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The Awareness of Baba Nyonya Food amongst Culinary Arts Students in Management and Science University

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ABSTRACT

Baba Nyonya food is a wonderful combination of Malay and Chinese cuisine with influences from Indonesia, Thailand, India, Holland, Portugal and England. Nyonya food presents the unique identity which combined culture and heritage, adapting ingredients and recipes. The purpose of this study is to find out awareness among Culinary Art students in the Management and Science University (MSU), Shah Alam about Baba Nyonya food, and to identify the uniqueness of Baba Nyonya's food. In this study, resource based theory has been exploited for developing conceptual research framework. Data collected using self-administered questionnaire among 110 respondents involving students of Culinary Arts through convenience sampling method. The data analysis has been conducted using frequency, descriptive statistic as well as Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS16). Results clarified that the culinary art students are aware about the uniqueness of Baba Nyonya food and the average ratio of students who know is overwhelming. The study concluded that the establishment of awareness among students about Baba Nyonya food is crucial related to the fact that Baba Nyonya food has been gradually forgotten.

Keywords: Awareness; Baba Nyonya; Culinary Arts

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Introduction

Tourism is a major part of the contemporary Malaysian economy, in which food plays an important role. Food is a key part of the culture, a major element of intangible heritage and an increasingly important attraction for tourists. The linkages between food and tourism also provide a platform for local economic development which can be strengthened by the use of food experiences for branding and marketing tourist destinations. One of the major challenges in the tourism industry of Malaysia is dealing with the shift towards intangible culture and heritage. The focus of many tourists has changed from the classic 'must see' physical sights such as museums and monuments towards a 'must-experience' imperative to consume intangible expressions of culture, such as atmosphere, creativity and lifestyle. Nowadays, students of generation 'Y' are not aware or knowledgeable about Baba Nyonya food. The young generation has very unique attitudes towards food. They are more aware of modern food (fast food). The younger generations prefer the modern food rather than traditional food.

The Baba Nyonya of Malaysia has been referred to as '*Peranakan*', Straits Chinese or Kings Chinese. Baba Nyonya are descendants of Chinese traders who migrated and intermarried with the local women. Members of this community in the former strait settlements (Malacca, Penang and Singapore) address themselves as the Nyonyas and the Babas (Chia, 1980; Yeap, 1975). Nyonyas is the term for the women and Babas for the men. Baba means master, in accordance with their social status of the male folk from south China who came to Malaya to conduct trade and business activities. The Babas were rather advanced and rich compared to ordinary Chinese. The Baba, as a term of polite address of the wife who regards her husband as a master in accordance with Chinese culture (Sadaoh Nasution, 1989:147).. Nyonya or in short as a "Nya" originated from the Hokkien and Teochew dialects when referring to older Chinese women (Razaleigh, 2015). In fact, the Peranakan Chinese community in Malaysia refer to the term of 'Ba' only when they want to emphasize that they have adapted to the Malaysian culture and are different from of their ancestors. The term is also used to differentiate them from the local Chinese who no longer practice their Baba Nyonya culture (Nasution, 1989:147).

'Peranakan' food is a wonderful combination of Malay and Chinese cuisine with influences from Indonesia, Thailand, India, Holland, Portugal and England. Nyonya food is clearly unique with Malaysian/Singaporean in identity. According to Tan (1993), Nyonya food is world renowned for its delicious flavors, but is time consuming preparation. This cuisine is the original 'fusion' food before the word was even invented. The ingredients used for the preparation of food include galangal, lemongrass, chillis, tumeric, ginger, tau cheow, tamarind, lime juice, 'belachan', 'buah keras', spices such as star anise, cinnamon, cardamon, cloves, nutmeg, leaves such as 'daun kesum', 'daun kaduk', 'daun kadok', 'daun limau purut' and 'down pandan' (Lee Su Kim (2008, 165).

Unique Nyonya cuisine reflecting Malay influence include '*Chicken Kapitan*' (a dry chicken curry), '*Inchi Kabin*' (a Nyonya version of fried chicken, and '*Pindang bandeng*' (a common fish soup) served during the Chinese New Year. '*Nyonya Laksa*' is a very popular dish in Singapore and Malacca, while another variant called '*Asam Laksa*' is

famous in Penang. 'Pongteh' is also another popular savoury dish of the 'Peranakan' community especially in Malacca.

One of the central functions of the tourism industry is to provide food experiences. Culinary tourism, food tourism or gastronomy tourism are related to food and eating experiences that occur when people travel. There will be travelers who might be passionate to try food of other cultures or those who are curious about different types of food. There are strong linkages between the ethnic food and tourism. The promotion of ethnic food may represent the nation, and at the same time strengthen the country image and identity (Zainal *et al.*, 2010). Hall and Mitchell (2000) define food tourism encompassing visiting food exhibitions, food festivals, restaurants and specific locations for which food tasting and experiencing food are the primary factors for travel. Tourist choices are not determined by a trivial need to 'feed oneself' but also by the desire to eat interesting products in suitable environments (Finkelstein, 1989; Pillsbury, 1990).

This study provides a clear picture about Baba Nyonya food. Commercially the marketers could use this information to plan their strategies in promoting Baba Nyonya food. Furthermore, this study provides new insight on the demographic factors in relation to the awareness of Baba Nyonya food among the Culinary Art students. Besides that, this study could help future researchers interested in studying about the Baba Nyonya food.

1. Literature Review

1.1 Baba Nyonya

There are three terms commonly used to describe this community; the Peranakan, the Straits Chinese and Baba Nyonya. The word Peranakan is derived from the Malay word 'anak' which means child. The terms refer to the local-born as well as the offspring of foreigner-native union. It had been explained by Frank Swettenham that the term Baba was used for Straits-born males, whether children of English, Chinese, Eurasian, or Hindustani origin (Tan 1988). Baba is the term for the male and Nyonya for the female. The word Baba may have been derived from the word 'bapa' which means father in Malay, an equivalent for a 'tuan' or a 'towkay'.

Baba community is the result of marriage between a male Chinese to female Malay. Inter-marriage between the migrant Chinese and local Malay women was important towards the creation of the 'Peranakan' (straits born) culture. The society in existence now is due to culture and its self-identity was due to inter-marriage (Joo Ee Khoo, 1996: 87-93).

1.2 Baba Nyonya Food

The Baba Nyonya cooking is a fusion of the Malay cooking and Chinese cooking. Among the famous Baba Nyonya dishes are 'embuk-embuk' –Nyonya dish, 'bubur caca', grilled fish, tamarind drink, 'nasi kerabu', 'sambal' (Razaleigh, et al, 2014). Food cooked by the Nyonya housewives is similar to Malay food, with lots of chili, such as the use of shrimp paste, which is foreign to the Chinese in China (Nasution, 1989, 138). It is said that a Nyonya can determine the culinary skill of a new daughter-in law simply by listening to her pounding the spices with a mortar. Nyonya traditionally spent endless hours pounding 'rempah' (spices) on a flat stone slab. Nyonya recipes are handed down from one generation to the next. Key ingredients include coconut milk, galangal (a subtle, mustard-scented root similar to ginger), candlenuts as both a flavouring and thickening agent, 'laksa' leaf, 'pandan' leaves, 'belacan' (shrimp paste), tamarind juice, lemongrass, torch ginger bud, jicama, fragrant kaffir lime leaf, rice or egg noodles. Another important ingredient is 'cincalok', a pungent sour and salty shrimp-based condiment that is typically mixed with lime juice, chilies and shallots and eaten with rice, fried fish and other side dishes (East-West Center, 2013).

'Laksa' Nyonya is the backbone of Baba Nyonya cuisine. There are several variations of 'laksa' and ingredients vary from region to region, but traditionally made with fish sauce shrimp, often combined with chicken and served with thick or thin vermicelli rice noodles. The final dish garnished with a variety of materials, including Vietnamese coriander, cucumber slices, omelets, shellfish, fish balls and foo Chok (fried tofu) with a dollop of sambal chili paste.

The Chicken with "black nut, was considered an exotic dish is made using the seeds (known as "black nuts") of the 'kepayang', a tall tree native to the mangrove swamps of Malaysia and Indonesia. The nuts are poisonous and can be deadly if not properly cooked, so they're soaked in cold water for at least two days, after which the flesh is scooped out and pounded into a paste with salt and sugar, before being stuffed back into the shell. The chicken and 'kepayang' seeds are simmered for hours and coated with sautéed spice paste and tamarind puree, resulting in a piquant dish that melts in your mouth (Kiki Deere, 2015). Within this "terroir", the environmental and landscape values, history, culture, and traditions are strongly highlighted in the marketing of the world cuisine (World Tourism Organization, 2012). Local cuisine, which contributes to a Malaysia countries identity, is a part of the travel experience for many visitors. Bessie (1998) believes local produce and cuisine can be regarded as part of the construction area where the terror of its own which reflect a local culture and identity of each country.

1.3 Family Background

The influence of family background can also cause a person to be something they are interested. Background parties among certain ethnic and way of life in a family may also influence the level of awareness of the culture of food. Furthermore, someone can also connect to their ethnic or cultural group through the same meal. Immigrants often use food as a way to maintain their cultural identity. People from different cultural backgrounds, eat different foods. The influence of family background has been widely introducing to a future generation about traditional Nyonya kitchen appliances and tools such as milling stones (boulders used to grind spices or "spice"), grated coconut wood, various cakes mold mistress, pots and pans. Mostly, Nyonya recipes are passed down to the ladies in the family because Baba Nyonya cooking process is an intimate family affair where everyone contributes to the preparation work of the kitchen and cooking. Nyonya cooking should always be considered enjoyable and rewarding experience (Bee, 2007). Moreover, Peranakan food is probably the most diverse and distinctive of all local cuisines. Nyonya cuisines combine the preparation techniques of both traditional Chinese and Malay cooking (Kim, 2015). The materials used, methods of preparation, preservation, and the types of food consumed at meal times vary between each different culture.

1.4 Mass Media

The mass media are diversified media technologies that are intended to reach a large audience via mass communication. The technologies through which this communication takes place vary. In addition, media influence or media effects are used in media studies, psychology, communication theory and sociology to refer to the theories about the ways in which mass media and media culture affect how their audiences think and behave. Media broadcasting transmitting information electronically, via media such as film, radio, recorded music, or television. Digital media comprising both the Internet and mobile mass communication. Media Internet consists of services such as e-mail, social media, web sites, and Internet-based radio and television. Many other mass media have an additional presence on the web, by means such as connecting to a TV or running ads online or in print to direct mobile users to a website. In this way, most of the students can use to easily access all the information and networks such as Internet coverage, because that way it is easier to publish information in many different regions of the world at the same time and cost efficient. Zboray (2013) considered the culture of food moving through intermediate representation system involving print, film, radio, television, and internet. Media

resources can be used in class to stimulate student interest and develop their knowledge of Baba Nyonya food being taught. Media allows instructors to facilitate the transfer of expert knowledge to the students. As an example, make electronic learning sessions as instructors demonstrating the types of preparation of the Baba Nyonya food. Given the tremendous pace of technological change, teachers face a constant challenge in selecting the most effective media platform to reach their students (Yowell and Rhoten, 2009).

1.5 Level of Interest

The most prominent aspect of the Baba Nyonya culture is their rich food heritage which is a unique blend of Chinese cooking method with Malay ingredients and recipes. The Baba Nyonya food tastes tangy, aromatic, spicy and herbal. It is called the Nyonya cuisine which is named after the women (Nyonya) who prepared it. Nyonya dishes is very labor-intensive.

1.6 Education

Educational plays an important role to Baba Nyonya to know the Malays culture. Although they only learn the Malay language through their schooling, Malays and Islam are synonymous, which means in Malaysia all Malays are Muslim, those who studied Malay will study Islam as well and indirectly they studied Malays culture. Moreover, many words in the Malay language are adopted from Arabic. So, Baba and Nyonya have an opportunity to interact and integrate with the Malays in all periods of education, whether in "Primary" or "Secondary" school or in "College/Institute/Pre-university Classes" or in the university itself (Kawangit *et al.*, 2015). So, Baba Nyonya influence is wide in this period, regardless of culture but also in terms of food. Majority of the new generation 'Y' do not know or aware and be aware of Baba Nyonya food and cannot differentiate between Baba Nyonya food and Chinese food. Deeper knowledge in this field should emphasized upon the culinary art students so that they be more aware of the Baba Nyonya food culture.

1.7 Health and Wellness

Most of the ingredients contained in the Baba Nyonya cooking are healthy ingredients like ginger, Candlenut, ginger flower, lemongrass, tamarind juice, kaffir lime leaves. According to Sandi (2013) 'galangal' is not only as a complement to a delicious menu to make it even nutrients for the body because it is a source of iron, potassium, vitamin A, vitamin C and of course rich in fiber. The use of ginger and galangal in everyday Baba Nyonya cooking improves blood circulation and keep the heart healthy. In addition, the widespread use of candlenut improves digestion (Ben Ashaari, 2012). In Hawaii, fruits and seeds that have been roasted is said to be used as a drug to treat constipation or laxative (Bee, 2013).

2. Study Framework and Methods

Sekaran (2003: 5) sets out research as an organized, systematic, data-based, critical, objective, scientific inquiry or analysis into a specific problem undertaken with the purpose of discover answers or solutions to it. The author also stated that research encompasses the processes of inquiry, investigation, examination, and experimentation. These processes have to be carried out systematically, diligently, critically, objectively, and logically. Naoum (2007) defined research strategy as the approach in which the research purposes can be questioned. Basically, there are two types of research strategies. These two types are known as 'quantitative research' and 'qualitative research' (Naoum, 2007; Richardson, Krishnan, Cheng, Khong, and Leo, 2005). As stated by Naoum (2007), the appropriateness of the type use is reliant on the nature and purpose of the study.

2.1 Study Framework

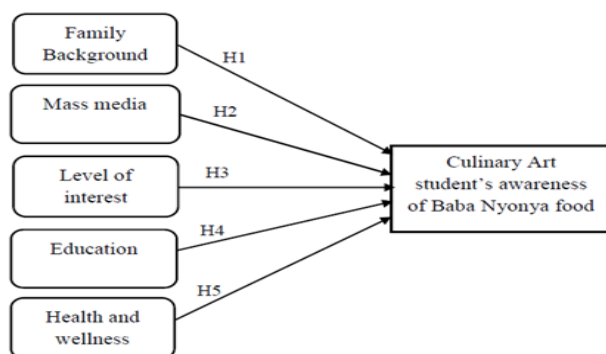


Figure 1: Factors Affecting Culinary Art Students Awareness of Baba Byonya Food

Source: Literature

This study undertaken at Management and Science University (MSU), Shah Alam, Focused on the students pursuing the Culinary Arts program from the School of Hospitality and Creative Arts (SHCA). The survey was conducted in September 2015, with target respondents of 110 students, modeled after Roscoe (1975). The non-probability sampling utilizing convenience sampling method was used (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970). The items in the self-administered survey were adopted from Chuah (2001) on the assimilation of Baba and Nyonya in Malaysia. The questionnaire consisted of three sections: demographic profiles, the general question of Baba Nyonya food, and factors affecting students awareness of Baba Nyonya food. During the process of data collection, researcher assistants gave a short briefing to the respondents before they answered the questionnaire. Data collected had been analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 16.0). Cronbach's Alpha had been used to measure the reliability (Sekaran, 2003)

3. Findings

3.1 Reliability Analysis

Nunnally (1978) stated that the data collected with the alpha coefficients of more than 0.70 will generally be considered reliable and acceptable for further analysis. The factor selected for this analysis is the dependent variable using the Cronbach's coefficient alpha test. The result of the analysis is displayed. (**Table 1**)

Table 1: The Cronbach's Alpha (Reliability Coefficients)

Scale	Cronbach Alpha
Family background	0.737
Mass media	0.858
Level of interest	0.782
Education	0.844
Health and wellness	0.866

Source: study data

Table1 shows that the alpha coefficient for each factor of the independent variables is

more than 0.7. According to psychometric theory Nunnally (1978), when alpha touches the point near 0.9 represents highly consistent scales. It is therefore clarifies that the developed scales in this study are reliable and consistent. Thus, this research qualifies for further analysis.

3.2. Respondents Background

The demographic characteristics of gender, race, age group, program, year, state of origin and race are included in the study in an effort to provide a descriptive profile of the respondents. A discussion of the demographics of the respondents is in **(Table 2)**

Table 2: Summary of Profile of the Respondents

Item		Frequency	(%)
Gender	Male	45	40.9
	Female	65	59.1
Age	20 & below	31	28.2
	21-21	72	65.5
	26-30	7	6.4
Program	Diploma	26	23.6
	Bachelor	84	76.4
Year	1	27	24.5
	2	45	40.9
	3	28	25.5
	4	10	9.1
State of origin	Kuala Lumpur	29	26.4
	Putrajaya	1	0.9
	Selangor	33	30.0
	Northern region	11	10.1
	East coast region	10	9.1
	Southern region	8	7.3
Race	Sabah/Sarawak	18	16.4
	Malay	84	76.4
	Chinese	8	7.3
	Indian	6	5.5
	Others	12	10.9

Source: study data

The gender distribution of the respondents was 59.1% (n=65) females and 40.9 % (n=45) males. The majority of the respondents were in the age group of 21-25 years old

(65.5%) followed by the age group of 20 years old and below (28.2%). Most of respondents were from the bachelor program (76.4%), while (23.6%) were from the diploma program. Majority of the respondents were in the second year (40.9%), followed by those in third year (25.5%), and those in the first year (24.5%). Almost a third of total respondents were from Selangor followed by those from Kuala Lumpur (26.4%) and Sabah / Sarawak (6.4%) of respondents. Respondents from northern regions of Peninsular Malaysia accounted only (10.0%). Ethnic wise majority of the respondents were Malay (76.4%) followed by Bumiputera (10.9%). The Chinese and Indian respondents were the minority accounting to (7.3%) and (5.5%) respectively.

3.3 General Information Baba Nyonya

Based on Table3 below, most of respondents knew about Baba Nyonya food from a total of 110 respondents, (27.3%) answered that Baba Nyonya is the mixture of Malay and Chinese. Surprisingly, (14.5%) of the respondents did not know or have no idea about the term Baba Nyonya.

Table 3: Knowledge about Baba Nyonya

Item	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Mix of Malay and Chinese	30	27.3	27.3
From Malacca	20	18.2	45.5
Don't know	16	14.5	60.0
About the traditional food and clothes	10	9.1	69.1
Chinese Muslim	8	7.3	76.4
Delicious cuisine	6	5.5	81.8
Know	6	5.5	87.3
Chinese	4	3.6	90.9
One of the population in Malacca	4	3.6	94.5
A cultural food that is invented in Malacca	2	1.8	96.4
Chinese descendants setting in Malacca	2	1.8	98.2
Combination cuisine Malay and Chinese	1	.9	99.1
Malacca and Penang	1	.9	100.0
Total	110	100.0	100.0

Source: study data

3.4 Familiarization with Baba Nyonya Food

Table 4 shows most respondents just knew about the Baba Nyonya food but not really familiar with it. (48.2%) significantly, those who responded 'familiar' and 'unfamiliar' with the Baba Nyonya food were almost equal in numbers, (23.6%) and (20.9%) respectively.

Table 4: Familiarization with Baba Nyonya Food

Familiarization with Baba Nyonya Food	Frequency	%	Cumulative Percent
Very Unfamiliar	6	5.5	5.5
Unfamiliar	23	20.9	26.4
Neutral	53	48.2	74.5
Familiar	26	23.6	98.2
Very Familiar	2	1.8	100.0

Source: study data

3.5 Sources Information about Baba Nyonya Food

Table 5 shows the distribution of how the respondents got the sources of information for Baba Nyonya food. The main source was through internet (38.2%), followed by magazines (18.2%) and (10.9%) from newspaper.

Table 5: Sources of Information about Baba Nyonya Food

Item	Frequency	%	Cumulative Percent
Internet	42	38.2	44.7
Magazine	20	18.2	66.0
Newspaper	12	10.9	78.7
TV	10	9.1	89.4
Friends	3	2.7	92.6
Restaurant	3	2.7	95.7
Family	2	1.8	97.9
Mass media	2	1.8	100.0
Total	94	85.5	100.0

Source: study data

3.6 Experience regarding Baba Nyonya Cuisine

Table 6: Summary of Experience regarding Baba Nyonya Cuisine

Experience towards Baba Nyonya Cuisine		Frequency	(%)
Experience in preparing	Yes	26	23.6
	No	84	76.4
Restaurant/outlet	Yes	72	65.5
	No	38	34.5
Experience in taste	Yes	44	40.0
	No	66	60.0

Source: study data

Most respondents had seen the Baba Nyonya restaurants/outlets but personally never prepared Baba Nyonya cuisines (76.4%). Only about a quarter of the respondents (23.6%) had experience in preparing the cuisine. A majority (60%) of respondents never had the experience tasting Baba Nyonya cuisine.

3.7 Common Ingredient Used in Baba Nyonya Food

As shown in Table 7, some (40%) of the respondents did not know the common ingredients used in Baba Nyonya cuisines. The details breakdown of respondents knowing specific ingredients commonly used in Baba Nyonya cooking was very glaring considering that they are culinary students.

Table 7: Common Ingredient Used in Baba Nyonya Food

Item	Frequency	%	Cumulative Percent
Don't know	43	39.1	39.1
Spices	19	17.3	56.4
Coconut milk	15	13.6	70.0
Belacan	11	10.0	80.0
Chili paste	6	5.5	85.5
Buah keluak	5	4.5	90.0
Asam jawa	4	3.6	93.6
Curry	2	1.8	95.5
Flower	2	1.8	97.3
Bunga kantan	1	.9	98.2
Cincalok	1	.9	99.1
Soy sauce	1	.9	100.0

Source: study data

3.8 Knowledge about Baba Nyonya Food and the Popular Personalities

Table 8: Summary Knowledge about Baba Nyonya Food and the Popular Personalities

Knowledge about Baba Nyonya Food and the Personality		Frequency	(%)
List of traditional Baba Nyonya cakes (kueh)	Kuih cincin	54	49.4
	Kuey ku	29	26.4
	Kuih lidah	27	24.5
List Five (5) names of Baba Nyonya food	Nyonya laksa	62	56.4
	Assam laksa	33	30.0
	Chicken kapitan	32	29.1
	Sagu Melaka	30	27.3
	Ayam pongteh	30	27.3
Name famous of Nyonya cuisine Chef	Chef Florence Tan	72	65.5
	Chef Amy Beh	23	20.9
	Chef Shersen Lian	13	11.8

Source: study data

Respondents were asked to name several popular traditional Baba Nyonya cakes, dishes and personalities. Based on Table 8, most of the respondents choose kuih cincin with (49.1%) compared to kuey ku with (26.4%). This shows that respondents did not know the exact traditional Baba Nyonya cake (kueh). Respondents were also asked to tick five names of Baba Nyonya food. Many respondents (56.4%) chose Nyonya Laksa, Assam Laksa (30.0%), followed by Chicken Kapitan (29.1%). Based on this analysis, it could be said that respondents knew several popular Baba Nyonya food. As for naming, the familiar Baba Nyonya food cuisine personalities, data shows that they were familiar with names such as Chef Florence Tan (65.5%), and to a certain extent Chef Amy Beh (20.9%). Only (11.8%) knew Chef Shersen Lian.

3.9 Descriptive Statistics of Factors Affecting Students Awareness

This section discusses factors affecting student awareness regarding Baba Nyonya food. The factors are family background, mass media, level of interest, education, and health and wellness were analyzed. Descriptions on those factors are discussed in Table 9.

Table 9: Descriptive analysis

Factor / Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Family background		
Chinese ancestors have more knowledge about Baba Nyonya food.	3.35	.737
Family who loves to spend their money on food might know more about the food.	3.47	.726
Family background influences the demand of the food.	3.60	.769
Family who lives in Malacca and Penang is more familiar with to the Baba Nyonya food.	3.72	.847
Mass media		
The information about Baba Nyonya food can be found through internet.	3.84	.819
The information about Baba Nyonya food can be found through magazines/newspaper.	3.65	.749
The information about this food can be found through TV channel.	3.71	.770
Advertising plays an important role in promoting Baba Nyonya food.	3.75	.780
Level of interest		
People who love to cook have more knowledge about Baba Nyonya food.	3.53	.713
Those who love to dine out are more expose to the existence of the food.	3.55	.773
People who love to travel have higher possibility to discover Baba Nyonya food.	3.60	.638
People who love to watch food channel have higher possibility to know the existence of the food.	3.64	.787
Education		
Students of Culinary Art are more exposed to the Baba Nyonya food.	3.44	.841
The level of education affects the knowledge of the food.	3.46	.774
Subjects offered in university help in revealing Baba Nyonya food existence.	3.40	.815
Some activity in university might expose to students the information about the food. E.g. : Food bazaar	3.44	.873
Health and wellness		
The ingredient that used for Baba Nyonya cuisine is very good for our health.	3.46	.809

The way of preparation of Baba Nyonya food is more systematic.	3.46	.786
Baba Nyonya food could help in weight management.	3.44	.796
Baba Nyonya food is a nutritious food.	3.50	.875

Source: study data

Table 9 indicates descriptive statistics of factors affecting student awareness regarding Baba Nyonya food. The respondents considered family background has strong influence. Respondents agreed that families living in Malacca and Penang are more familiar with Baba Nyonya food (mean 3.72). Whilst 'family background' also has strong influences (mean 3.60). On the other hand, the respondents did not consider those with Chinese ancestors are more knowledge about Baba Nyonya food (mean 3.35).

Mass media factor also play a role in influencing students' awareness of Baba Nyonya food (mean 3.84) compared to relying on magazines / newspaper (mean 3.65). Advertisements do play an important role in promoting Baba Nyonya food with (mean 3.75) followed by TV (mean 3.71).

Likewise, people who love to watch TV food channel have higher possibility to know the existence of the Baba Nyonya food (mean 3.64). This is because usually TV food cooking channel will air a variety of different types of food in the world. Similarly, the second for people who love to travel have a higher probability to discover Baba Nyonya food is (3.60), so does regarding for those who love to dine out are more aware of the existence of Baba Nyonya food. The respondents considered the Baba Nyonya food to be nutritious food (3.55) and the ingredients used and when prepared properly would be good for health (3.64)

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the awareness of Baba Nyonya food among the Culinary Arts (MSU) students to Baba Nyonya food. This research utilized five factors that influence students' awareness of Baba Nyonya food: family background, mass media, level of interest, education, and health and wellness. Many of Culinary Art students just knew about the Baba Nyonya food culture but not really familiar with it. Queries and information pertaining to Baba Nyonya food was obtained from the internet. From the survey questionnaire, most of respondents have seen the Baba Nyonya restaurant/outlet but never prepared the food or taste it. Families who live in Malacca and Penang are more knowledgeable about Baba Nyonya food.

Activities organized by the university will increase students' awareness, and give information about the Baba Nyonya food. Furthermore, watching food channels will increase the awareness among the culinary arts students. By improving students' awareness towards the Baba Nyonya food will increase consumers' intentions to purchase the food. Base on the researches that have been done, it can be concluded

that the students were only aware on the culture of the Baba Nyonya but not the uniqueness of Baba and Nyonya food. Marketing campaigns from the government will increase the awareness among tourists and locals. Recommendations also made to include theoretical and practical sessions about Baba Nyonya food in the classroom.

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