicated acceptable values, with tolerance levels exceeding .10 and variance inflation factor (VIF) values below 5 for all predictors, confirming the absence of multicollinearity concerns.

Overall, the findings suggest that specific aspects of gastronomy knowledge particularly prior exposure to street food information and awareness of popular street food offerings are key determinants influencing the dependent variable, while other knowledge-related dimensions exerted weaker explanatory effects.

Table 5. Results of Multiple Regression the gastronomy experience

Gastronomy experience	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Standardized Coefficients Beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	0.96		5.55**	.00		
1. I enjoyed my street food experience.	0.11	0.14	3.16*	.00	0.64	1.55
2. I had good experience with the street food service provider.	0.02	0.04	0.85	.39	0.60	1.66



Table 5. (Continue)

Gastronomy experience	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Standardized Coefficients Beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Tolerance	VIF
3. I get to know more about the local culture through street food experience in Bangkok.	0.06	0.08	1.84	.06	0.65	1.51
4. In general, I found street food in Bangkok to be what I anticipated.	0.13	0.19	4.20**	.00	0.64	1.55
5. I close the street food that was prepared with local ingredients and/or techniques.	0.06	0.09	2.15*	.03	0.70	1.42
6. I have eaten the street food in holidays.	0.02	0.04	0.96	.33	0.78	1.27



Table 5. (Continue)

Gastronomy experience	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Standardized Coefficients Beta	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	Tolerance	VIF
7. The quality of street food makes me come back to eat again here.	0.13	0.18	4.13**	.00	0.67	1.48
8. I will remember the street food experiences in Bangkok.	0.03	0.05	1.16	.24	0.62	1.60
9. When traveling, my important to me is the street food experience in Bangkok.	0.03	0.05	1.13	.25	0.63	1.57
10. The street food experiences have made me more knowledgeable.	0.12	0.18	4.00**	.00	0.66	1.49
$R=.686^a$, $R\text{ Square}=.471$, $\text{Adjusted } R\text{ Square}=.458$, $\text{Durin-Watson}=1.87$						

* $p<.05$, ** $p<.01$

Table 5, the results of the multiple regression analysis indicate that gastronomy experience variables significantly explained the variance of the dependent variable. The model



demonstrated a strong relationship ($R=.686$), with an explanatory power of 47.10 percent ($R^2=.471$) and an adjusted R^2 of .458. This suggests that gastronomy experience factors collectively accounted for approximately 45.80 percent of the variance in the dependent variable. The Durbin–Watson statistic was 1.87, indicating no serious autocorrelation in the residuals. At the individual predictor level, several gastronomy experience dimensions were found to have statistically significant positive effects on the dependent variable. Enjoying street food experiences significantly influenced the dependent variable ($\beta=0.14$, $t=3.16^*$, $p=.00$). In addition, gaining knowledge about local culture through street food experiences showed a significant positive effect ($\beta=0.19$, $t=4.20^{**}$, $p=.00$). Moreover, finding street food in Bangkok to be as anticipated ($\beta=0.09$, $t=2.15^*$, $p=.03$), the quality of street food encouraging revisit intention ($\beta=0.18$, $t=4.13^{**}$, $p=.00$), and street food experiences enhancing personal knowledge ($\beta=0.18$, $t=4.00^{**}$, $p=.00$) were also identified as significant predictors. In contrast, variables related to experiences with street food service providers, preference for local ingredients or techniques, having eaten street food during holidays, memorability of street food experiences, and the importance of street food experiences while traveling did not exhibit statistically significant effects ($p>.05$). Multicollinearity diagnostics revealed acceptable tolerance values (greater than .10) and variance inflation factor (VIF) values below 5 for all predictors, indicating no multicollinearity issues within the model.

Overall, the findings suggest that experiential and cognitive dimensions of gastronomy experiences particularly enjoyment, cultural learning, perceived quality, expectation confirmation, and knowledge enhancement play a crucial role in influencing the dependent variable. This highlights the importance of meaningful and high-quality street food experiences in shaping tourists' behavioral outcomes in Bangkok.

DISCUSSION

To examine the influence of cultural differences on street food consumption behavior among foreign tourists in Thailand.

The present study found that respondents demonstrated a relatively high level of gastronomy knowledge related to Bangkok's Street food. Such knowledge may play an important role in shaping tourists' perceptions, perceived value, and decision-making regarding street food consumption. This aligns with recent research showing that cognitive and cultural



gastronomic experiences significantly influence tourists' destination image and travel intentions in the context of culinary tourism. For example, Cheng & Jiang (2024, p. 5) found that cognitive, emotional, and cultural experiences significantly influenced tourists' affective and cognitive destination images, thereby positively impacting their intention to visit Thailand for culinary experiences. Their model emphasized the importance of experience-based knowledge in shaping tourists' travel decisions, supporting the notion that knowledge acquisition is integral to gastronomy tourism behavior.

In addition, the current findings reveal that positive street food experiences were associated with high satisfaction, meaningful engagement, and stronger intentions to revisit. This result is consistent with recent empirical evidence suggesting that street food quality, including cultural experience components, positively predicts involvement and repurchase intentions among international tourists, Jeaheng & et al., (2023, p. 237) demonstrated that perceived quality of Thai street food significantly influenced tourists' involvement and repurchase intentions, highlighting how experiential quality contributes to post-visit behavioral intentions. This suggests that providing high-quality, culturally rich street food experiences can enhance tourists' positive attitudes and strengthen their behavioral intentions, thereby reinforcing the role of street food as a key element of gastronomy tourism.

Moreover, the present study also found positive attitudes toward street food purchasing behavior among respondents, indicating that favorable attitudes may contribute to stronger behavioral intentions and actual purchasing behavior. These findings align with theoretical expectations from the Theory of Planned Behavior, wherein attitudes toward behavior significantly influence intentions and subsequent actions. Collectively, the current results contribute to existing literature by reinforcing the central role of gastronomy knowledge, experience, and attitudes in shaping tourist behavior in street food tourism contexts.

1) To determine the extent to which cultural differences significantly predict street food consumption behavior among foreign tourists in Thailand.

The present study's regression findings indicate that specific aspects of gastronomy knowledge particularly prior exposure to street food information and awareness of popular street food offerings serve as significant positive determinants of the dependent variable. Although the overall explanatory power of the model was moderate ($R^2=.185$), the results



underscore the meaningful contribution of targeted knowledge components to shaping tourist behavior outcomes. This finding corroborates prior research showing that cognitive and informational knowledge significantly influences tourist decision-making processes and experience outcomes in food tourism contexts.

A review of the literature indicates that food tourism motivation serves as an initial driving force influencing tourists' travel decisions. Su, Johnson & O'Mahony (2020, pp. 575-576), within the push-pull framework, internal push factors such as the desire to taste local cuisine, socialization, and cultural experiences, together with external pull factors including the attractiveness of local food and culinary destination identity, play significant roles in shaping food tourists' travel motivation. This perspective highlights that food functions not only as a basic necessity but also as a central component of the tourism experience. From the knowledge dimension, previous studies have found that gastronomic knowledge, particularly pre-trip information acquisition and familiarity with local specialties, positively influences tourists' destination choices and satisfaction. Research conducted in the context of culinary tourism in Vietnam further suggests that accessible and relevant food-related information enhances tourists' confidence in exploring local cuisine and enriches their overall travel experiences. Integrating these perspectives, it can be argued that food-related motivation stimulates tourists to seek gastronomic knowledge, while knowledge obtained prior to travel helps reduce uncertainty, increase familiarity, and foster positive attitudes toward local food consumption. Ultimately, this process leads to actual consumption behavior. Such a relationship is consistent with the Knowledge – Attitude - Behavior, sequence framework within gastronomy tourism contexts.

In addition, Kovalenko, Dias, Pereira & Simões (2023, p. 5) identified that tourists' prior knowledge, particularly familiarity with local specialties and awareness of popular culinary offerings, positively influenced their perceived quality of a destination's cuisine and overall gastronomic engagement. Their findings suggest that depth and relevance of food-related knowledge yield stronger cognitive evaluations and behavioral responses than general awareness alone. This is consistent with the present results, where not all gastronomy knowledge dimensions were significant predictors, implying that depth and relevance of information rather than general knowledge drive behavioral outcomes more effectively. Collectively, these findings extend existing literature by delineating which knowledge components matter most



in influencing tourism-related behavior. They highlight the importance of providing accurate, engaging, and destination-specific gastronomic information to prospective travelers as a strategy for enhancing culinary tourism satisfaction and strengthening intention to engage in food-related consumption behaviors.

The results of this study demonstrate that gastronomy experience plays a substantial role in explaining tourists' behavioral outcomes, as reflected by the strong explanatory power of the regression model. The relatively high adjusted R^2 value indicates that experiential dimensions of street food consumption are critical determinants influencing the dependent variable. This finding reinforces the argument that gastronomy tourism is inherently experienced driven, where emotional, cognitive, and cultural interactions collectively shape tourist responses.

Specifically, enjoyment of street food experiences and cultural learning through street food were identified as significant predictors, highlighting the importance of hedonic and educational aspects of gastronomy experiences. This result is consistent with recent studies emphasizing that experiential enjoyment and cultural immersion are central to tourists' evaluations of food-related experiences. Cheng & Jiang (2024, p. 2) found that emotional enjoyment and cultural experience significantly influenced tourists' destination image and behavioral intentions in the context of Thailand's gastronomic tourism, suggesting that experiential engagement enhances both affective responses and post-visit intentions.

Furthermore, the significant effects of perceived quality, expectation confirmation, and knowledge enhancement suggest that tourists evaluate street food experiences through both affective and cognitive lenses. When street food meets or exceeds expectations and is perceived as high quality, tourists are more likely to develop favorable behavioral outcomes. This aligns with the findings of Jeaheng & et al., (2023, p. 226), who reported that perceived quality and experiential involvement in Thai street food positively influenced tourists' revisit intentions and repurchase behavior. Such results indicate that memorable and high-quality gastronomy experiences not only generate satisfaction but also foster long-term behavioral intentions. In contrast, the non-significant effects of service provider interaction, ingredient preference, and memorability alone suggest that not all experiential components exert equal influence. Rather, it is the integration of enjoyment, learning, and perceived value that most strongly drives tourist behavior. Overall, these findings extend existing gastronomy tourism literature by demonstrating that meaningful and cognitively enriching street food experiences



are key mechanisms through which destinations can enhance tourists' behavioral outcomes and competitiveness.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for applying research findings: The findings of this study offer several practical implications for stakeholders involved in gastronomy tourism development and street food management in Thailand.

1. Tourism authorities and destination management organizations should develop targeted gastronomy tourism promotion strategies that highlight Thailand's street food culture as a core tourism product. Specifically, marketing campaigns should emphasize culturally rich and authentic street food experiences to attract foreign tourists with diverse cultural backgrounds, as cultural differences were found to significantly influence consumption behavior.

2. Local authorities and tourism organizations should collaborate with street food vendors to establish and maintain quality standards related to food safety, hygiene, and service quality. Improving these standards can enhance tourists' perceived value, trust, and satisfaction, thereby strengthening their behavioral intentions to revisit and recommend Thai street food destinations.

3. Gastronomy knowledge was identified as a significant predictor of street food consumption behavior. Therefore, tourism stakeholders should invest in the development of accessible and destination-specific food information platforms, such as multilingual digital guides, interactive food maps, and cultural interpretation signage at street food areas, to enhance tourists' pre-trip and on-site gastronomic knowledge.

4. Given that gastronomy experience, particularly enjoyment and cultural learning, strongly influenced tourist behavior, experience-based tourism products such as street food tours, cooking demonstrations, and food cultural workshops should be developed and promoted. These initiatives can deepen tourists' cultural engagement and foster positive attitudes toward street food consumption.

5. Policymakers should integrate street food development into broader urban tourism planning frameworks by supporting vendor capacity-building programs that focus on food safety, cultural storytelling, and service quality improvement. Such efforts can contribute to a



sustainable and competitive street food ecosystem that benefits both tourists and local communities.

Recommendations for future research

1. Future research should examine the role of tourism and urban food policies in shaping street food quality, hygiene standards, and vendor practices, in order assess how policy interventions influence tourists' trust, satisfaction, and behavioral intentions.

2. Further studies are encouraged to investigate destination management strategies related to street food zoning, branding, and promotion, particularly how coordinated efforts among local authorities, tourism organizations, and vendors can enhance the competitiveness of street food as a tourism product.

3 Future research may explore the effectiveness of capacity-building and training programs for street food vendors, focusing on food safety, service quality, and cultural interpretation, and their impact on tourists perceived value and revisit intentions.

4. Comparative policy-oriented research across destinations or countries is recommended to identify best practices in street food governance and management that support sustainable tourism development while preserving local culinary identity.

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