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## Gastrodiplomacy: Captivating a Global Audience Through Cultural Cuisine-A Systematic Review of the Literature

Wajeana White<sup>1</sup> , Albert A. Barreda<sup>2</sup> , Stephanie Hein<sup>3</sup>

### Abstract

The aim of the study is to contribute to the scholarly works that examine food and the role it plays as a tool in the diplomatic influence known as gastrodiplomacy. This work also offers readers literature inclusive of authors, periods of time, sources, and titles pertaining to the topic. The goal is to categorize diverse workings and problems related to gastrodiplomacy that have been analyzed up to this point. A systematic review of 32 peer-reviewed academic articles published in the past five years, validate the depth of the present research. Up-to-date subjects, methodologies, and results are provided, in addition to prospects for supplementary exploration. The literature tracks industry developments in the tourism sector. Most of the research concentrates on the platform of nations experiencing global status from a dynamic array of distinctive foods from other cultures. A great amount of opportunity for research is recognized in the literature, whereas only a limited amount has been delivered. Research in gastrodiplomacy has been inadequate up to this point, both in tourism and hospitality literature, with more attention given to the social aspects of cultural cuisine. Consequently, this study provides a foundation for researchers, scholars, and learners to expand and develop additional analysis in the future.

### Keywords

Systematic review, Diplomatic influence, Gastrodiplomacy, Multi-cultural, National cuisine

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## Introduction

This study focuses on the national branding endeavor known as gastrodiploamacy. Through gastrodiploamacy, nations utilize food to engage in diplomacy efforts and encourage the global branding process. Food has long connected societies as well as geographical areas. During the earliest of time periods, these connections centered on commodities such as spices, coffee, tea, and sugar (Suntikul, 2017). Gastrodiploamacy is a relatively modern experience in the market branding design process. When effectively applied, gastrodiploamacy can help develop a persona of a national influence by way of national cuisine. Through global identification, food is used as a symbol of national individuality for achieving diverse economic principles (Suntikul, 2017).

Although the primary role of food is to provide sustenance, it has long been used as a means to convey traditions, foster negotiations, and exchange ideas or expressions. For example, ceremonial meals and gatherings for diplomats, utilize precise, traditional culinary methods and extraordinary regional cuisine to mark a notable occasion and to build rapport between nations (Sormaz, Akmese, Gunes, & Aras, 2016). Quite often, communication between parties is delivered by way of table etiquette, dignitaries in attendance, seating provisions, and extravagant cuisine (Tettner & Begum, 2018).

Specifically, this study aims to understand the development, the evolution, and the most recent, significant academic literature that contemplates gastrodiploamacy within the tourism and hospitality industry. The authors not only examined the most up-to-date research on gastrodiploamacy, but also considered the gaps in the literature as well as essential issues pertaining to the topic and provided thoughtful direction for forthcoming research in the gastronomy, culinary, and tourism industry. Within the context of this systematic review, gastrodiploamacy, as it relates to the tourism industry and the international relations continuum, is discussed, and the role it has on societal or cultural diplomacy is considered. Then, the interchange of cuisine and the vacation industry in the development of gastrodiploamacy promotions at a national branding level is examined. This includes a comparison and review of current gastrodiploamacy campaigns from Peru, Taiwan, Malaysia, Thailand, South Korea, the United States, and Australia. Next, additional areas of importance generated through gastrodiploamacy are presented. From this, gastrodiploamacy, tourism, and the political role cuisine plays in the national branding process are discussed. The research concludes by presenting considerations for further research and strategy.

## **Literature Review**

The review that follows provides an organized examination of past and current literature. Key topics of consideration include gastrodiplomacy's influence on national distinctiveness, the individuality of nations, and soft power.

### **Gastrodiplomacy As A National Distinctiveness**

Customs and food diversity are significant for regional locations where environments, cultivation of lands, cuisine, Epicureanism, values, arts, and hospitality join together (Longin & Würschum, 2016). Additionally, cuisine and cultural commodities are a vital measurement of a country's resources and influence manufacturing and distribution capabilities, as well as promotion, branding, and trade opportunities. Food is an essential way in which countries distinguish themselves (Zhang, 2015). The figurative symbol of food is used to interconnect beliefs, principles, individualities, and viewpoints. Dissimilar societal statuses are articulated not only through the elegance of service at different gatherings, but also through variations and extent of the cuisine (Zhang, 2015).

Gastrodiplomacy connects to public diplomacy in the same way that the relationship merges culture and culinary diplomacy with national branding, thereby creating a physical perception of taste and touch to a nation (Suntikul, 2019). Whereas gastrodiplomacy is a relatively modern concept, cuisine has long influenced diplomatic activities (Nirwandy & Awang, 2014). Gastrodiplomacy is often referred to as culinary diplomacy; however, there are dissimilarities between the two. Culinary diplomacy relates to the expansion of relations through cuisine and the eating habits of visiting ambassadors or public figures. Gastrodiplomacy engages the role of food in public diplomacy, revealing wide-ranging public views targeted by leaders in modern diplomacy and enriching the palatable national brand (Rockower, 2014). Gastrodiplomacy shapes the lives and values of all individuals by using food as a building block of collective elements. It is often referenced as the compassionate segment of public diplomacy, promoting simply through emotional relations (Osipova, 2014).

### **Individuality of Nations**

Gastrodiplomacy has largely benefited middle power nations who are not global forces in the areas of culture, armed forces, or financial stature (Rockowner, 2014). However, middle power nations encompass some authority and control on the international platform. These countries include Thailand, Korea, Taiwan, and Peru, along with major authorities like the United States and Japan. Each one utilizes food as an ambassadorial tool (Rockower, 2014). Gastrodiplomacy should not be observed as just a branding tool for a country, as it involves much more. For world

power nations, collective agreements develop through public diplomacy, enrich envisioned developments, and create advantages for nations (Nirwandy & Awang, 2014). National cuisine is often utilized as a soft power for societal resolution in the collective agreement process by way of gastrodiploamacy. As a result, democratic ideals are communicated through recognized global cuisine that is part of the society's sustenance culture (Zhang, 2015).

Culinary tourism is viewed as a cultural means for branding a destination persona. For quite some time, culinary tourism has been an attractive theme for scholarly research of industrial concerns (Lee, Wall, & Kovacs, 2015). The tourism industry continuously focuses on marketing visions and experiences. For instance, experience tourism pays attention to the interest of what is authentic and unique in any given destination (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2015). A culture encompasses histories that preserve specific ethics and beliefs, channeling them through art, composition, and theatre, as well as cuisine. Cultural values are often shared with others through communal experiences and societal backgrounds or traditions that surround a meal (Cavalcanti de Melo, 2015).

From one generation to the next, the planning and partaking of food has been vital to a society's culture, and has shaped each generation's particular ways of existence, as well as forms of appreciation. A society's vision is often solidified and protected through their cultural values. Nationalized gastronomy advances this idea by classifying cultural legacy as a broadly recognized element in the tourist segment (Strugar, 2015). A small number of nations, together with Italy, France, and Mexico have at present, created the global status of dynamic, distinctive culinary cultures, even though the gastrodiploamacy concept is a relatively new idea (Nirwandy & Awang, 2014).

Precise branding campaigns, coupled with the use of a national cuisine, help create a persona for nations. This is particularly true when familiar cuisines from smaller countries are utilized (Griffith, 2016). As a result, globalization is often encouraged. It is important that the globalization of culture is embraced, as it is a key component for the boundaries between nations to disappear, thereby creating a new world image. New generations are more likely to be open to new ideas and integration, which allows for the fusion and acceptance of other cultures (Nahar, Karim, Karim, Ghazali, & Krauss, 2018).

**Table 1**  
*Examples of Contemporary Gastrodiplomacy Actions*

Location	Country	Actions
Latin America	Peru	The government of Peru started campaigning for its cooking in 2006 with a service sector program called “Peru Mucho Gusto” meaning “Peru, nice to meet you and Peru, full of flavor”. The outcome of this promotion was funds created for national cookbooks, prestigious culinary celebrations, and the launching of Peruvian eateries all over the globe. An additional significant element was to ensure that Peruvian food was acclaimed as a “culinary treasure” on the Intangible Cultural Heritage listing by UNESCO.
Asia	Taiwan	The endorsed name of Taiwan’s gastrodiplomacy program began in 2010 called, “All in Good Taste: Savor the Flavors of Taiwan” and was supported by the Economic Affairs Ministry. Over a four-year time, the commonly referred to program, “Dim Sum diplomacy” devoted \$34.2 million in an attempt to improve Taiwan’s worldwide brand encompassing its trade, cultural and culinary contributions.
North America	United States	In 2012, a selection of chefs from all over the United States called the American Chef Corps was chosen to participate in government programs to reflect America’s rich culinary culture. The culinary diplomacy program was closed in 2016 by the current administration.
Oceania	Australia	Australia’s Ministry of Tourism allocated \$10 million in 2014 for the funding of their international movement “There’s Nothing like Australia” a gastrodiplomacy program constructed in a year called “Restaurant Australia” targeting twelve global marketplaces.

**Gastrodiplomacy As A Soft Power**

Gastrodiplomacy is an increasingly important international affairs topic (Farna, 2018). As such, gastrodiplomacy is one approach countries use to promote their indigenous culinary landscape. To do this, countries use gastrodiplomacy to generate progressive international relations by way of their local cuisine. Rich culture and history are then expressed by sharing uniqueness through food. Countless countries have utilized a gastrodiplomacy movement to share or market their cultural journey to other nations (Krinis, 2018).

The importance of gastrodiplomacy is discussed within the context and extensive debate on soft power. The notion of soft power, or exploiting national food and culture, was shaped by Joseph Nye in the first part of the 1990s. The concept has since achieved wide acceptance (Farina, 2018). Gastrodiplomacy can be viewed as a fundamental paradigm for maintaining national well-being while re-enforcing national policy intentions. Cuisine is an example of public soft power, and in recent research, the role of food in diplomacy has been examined (Nirwandy & Awang, 2014).

Gastronomic soft power is the recognized charm and allure of food traditions that hold fast to a region, state, or nation (Assmann, 2015). Gastrodiplomacy strives to improve unilateral relations by using culinary events as a process to charm notables.

As a result, culinary values are communicated to foreign societies in a way that is better distributed than culinary diplomacy (Rockowner, 2014). Gastrodiplomacy encompasses more than just the promotion of a national cuisine on an international platform; it is also instrumental in allowing nations to utilize their local cuisine as a subtle power source. This increases the attractiveness and appeal of the gastrodiplomacy philosophy, as societal ideals and principles are reinforced with the relationship of specific indigenous foods that help achieve positive economic results to advance tourism activity (Farina, 2018).

### **Methodology**

In May 2019, all gastrodiplomacy publications in tourism and hospitality were collected, categorized, and analyzed from Google Scholar, Science Direct, Emerald Insight, and Ebscohost, which are considered to be the most common and useful online databases and search engines (Leung, Law, Van Hoof, & Buhalis, 2013). Aligned with previous studies, the systematic review process implemented in this project followed the PRISMA framework adapted from Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, and Altman (2009) and others (Yang, Khoo-Lattimore, & Arcodia, 2017). Since Gastrodiplomacy is a relatively modern concept and this systematic review aims to investigate the most recent literature regarding Gastrodiplomacy, the time-frame was constrained from January 1, 2013 to December 31, 2018.

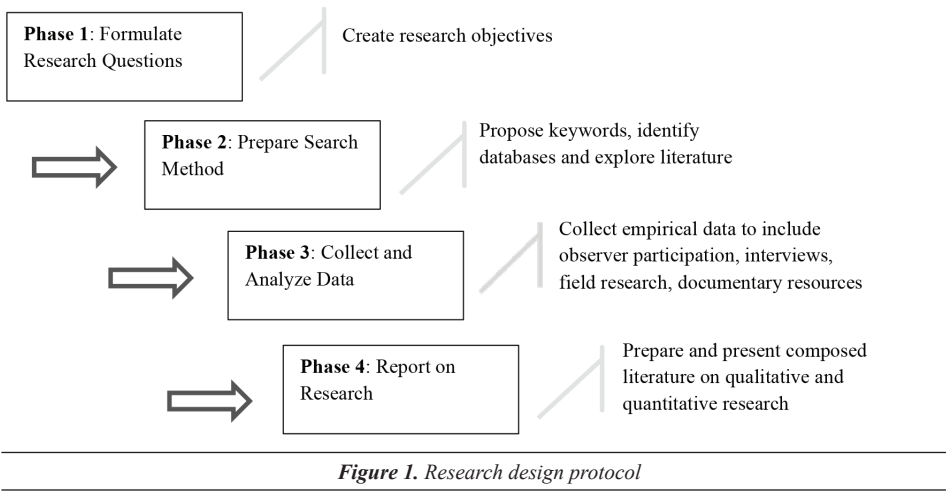
To attain the research objective of presenting an all-encompassing summary of findings, the keywords of diplomatic influence, gastrodiplomacy, multi-cultural, and national cuisine were used to identify peer-reviewed published papers. These keywords were considered the most pertinent search terms for the study of the topic. Similar to previous research projects, the authors decided only to examine full-length articles published in refereed academic journals (Jang, & Park, 2011). The authors did not include conference abstracts, book reviews, dissertations, or theses.

After completing the database review, the search generated 11,682 collected works from a wide-ranging spectrum. Searching across databases by topic, full-text articles were assessed for eligibility. Honing in on pertinent articles was key as the Ebscohost database alone included approximately 9,100 full-text periodicals from publishers such as Taylor & Francis Ltd., Sage Publications, Inc., and Springer Link, among others. From this, 7,900 peer-reviewed journal articles associated with international relations and humanities linked to food studies populated in the search of this one database.

To focus the review, criteria were set to only include literature published in a five-year timeframe, so that the authors could gain the most up-to-date information pertaining to gastrodiplomacy and the manner in which countries currently utilize the

concept. Upon review, 9,484 articles were excluded because the work existed outside of the five-year time-frame or lacked focus on the topic. Excluded articles lacked a specific relationship between governmental soft powers utilizing cultural cuisine. The excluded articles referenced food from a conventional perspective relative to a precise culture, and did not include the most recent concepts of gastrodiplomacy. An additional 22 articles were eliminated for invalid material and duplications. As a result, 32 studies were determined to be appropriate and included in this synthesis.

Figure 1 illustrates the literature search method. In phase 1, questions were formulated to determine the amount of research that would be generated on the topic of interest, as well as determining the final outcome. In phase 2, keywords were identified to search digital databases for journal articles and gather sample collections. As an outcome, the chosen articles were fully characteristic of conventional gastrodiplomacy and public diplomacy research. During phase 3, empirical data were collected from articles that reported research findings from observer participation, dynamic interviews, field research, as well as additional documented research methods. In this stage, numerous articles were available for appraisal. However, many were rejected due to their lack of relevance related to the topic of focus. After careful consideration, articles that fit the criteria of gastrodiplomacy, public diplomacy, and soft power were utilized. Selected applicable data, included observer participation, interviews, case studies, surveys, field research, and documentary resources. The final stage, phase 4, presents the results and findings in addition to reporting any research gaps.



All gastrodiplomacy related works in hospitality and tourism were identified using keywords including gastrodiplomacy, gastrodiplomacy in tourism, gastrodiplomacy in hospitality, international gastrodiplomacy, and culinary diplomacy. Key factors



were used to evaluate full-length, peer-reviewed articles in scholarly journals. Each article was meticulously examined to confirm and certify its significance to the topic. Furthermore, each reference was studied to confirm that applicable journals were not excluded in database examinations. Data compilation ensued at the beginning of the analysis, and continued until the completion of the analysis process could be validated.

Gastrodiplomacy research published between 2013 to 2018 supports the development and growth of gastrodiplomacy as a geopolitical means to successfully channel peace, nurture societal well-being, and aid diplomatic ambitions. To conduct a thorough examination of the literature, studies were cataloged by coordinating the number of studies and the year they were published, along with the level of analysis and sample types. The literature corresponding to the designated time period, as well as the research unit of analysis is presented in Table 2.

**Table 2**  
*Timing and Unit of Analysis*

Year		# of studies	%
	2018	5	16
	2017	9	28
	2016	4	12
	2015	8	25
	2014	5	16
	2013	1	3
Level of Analysis	Local Private Sector	2	6
	Subject Matter Experts	8	25
	Familial Community	1	3
	Migrant Authors	1	3
	Celebrity Chefs	6	20
	Tourists	5	16
	Government	3	9
	Donor Institutes	1	3
	Diplomats	3	9
	Students/Faculty	2	6
Sample Type	Public Opinion	1	3
	Papers	7	22
	Subject Matter Experts	6	19
	Tourists/Customers	5	16
	Case Study	3	9
	Celebrity Personalities	5	16
	Direct Observation	2	6
	Hotels	1	3
	Diplomats	2	6

**Review of Findings**

Tourism has developed a close association to gastrodiplomacy to extend outside gastronomic nationalism. It is relevant to say, according to research, that the tourism

sector has acquired a greater curiosity in local cuisine. Since 2013, the research indicates that there has been steady growth in the interest of culinary diplomacy, especially between 2015 and 2017, with no less than 21 scholarly articles written by subject matter experts. Research compiled during this time reflects over half of the overall data collected.

Research Framework and Topics

Table 3 provides a summary of gastrodiplomacy research by geographical location, the first author location, as well as the number of articles of reference originating from each location. With an increase in tourism travel, major players like Malaysia, Peru, South Korea, and British governments have entered public diplomacy as a soft power since 2015. This has created an increase in influence across the Middle East. Although research shows that some countries like the United States and Australia only participated for a short time or have already ceased their culinary public diplomacy programs, others recognized the need to advance their soft power through gastrodiplomacy. Locations such as Malaysia, South Korea, Peru, and Spain are recognized in the data set for their investment in gastrodiplomacy. All national campaigns from these settings were introduced and sponsored by their domestic government. The campaigns for each country achieve positive elements that develop harmonious imageries of their culinary traditions (Zhang, 2015). In this study, the nation-state is individually considered as a distinct cultural alliance.

Table 3  
Research Location

Research Location	# of studies	1 <sup>st</sup> Author Location	# of studies
Malaysia	4	USA	5
South Korea	3	Japan	2
Taiwan	2	Nigeria	1
Peru	3	Great Britain	1
Australia	1	Turkey	4
Spain	2	Spain	4
Germany	1	Indonesia	2
United States	3	Croatia	1
Jamaica	1	Malaysia	4
Japan	3	Peru	3
China	2	South Korea	5
Turkey	1		
Italy	1		
Great Britain	2		
France	1		
United Kingdoms	1		
Thailand	1		

In the knowledge areas of public diplomacy and gastrodiplomacy, national branding is a concept that is dependent on marketing the national cuisine. These results are

depicted in Table 4. When combined with a tourism market, branding creates a resilient image that fosters an effective reputation of a nation (Luša, 2018). Articles gathered for this research focused primarily on the topics and sub-topics of public diplomacy, gastrodiploamacy, national cuisine, market branding, and tourism while including the areas of persuasion as a soft power. Many countries have implemented gastrodiploamacy programs to endorse their local cuisines. For instance, Japan launched a global sushi campaign with Washoku, Peru introduced Cocina Peruana, Malaysia unveiled Malaysia Kitchen, and South Korea presented Kimchi diplomacy (Luša, 2018).

**Table 4**  
*Knowledge Areas*

Knowledge Areas	# of studies	Research Fields	# of studies
Public Diplomacy	7	National Cuisine	8
Gastrodiploamacy	8	Marketing/Branding	12
Washoku	3	Tourism	8
Food Education	1	Migration	1
Food Culture	2	Food Travelogue	1
Fusion Cuisine	1	Food Media	2
National Food Security	1		
Culinary Programming	1		
Television Concepts	1		
Soft Power	4		
Gastro-Brand	1		
Culinary Diplomacy	2		

A majority of the collected works pertaining to gastrodiploamacy are in the form of case studies. Numerous researchers have offered examinations of gastrodiploamatic campaigns and strategies as they are implemented by different countries. Examples of these include those from Peru, South Korea, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Taiwan, and Japan, along with others who seek branding and promotion strategies to endorse soft powers through gastrodiploamacy (Tettner & Kalyoncu, 2018).

An examination of the diverse approaches countries use revealed gastrodiploamacy promotions are often incorporated into marketing, advertisements, image management, and public relations strategies to achieve collaborative results (Zhang, 2015). These marketing elements often place emphasis on the development of franchisees, growth of membership, and the promotion of processed food commodities. Image management is also utilized to increase recognition, develop food brands, and enhance long-term rapport with international viewers (Zhang, 2015). Table 6 captures the events or campaigns various nations use to promote and/or endorse national cuisine to foreign leaders as well as the general population. It is feasible that this strategy may be the most pragmatic for many of these national campaigns. For instance, South Korea is likely benefiting from key international events and gastrodiploamacy strategy. Peru individually fashions its own international events, and promotes them among other nations to create a platform for cultural awareness (Zhang, 2015).

**Table 5**  
*Promotion and Branding through Culinary Diplomacy*

Location	Events
Malaysia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1.3 billion people in cities across the world to include New York, Sydney, Melbourne, London, Perth, Wellington, and Auckland became informed about Malaysian’s cuisine through the Malaysian Kitchen Program since it was launched in 2010 (Nahar, Karim, Karim, Ghazali, and Krauss, 2018).</li></ul>
South Korea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The strategy of South Korea’s branding of gastrodiplomacy is through the custom of introducing <i>hansik</i> (Korean food) globally through the practice of tempering traditional characteristics of spicy and sour tastes to allure foreign palates. (Pham, 2013).</li></ul>
Peru	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In 2007, the Peruvian administration elevated Peruvian cuisine to the prestige position of National Heritage in expectation to continue expanding the excitement of the local cuisine as an agency of identity (Bannister, 2017).</li><li>The organization, Apega is furthering the economic and social presence of small-scale agricultural producers and small company owners through gastronomy programs (Bannister, 2017).</li></ul>
Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Cultural assimilation is celebrated annually to honor cultural interchange among two countries, Spain and the Philippines. The 2017 conference, “Towards a Sustainable Gastronomic Planet” highlighted Madrid Fusion directing attention to the sustainability of people, culture, land, and water to communicate methods of satisfying gastronomic requirements while placing emphasis on cultural evaluation and environmental fortification in the lead (Dublin, 2017).</li></ul>
Japan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Ministry of Economy, Industry, and Trade along with the Foreign Affairs Ministry have participated in an aggressive role to promote Japanese cuisine out of the country which included a published report in 2010 labeled “Towards Nation Building through Cultural Industries” to highlight the value of the cultural diplomacy as a country’s soft powers (Farina, 2018).</li></ul>

Table 6 represents the type of research methods used in each article reviewed. The majority (78%) of the data collected for each work was qualitative in nature. Qualitative methodologies utilize methods such as conceptual review, comparative analysis, interviews, and case studies.

**Table 6**  
*Research Type*

Research Type	# of studies	%
Qualitative	25	78
Quantitative	6	19
Mixed	1	3

As depicted in Table 7, the studies analyzed most frequently (38%) used the conceptual review as a research design. This was followed by comparative analysis (16%) and case study methods (13%).

**Table 7**  
*Research Design*

Research Design	# of studies	%
Conceptual Review	12	38
Comparative Analysis	5	16
Survey	2	6
Data Collection-Secondary Sources	2	6
Interviews	3	9
Exploratory Design	1	3
E-questionnaires	2	6
Case Study	4	13
Systematic Review	1	3

**Conclusion**

The research gathered in this literature examination addresses the degree of the relationship between the consumption of a nation’s cuisine and its national persona. The research denotes that food accomplishes the ability to transform shared views of a national semblance, which can be an entrance to utilizing a nation’s additional cultural exports. Such cultural exports might include athletics, cultural arts, as well as literature that could possibly increase tourism within that country (Ruddy, 2014). The study also determines that small to intermediate size countries have a great deal to gain from gastrodiploamcy agendas. Nations emergent from, or currently in, present-day disagreements may discover that gastrodiploamcy movements are beneficial to improve their domestic image from the world view. However, each nation will need to determine what type of program is right for them.

Expressive of unique innovative developments contained in public diploamcy, gastrodiploamcy has become a prevalent topic in the tourism industry. The study of gastrodiploamcy has gone from being an obscure concept to a subject of high importance, with much debate taking place in academic journals and at national conferences. Gastrodiploamcy exemplifies an influential standard of nonverbal communication to link diverse societies, creating a new dynamic approach to cultural and public diploamcy. As more nations implement gastrodiploamcy strategies, it will create a new structure for best practices in the study to promote personal connections (Buscemi, 2014).

Gastrodiploamcy is a subject that continues to require additional evaluation and assessment. The culinary topic has been defined as a characteristic of public diploamcy which utilizes gastronomy as an instrument for interaction and appeal of a nation’s resources. As an element of a nation’s philosophical foundation, gastronomy preserves a society’s traditions and beliefs while meeting the needs of nourishment. Recently, there has been a precipitous growth in gastrodiploamcy inventiveness throughout the world. By marketing and branding ideas on a national, regional, and

local level, it is prudent to deliberate what this will hold for future diplomats and reconciliation advantages for nations.

Examples were provided by multiple countries that illustrate how each one strives to work with others for constructive interaction by using gastronomy and diplomacy to resolve opposition. Gastrodiplomacy is a positive influence on the private sector and can be instrumental in partnerships between nations and society. Public diplomacy, along with gastrodiplomacy, is often used to develop inventive programs that inspire the public and support national foreign policy in diverse issues (Solleh, 2018). Evidence suggests the food that we eat motivates the decisions that are reached. Thus, it can be concluded that careful consideration should be given to the cuisine that is served when negotiating and making important national decisions. As the significance of food to policymaking in situations such as decision-making, diplomacy, and innovations are acknowledged, then it should also follow that a destination space is also vital to nations coming together in a collective manner (Spence, 2016).

Gastrodiplomacy tourism campaigns should be encouraged to use resourceful methods to create situations for tourists to be involved with national cuisine endeavors. Comprehensive focus should be given to the diplomatic food scope of a population, as it relates to tourists as culinary representatives, since this plays an important role in gastrodiplomacy (Suntikul, 2017). While bringing foreign dignitaries to a destination, tourism presents many occasions for limited culinary organizations and local businesses that are deficient in resources to manage international gastrodiplomacy programs which improve the responsiveness to the role of peacekeeping. A nationalized brand can be carried across lands, but a destination will always remain in place.

### **Significance of the Message**

Variation and influence are two key interests in the preparation of a gastrodiplomacy campaign message. Each country customizes its gastrodiplomacy campaign message to focus on the populace of interest. For instance, South Korea introduced menus custom-made for the British public during its introduction of Bibigo. This was done by using British names for the Korean food offered to create a feeling of familiarity. This tactic preserved the uniqueness of Korean food while enticing the British People (Zhang, 2015). The goal of many gastrodiplomacy campaigns is to increase tourism in individual countries by designing a food experience that will inspire foreign representatives to visit that country. This can be extended by designing special social occasions and entertainment that allow the country to be viewed as a culinary destination. For instance, the idea of “Thai Kitchen to the World” was to foster Thai restaurant growth overseas while also using restaurants as tourist information places (Suntikul, 2017).

### **Promoting A National Brand Through Marketing**

In the public diplomacy domain, it is customary for a country to introduce its brand with the purpose of promoting and sharing the campaign all over the world. The individuality of a nation is promoted and created as slogans and expressions are used to communicate the essence and fundamental characteristics of the nation. The use of ideas, perceptions, imageries, and expressions enables nations to convey their culture abroad (Nirwandy & Awang, 2015). Within the sources of national marketing, food and beverages are frequently used as connections between national imagery and activities of the consumer (Zhang, 2015). For example, in 2006, Japan introduced an extensive campaign to represent Japanese food and food culture overseas with the “Washoku-Try Japan’s Good Food” campaign. The idea behind this campaign was to present Japanese cuisine at distinctive events organized by Japanese diplomatic operations abroad with the goal of using media at such events to create patron demand (Farina, 2018).

Another example involves the Malaysia Kitchen for the World program which was developed in 2006 by the Malaysian government. This project allowed Malaysians who resided outside of the country to participate by encouraging restaurants to be opened abroad and enhanced. The objective of this program was to increase international consumers attraction towards Malaysian cuisine (Nahar, Karim, Karim, Ghazali, & Krauss, 2018). In 2010, an additional promotion was launched by the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia. This campaign featured British celebrity chefs Chef Gordon Ramsay, Atul Kochar, Angela Hartnett, along with Malaysian restaurateurs and important authority figures to promote Malaysia using British broadcasting avenues (Nahar, Karim, Karim, Ghazali, & Krauss, 2018).

### **Diversity**

Two recipe books, *Heritage* by Sean Brock and *Peru: The Cookbook* by Gaston Acurio, were analyzed to examine the concepts of soft power and how cuisine can be used to heighten a region’s brand image. Separately, these chefs/authors utilize multiple cross-cultural styles to propose that new age cuisines are a genuine gateway to cultural coherence and annexation (Passidomo, 2017). Peru asserts that it encompasses biocultural stewardship, as it is home to 84 of the 104 recognized life zones, or belts of vegetation and animal life, that subsist around the globe. Moreover, the country suggests that its culture is further enhanced by the 40 plus ethnic groups that reside in the country. Taiwan’s movement positions itself as a fusion of disparate cultural societies. It is noted that Taiwan is a domestic residence to cultural and social diversity that influences its nutritional traditions while continuing to merge the spirit of cuisine presented internationally with the inspirations and tastes of Western cuisine (Zhang, 2015).

## **Healthfulness**

The notion, or message, of healthfulness highlights that a country's cuisine is beneficial to an individual's health. The Korean government implemented a form of diplomacy by making use of Korean culture, music, and cuisine as a way to provide for the less fortunate. Kimjang, the custom of preparing kimchi, joined together whole villages and communities to convert hundreds of heads of cabbage into a supply of food and sustenance for individuals who have historically endured poverty and famishment (Sisters, 2016). Japan's gastrodiplomacy movement affirms that health value, coupled with the exceptional taste of its cuisine, has generated positive recognition of its food. Japanese cuisine is drawing notice on a global level as a healthy dietary option that provides a nutritional way of life (Zhang, 2015).

## **Natural Culture**

Cuisine is an essential element of a nation's character and as a result, often enhances other cultural traditions. Japan's gastrodiplomacy movement communicates its cuisine culture through the use of local ingredients and culturally specific cooking methods. Culture is further enhanced and communicated through tableware and décor, architecture, mysticism, and artfully designed floral arrangements. These elements are often combined and demonstrated during the traditional Japanese tea ritual. Ultimately, the cuisine culture echoes Japan's inclusive values.

The Mistura campaign of Peru promotes Peruvian gastronomy as a foundation for societal uniqueness that helps influence trade and industry while enhancing the health and welfare of Peruvians. Food is part of the country's cultural traditions. Embracing these traditions allows for the increased potential to market food-related design products and support services that provide additional economic and awareness opportunities (Zhang, 2015).

## **Research Implications**

To date, gastrodiplomacy case studies have primarily focused on nations that are typically considered to have middle-powers. These tend to be nations that do not have a dominant government; however, they are not nations that have a lack of power, but they reside somewhere in the middle (Buscemi, 2014). Countries with middle power face challenges as they navigate obstructed, often difficult, global landscapes. Culinary cultural diplomacy researchers provide important meaningful insight on the topic, and facilitate lesser national brands to improve cultural perception through the strategy of national and local cuisine (Buscemi, 2014).

In the current environment, it can be argued that food serves as an essential function, not only as nourishment to satisfy hunger but also as a tool that preserves inspiration and



ideas from country to country, thereby protecting a nation's foreign strategy. In addition, food enjoyed as a national brand upholds a nation's philosophy and identity. For any country that is facing a political decline and uncertainty, employing cultural tourism events could contribute to an improved perception of national uniqueness (Solleh, 2015). This research concludes that by using a domestic cuisine as a subtle power tool, it offers the potential for middle power countries to be put on the global stage.

### **Limitations of the Study**

This study analyzed literature pertaining to gastrodiploamacy campaigns from several countries across the globe. As with any research, there are limitations and areas for improvement, as well as further research possibilities. Although research on this topic has improved over the last few years, much of the content covered is limited. This leads to limitations with the present research. These limitations include a minimal amount of studies pertaining to the gastrodiploamacy topic, as well as an inadequate number of countries that are utilizing gastrodiploamacy for their national soft powers. Additionally, this research lacks a quantitative databank encompassing personal experiences of individuals that have first-hand experience with tourism diplomacy.

The culture of cuisine, including the countries diplomacy campaigns, were unmistakably revealed. However, additional nations should recognize the benefits of gastro and public diplomacy. Cultural cuisine has the promise to unite people together to create expressive dialogue through food. Using cuisine for national purposes allows for the fostering of a national brand image. To improve gastrodiploamacy campaigns across the globe, it is imperative that tourism endeavors grow so that new culinary traditions that enrich the interchange of culture and diversity can be discovered and promoted.

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