

## Japanese Diplomatic Strategy in Using Traditional Culinary as An Instrument of Cultural Diplomacy in Indonesia

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### Abstrak

Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis inisiatif yang dilakukan oleh masyarakat Jepang dalam memanfaatkan masakan tradisional. Metodologi penelitian menggunakan metode kualitatif. Tinjauan literatur memanfaatkan berbagai sumber data sekunder digunakan untuk tujuan ini. Tiga konsep yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini yaitu konsep kekuasaan persuasif, diplomasi budaya, dan diplomasi publik. Ketiga konsep ini membantu Jepang maju dalam dua cara utama. Fase awal melibatkan pengorganisasian pameran di acara-acara seperti festival, sedangkan fase kedua melibatkan peningkatan kesadaran melalui media visual seperti manga dan anime. Kesimpulan utama dari artikel ini adalah bahwa upaya Jepang melalui washoku ditujukan untuk menjaga kepentingan nasional, termasuk memajukan bangsa dan mencapai nilai ekspor yang diinginkan ke luar negeri. Mempengaruhi persepsi masyarakat dunia bahwa Jepang adalah negara yang menghargai perdamaian dan memiliki budaya menawan baik kontemporer maupun tradisional, serta menegaskan fakta bahwa Jepang memiliki budaya kuliner yang sangat khas.

**Kata Kunci:** Jepang, Tradisional, Diplomasi, Budaya Kuliner

### Abstract

*The objective of this research is to analyze the initiatives that the Japanese have implemented to utilize traditional cuisine. The research methodology employs qualitative methods. A review of literature utilizing various secondary data sources is utilized for this purpose. Three concepts are utilized in this research: the concepts of persuasive power, cultural diplomacy, and public diplomacy. These three concepts assisted Japan in progressing in two main ways. The initial phase involves organizing exhibitions at events such as festivals, while the second phase involves raising awareness through visual media like manga and anime. The main conclusion from this article is that Japan's endeavors through washoku are aimed at safeguarding national interests, including promoting the nation and achieving the desired value of its exports overseas. Influencing the perception of the global population that Japan is a country that values peace and possesses a captivating culture that is both contemporary and traditional, as well as emphasizing the fact that Japan possesses a highly distinctive culinary culture.*

**Keywords:** Japan, Traditional, Diplomatic, Culinary Culture



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### INTRODUCTION

One form of public diplomacy that becomes an instrument of cultural diplomacy is culinary. Cultural diplomacy is used because it is through culture that the exchange of ideas, values, and information is easier to accept. The scope of cultural diplomacy is also very broad, covering the fields of arts, sports, education, and science. Culinary instruments are used because all living things need to eat. And from the distinctive taste of the tongue, love will be born. With love, all diplomacy becomes easy. A new diplomatic method known as gastrodiploamacy, or diplomacy by food in another sense, has emerged in the profession of diplomacy. The first person to use this phrase was the gastronome Paul Rockower. The phrase "the best way to win hearts and minds is through the stomach" describes gastrodiploamacy. The purpose of a country's diplomacy can be introduced through the use of formal gastrodiploamacy,

which can be a government project (Adam, 2017). The state can utilise gastrodiploacy to foster intercultural understanding in the hopes of boosting engagement with the target population or community. This is due to the fact that, in terms of human groups, food plays a crucial role in people's lives (Naim & Mokodenseho, 2023). In a society, food is a symbol of history, custom, and culture. Gastrodiploacy is a sort of soft power that is employed to advance a nation's cultural interests. Gastrodiploacy is another effective nonverbal communication technique. In 2005, Japan launched the "Shoku-bunka kenkyu suishin kondankai" cooking initiative. They (Shoku-Bunkya) are a Committee that specialises in studying culinary traditions in order to promote food as a component of Japanese cultural goods. Later, this committee's continued existence led to a campaign using regional cuisine (washoku).

One of the intangible cultural heritages that UNESCO owns and trademarked in 2013 is washoku, which is controlled by the government through the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries (Rockower, 2011). Simply put, washoku is the name for a variety of traditional Japanese foods. Sushi has become one of the most well-liked foods in the world as a result of this programming. Based on a Facebook Poll conducted by CNN in 2015 about travellers' favourite culinary destinations, Japanese cuisine is in 5th place with 453 votes (Bogdan & Steven, 1992). The government has taken the initiative known as "Washoku" in an effort to promote food more widely, especially in Indonesia. Additionally, one of the success factors in efforts to boost tourism is the existence of nation-branding. With its "washoku" campaign, Japan is very serious and is not messing around with its goal of having 1 trillion yen in agricultural, marine, and fisheries exports by the year 2020 (Darmawan et al., 2023). The Japanese Restaurant Organisation is one of the actors who contributed to Washoku's popularisation. A non-profit organisation called JRO works to promote Japanese food globally. Although this organization is in the private sector, it still uses the Washoku campaign as their guide (Erwindo, 2018).

A survey carried out by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries in July 2015 revealed that there are currently about 89,000 Japanese restaurants located abroad. While there were 24,000 stores in 2006, there were 55,000 stores in 2013. Incredible increase in the number of restaurants. The Oceania region recorded the most significant growth, namely around 160%. According to the collected data, Japanese culture enthusiasts in Indonesia can be said to be quite large, as evidenced by the large number of visitors to events with Japanese themes. For example, like the Ennichisai or Little Tokyo event that was held in the Block-M area in early July 2018, within 2 days this event managed to capture more than 350,000 visitors. The number of visitors increased when compared to the number of visitors in the previous year, which amounted to 250,000 (Mokodompit et al., 2023). However, this is not comparable to the size of the culinary market (washoku) in Indonesia (Rockower & Pham, 2013). Indonesia ranks sixth in ASEAN in terms of the number of exports in the food and agriculture sector. This becomes interesting if we compare it with other ASEAN countries, for example, Malaysia, where the number of cultural enthusiasts is not as large as in Indonesia, but Japan's export figures in this country are the 4th largest in the ASEAN region (Turyadi et al., 2023). In the end, in carrying out its efforts, the government certainly cannot do it alone. Collaboration and collaboration with the community, business people, and especially the media are needed to be able to increase the promotion of washoku throughout the world and especially in Indonesia.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The research will employ a qualitative approach. The process of doing qualitative research generates descriptive information in the form of spoken or written words as well as the actions of the individuals being studied. A qualitative technique is anticipated to be able to

offer detailed descriptions of audible expressions, written works, and/or behaviours of a certain group, community, and/or organization in a particular context setting that are investigated from a whole, comprehensive, and holistic viewpoint. Researchers use this method because it will give them a deeper understanding of the main issues in this study.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Exhibition, according to Lenczowki, is one of the cultural diplomacy activities. This effort can be done through exhibitions or festivals to display various cultural elements such as technology, science, social values, or works of art. This effort is one of the most commonly used forms of cultural diplomacy because it is carried out in a transparent and open manner. In this festival, there are various stages that represent different things. The first is the main stage, also known as the traditional stage. As the name implies, this stage displays traditional events such as taiko, oiran, and not only Japanese culture but also Gambang Kromong and joint cultural arts between the two countries. Next is the Pop Culture stage. On this stage is the final event of a national-level cosplay competition, and later the winner will be brought to Japan to take part in a world-class cosplay meeting. The last one is a new stage in 2018, namely the Chika stage, which is in the basement area. This stage contains various bands and groups, such as girl groups and boy bands from Indonesia, that were selected at the previous audition.

Related to washoku, the festival also sells a variety of snacks and main dishes; each year, there are approximately 150 outlets selling these products. These outlets sell food that is relatively cheaper when compared to a similar menu found in a restaurant; for example, the price is for one portion of kakigori. Kakigori itself is a dessert in the form of shaved ice topped with various types of syrup. At this festival, the price for one serving ranges from 15 thousand to 25 thousand; it is different if we buy it at restaurants where the price is over 30 thousand. Affordable prices allow visitors who attend to buy a variety of existing menus. It is at this point that we can see that Japan is making efforts to promote washoku, where visitors can buy various existing menus. When visitors eat the dish, they become captivated, and when the festival is over, visitors who already like the dish will look for it. The menu that we can easily find nowadays is takoyaki; now we can find street vendors selling takoyaki. Even though the taste is not very authentic and there have been slight modifications to further entice buyers, this shows the public's appreciation for this one snack. Not only takoyaki but also sushi have a place in the hearts of Indonesians. If in the past sushi was only sold in restaurants of the upper middle class, now we can find it at relatively lower prices, and there are vendors selling this dish on a home-industrial scale.

Apart from Ennichisai, there is another festival in Jakarta that is routinely held every year. This event is called the Japan-Japan Matsuri. This festival was held for the first time in 2008, and this event is a form of gratitude for 50 years of diplomatic relations between Indonesia and Japan. Japanese citizens in Indonesia at that time thought about how to continue to maintain the spirit of friendship between the two countries. So with the assistance of the DKI Jakarta Provincial Government, this festival was created. One of the differences between this festival and Ennichisai is the entrance fee. The Ennichisai Festival is free of entry fees, while for the Jak-Japan Matsuri, visitors are charged an entrance fee of 40 thousand Rupiah. With festivals such as Ennichisai and Jak-Japan Matsuri, it is hoped that people can get to know Japanese culture better and have a positive view of their culture, especially their traditional food. Like most festival performances, there are also various washoku at this festival. One of them is ikayaki. This snack is made from grilled squid after being smeared with Japanese spices. This food can be well known to the public because there are many anime featuring it; usually scenes featuring these snacks have a festival background, and indeed, these snacks are actually quite popular at

festivals held in Japan. According to a trader there, ikayaki is the best-selling food bought by visitors. He sells a portion of ikayaki for 50 thousand rupiah.

Apart from going through large-scale festivals, we also use small-scale festivals, such as what was done through the Japan Food Festival, which was driven by JETRO. This event was held on October 31-November 13, 2016. This event was held at a world centre in South Jakarta. This festival is filled with five Japanese food outlets, represented by various brands from Japan. These brands include Enokiya, Ringer Hut, Fujisan Taiyaki, Sushi Kaz, and Menya Takeichi. One of the goals of this event was to do a market test because, at the time, these brands planned to open branches in Indonesia. As of 2019, not all five brands have succeeded in opening branches in Indonesia. There are only three brands that have opened branches in Indonesia. These brands include Enokiya, which is located at Pondok Aren Tangerang; Ringer Hut, which is located at Citywalk Sudirman; and Fujisan Taiyaki, which is located at the south exit of Gambir Station. So why can festivals be such a powerful tool in terms of cultural diplomacy? There are several reasons for this. In general, the thing that attracts attention is that there is something special that is the main attraction. Based on the description in the previous paragraphs, it can be seen that the main attraction for Indonesian people, especially in Jakarta, is to get to know Japanese culture more closely. Apart from the culture, the Ennichisai festival also sells related knick-knacks such as kimono clothes, various key chains, and manga costumes with various discounts. Apart from knick-knacks, don't forget that the next attraction is food outlets that sell various foods.

Apart from the festivals held in Indonesia, the utilisation of washoku is also done through existing arts, such as cartoon series and comics. In the previous chapter, it was explained about Japanese popular cultural diplomacy in Indonesia, but it was not mentioned what the difference is between J-Pop and K-Pop, especially in their culinary appearance. Usually in K-Pop, the media that most often displays scenes of eating or those related to eating is in dramas or reality shows. The use of drama shows or reality shows is also considered quite effective. Today, we can easily find kimchi, a kind of sauerkraut. If this is allowed to continue, it is felt that it will be able to shift the popularity of washoku in Indonesia. But already have something that is quite mature, namely anime and manga. Because they have been around since the 1990s, anime and manga are sort of rooted in Indonesian society. So that the effort required to watch this anime is not too difficult. Art in cultural diplomacy involves existing artists, be they singers, painters, writers, or other artists. In studies related to the concept of cultural diplomacy, the actors involved are not only the state; all parties can be involved both individually and collectively. Consequently, the actor might be any citizen. Additionally, cultural diplomacy aims to benefit not just the state but also the entire population. In this instance, the comic book creator is the performer, and readers and viewers from all around the world are the intended audience. This is connected to the objective of cultural diplomacy, which aims to sway public opinion at the local, national, or global level.

The use of manga and anime can be said to be quite effective media, especially when we look at previous years, when the number of hours broadcast for Japanese cartoons was not small. Many washoku are displayed in an animation, and it's not uncommon that when we see the programme, the audience can associate an animation with its special food, such as in the Doraemon series. When we hear this word, the audience can associate it with dorayaki, a cake-shaped snack filled with red bean paste. But actually, Doraemon was already booming in the 1990s. Currently, there is also a shift in how to access manga and anime series. In the previous era, television stations in Indonesia had relatively high airtime for showing manga series, especially on the Indosiar channel, but today it is different. Currently, television does not show Japanese cartoons very often. Showtimes that are not as busy as before don't really affect it

because now internet access is easy to get. Easy access helps people choose their favourite shows. Actually, at this time, it is rather difficult to determine the trend of manga or anime that is currently happening in Indonesia. Because if in the past television made what we saw not too different, now each individual has a different spectacle.

The list of popular anime and manga in Indonesia via the Google search engine also displays mixed results. However, there is one thing that each anime series has in common: When there is a food scene, the food eaten is often typical. Indeed, there are several scenes featuring Western food, such as burgers or steaks, but most of the time the food shown is washoku. Anime or manga have different themes, such as action, adventure, horror, and so on. Food-themed manga or anime are also present. With a theme like this, the promotion of their culinary culture becomes clearer. This kind of theme makes the audience and readers even more interested in finding out more about the food being displayed. Other data that can strengthen the effectiveness of manga and anime can be found in a survey conducted by Caraka Wahyu Erwindo in his research entitled "Effectiveness of Cultural Diplomacy in Spreading Anime and Manga as Japan's Nation Branding" in 2018. The survey contains data such as whether respondents know about manga and anime, the gender of readers and viewers, and whether the situations depicted by manga and anime can describe the conditions of social life in society.

The survey said that women also like manga and anime; this data can be seen in 52.9% of women who filled out the survey. Awareness of manga and anime is also quite good. 97.1% know manga and anime. Erwindo also mentioned that 35 correspondents stated that anime and manga depicted Japanese people as hard workers; 20 correspondents stated that the people there uphold good manners; 15 correspondents stated that the people there upheld cultural values; 13 correspondents stated that they discipline; and 9 correspondents stated that people who adhere to the nature of life are orderly and orderly. This shows that anime and manga can be a reflection of Japanese society.

Besides through cultural festival performances and through anime and manga, in 2013 an attempt was made. The effort is in the form of a project called the "Japan Halal Food Project". The project is a form of collaboration between Cool Japan Strategy Promotion Project METI and First Co., Ltd. This project was launched in 2013 and completed in 2014. The project specifically promotes clean and safe food conditions, as the halal concept is adhered to by most Indonesians. The project has several activities and is supported through a website called "Cooking Japan". This site contains information related to washoku, such as various recipes, lists of restaurants providing halal food, and information about culinary culture. The project activities include washoku training demonstrations for young children and their parents regarding healthy eating habits. Apart from cooking demonstrations, seminars were also held. This seminar, among others, contains the standard for production control. Even though there are limitations in the field of raw materials, especially those containing non-halal elements, many companies in the food sector are still interested in investing in Indonesia. This is in accordance with other points from Lenczowki, namely Literature and the existence of an Educational Programme. The provision of reading materials to outsiders is a powerful way of conveying an idea, history, or other matter to provide further insight into the details of that country. The use of this site can provide more insight to the Indonesian people about their culinary culture.

Based on the concept of cultural diplomacy and the use of cultural diplomacy instruments to influence Indonesian society, below is a summary of how traditional Japanese culinary utilization is done in Indonesia. There were several other activities that were not carried out, but even though they only carried out four activities, they were able to carry out these activities

effectively. Thus, the steps taken in the utilization of washoku in Indonesia are through exhibitions, spreading values through drawing (manga and anime), and finally holding educational programmes along with literacy. Through the above efforts, the benefits are in the form of a positive view of the Indonesian people, as mentioned in the survey previously mentioned, the spread of restaurants with washoku themes, both at the luxury restaurant scale and the street food scale, and the increasing number of tourists from Indonesia.

## CONCLUSION

Cultural diplomacy through culinary creation is built on the export target in agriculture, fisheries, and agriculture reaching a value of 1 trillion yen in 2020. Previously, he had begun to look at traditional culinary arts by creating a programme called Shoku-bunka kenkyū suishin kondankai in 2005 and making sushi one of the world's favourite foods. In 2013, their traditional cuisine, or washoku, was included in the list of intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO. can be said to compete with South Korea in matters of cuisine. The K-Pop boom has helped spread South Korean food well, especially in the Indonesian market. This means that Japan needs to make a series of efforts so that its cultural diplomacy is successful. various efforts in its culinary utilization in Indonesia. The creation of literacy has been promoted through the holding of various exhibitions (such as the Ennichisai Festival), dissemination through drawing (manga and anime), holding educational programmes like cooking demonstrations, and holding of websites and books on various recipes and history related to washoku that we can find in the TJF library. These initiatives are related to the ideas of soft power, public diplomacy, and cultural diplomacy. Diplomacy through washoku uses cultural instruments and is aimed at fighting for national interests, such as promoting the country and achieving target export values in foreign countries. The four aforementioned initiatives are also intended to persuade the general public on a global scale that this nation values peace, has an intriguing traditional and modern culture, and also has a distinctive culinary tradition. Like the concept of public diplomacy, this study also recognizes that non-state actors are something that is quite often taken into account in international relations. Thus, each of these concepts is able to become an analytical tool and answer the research questions raised.

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