



cultural authenticity analysis



By: Matthew Goldsmith, Zakia Sabnam, Lee-Anne Andre

Background

- For our project, we decided to study the Yelp reviews of an Indian restaurant and a Japanese restaurant in and around the Jackson Heights section of Queens, New York City.
- We were inspired by previous academic work to explore this topic Research in cultural authenticity is particularly relevant in food and tourism studies.
- We wanted to explore how authenticity is discussed/the expectations of authenticity among customers of these restaurants.

Research Questions

RQ1:

How do customers' reviews reflect their perception of restaurant authenticity?

RQ2:

How do customers' reviews regarding restaurant authenticity differ between Indian and Japanese restaurants?

Raku



1521 reviews

Claimed • \$\$ • Japanese, Noodles

Open 12:00 PM - 9:30 PM ⓘ Hours updated 1 month ago See hours



Seva Indian Cuisine



1424 reviews

Claimed • \$\$ • Indian

Closed 11:30 AM - 3:00 PM, 4:30 PM - 10:00 PM See hours



Step 1: Yelp Review Scrape

1. Libraries used: `rvest` and `tidyverse`
2. Created a function that extracts the reviews using the url with
`read_html` command
3. Stored reviews in a dataframe
4. Converted the dataframe to a csv file

Step 2: Calculate Authenticity Score

1. Libraries used: `tm`, `stringr`
2. preprocess the data
 - inspired by Kovács et al. (2014) authenticity keywords
 - inc. removal of english and custom stop words (restaurant, indian, japan, and food, etc.)
3. Define authenticity indicators (authentic, real, and traditional etc.)
4. Calculate how many of our authenticity indicators/words appeared in each review
5. Filter reviews with at least 1 authenticity indicator word. This makes it so our dataset only contains reviews that explicitly talk about the authenticity of the restaurant

Step 2: Calculate Authenticity Score

6. Create a positive and negative pattern sentiment that categorizes a review as either positive or negative depending on if specific words are present in the review

```
positive_count <- sum(str_count(review, paste(positive_patterns, collapse = "|")))
```

```
negative_count <- sum(str_count(review, paste(negative_patterns, collapse = "|"))))
```

```
sentiment_score <- positive_count - negative_count
```

7. This creates a sentiment score that is either positive, negative, or neutral

negative<0

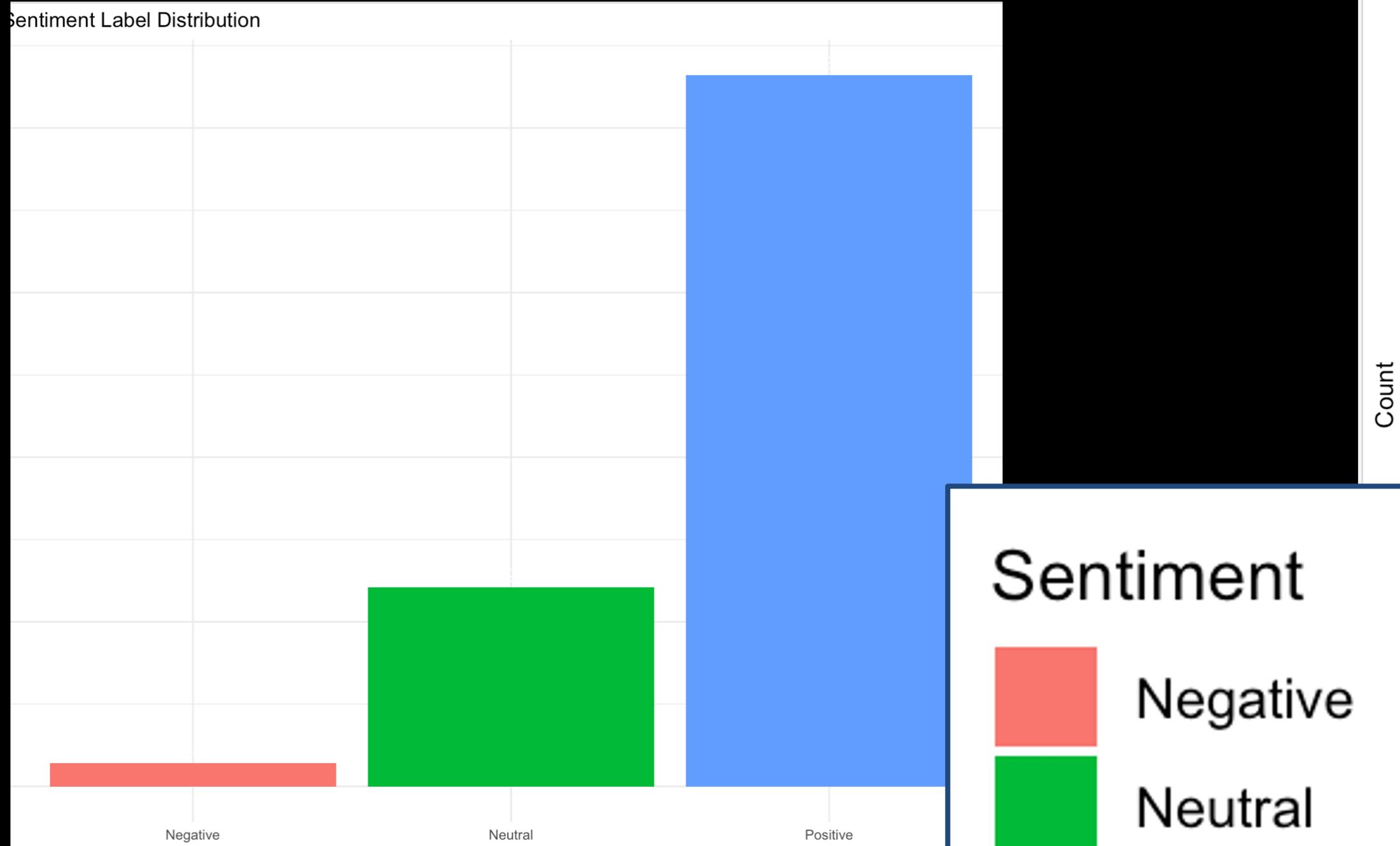
neutral=0

positive>0

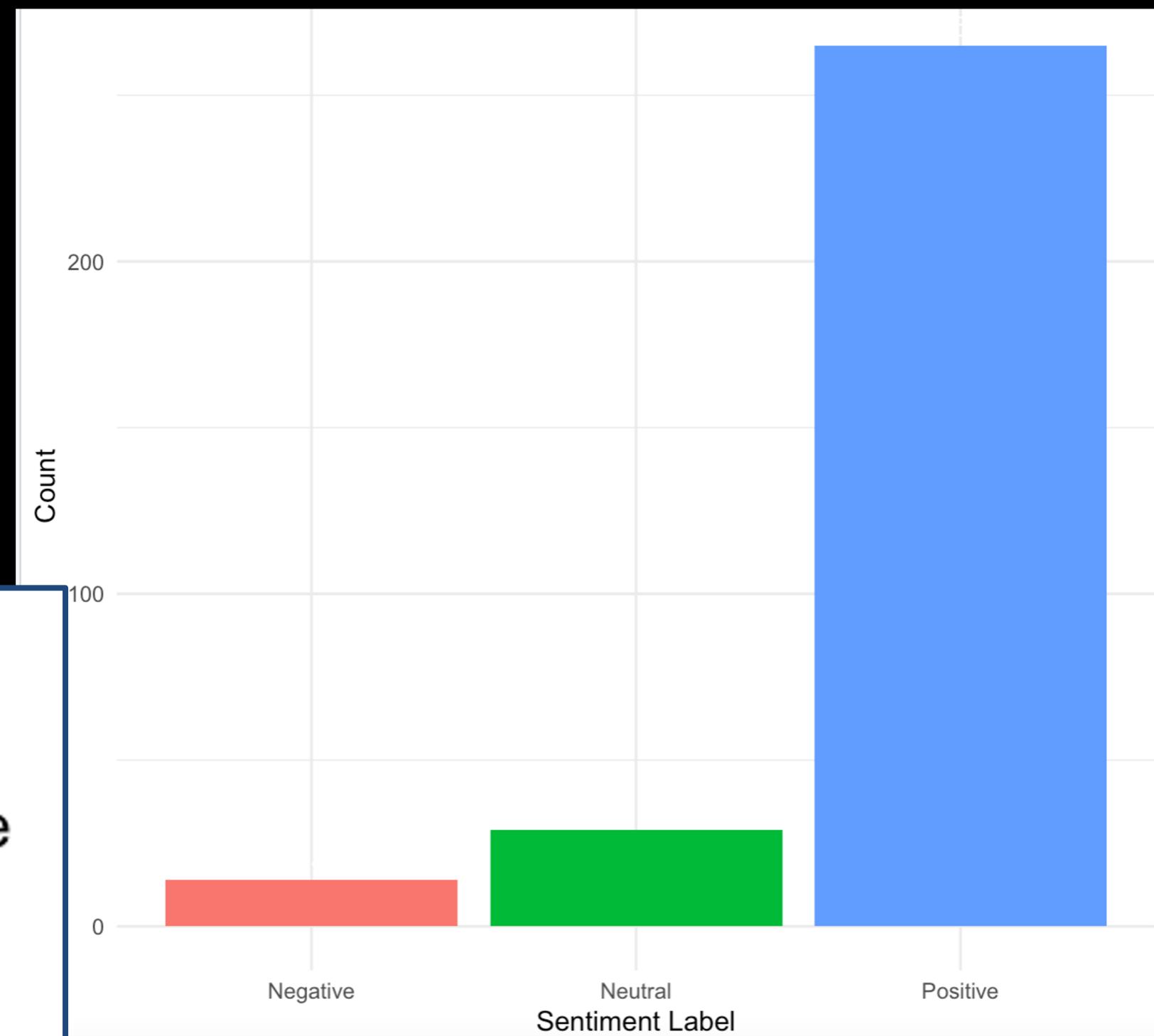


	review_text	indian_count	sentiment_score	sentiment_label
35	eating seva made seriously consider moving can ever...	2	11	Positive
43	cuisine service decor value overall times years never f...	1	2	Positive
45	date night afterwork fun time place flavors bit muted...	1	0	Neutral
50	close fifth star closeseva nails cuisine almost every le...	1	-2	Negative
56	im grateful yelp yelpers convincing try place long we...	1	2	Positive
58	great place find authentic dining experience flavorful ...	1	2	Positive
62	went lunchbrunch good prefix menu app dessert serv...	1	2	Positive

Japan

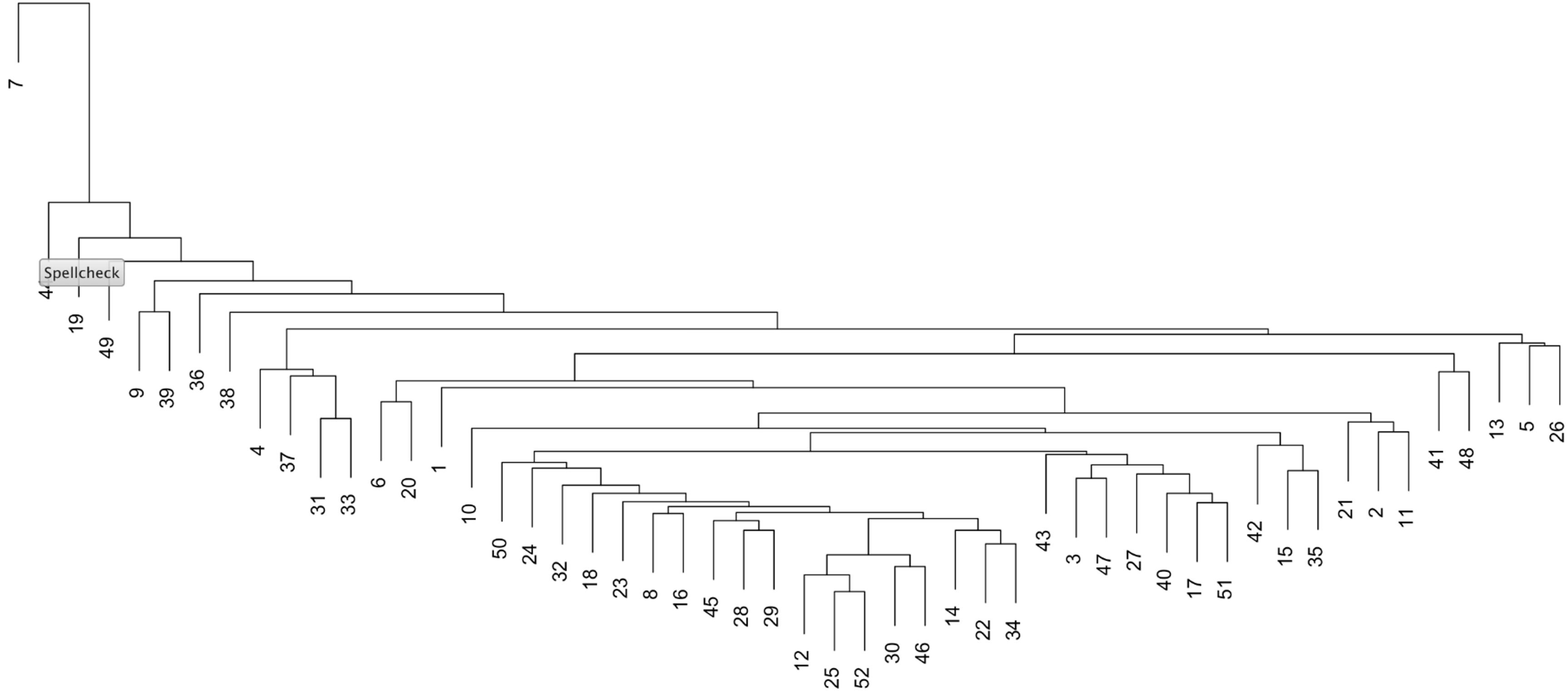


India



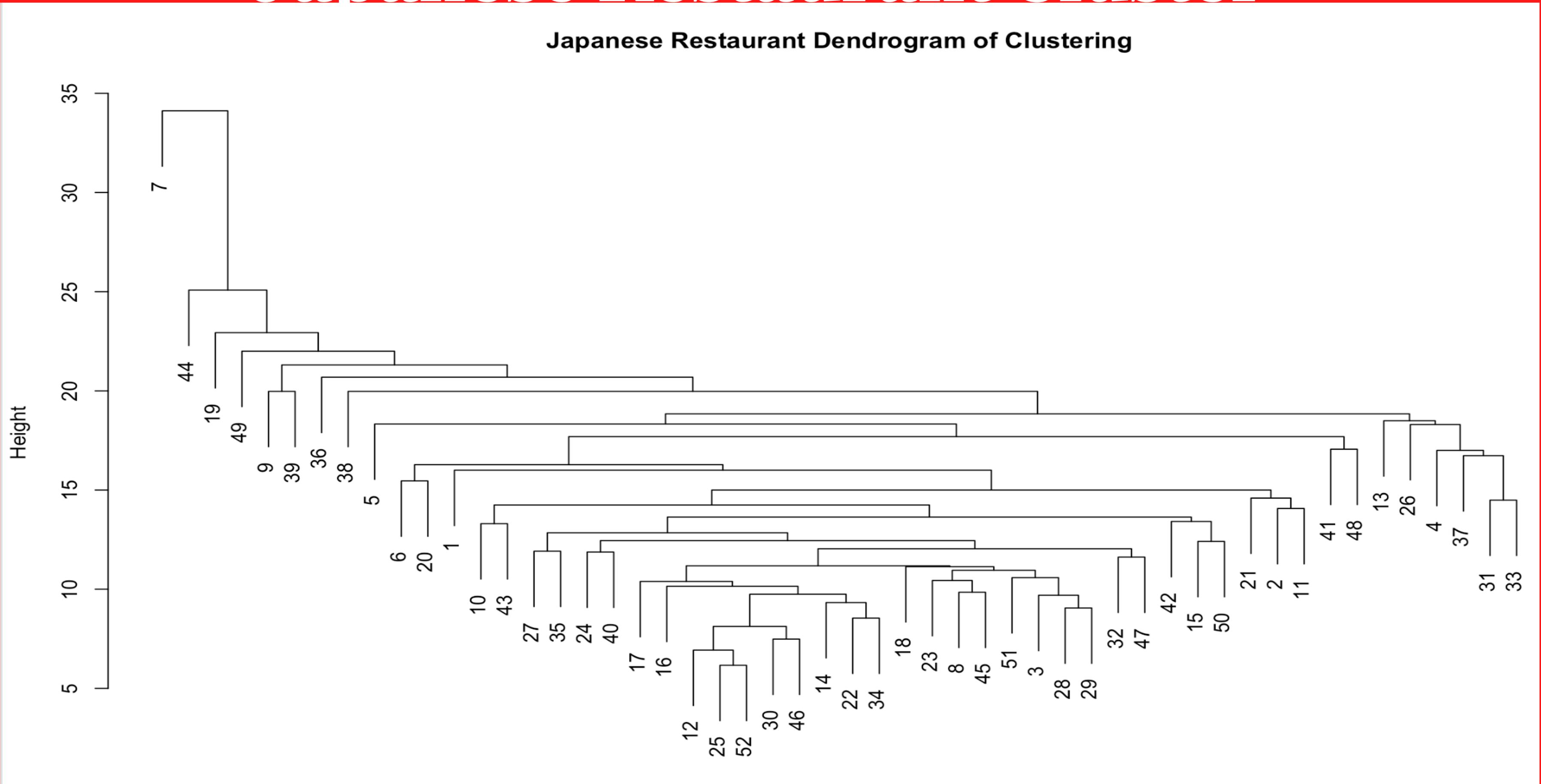
Indian Restaurant Cluster

Indian Restaurant Dendrogram of Clustering



Japanese Restaurant Cluster

Japanese Restaurant Dendrogram of Clustering



Themes: India

- Food:
 - Flavorful
 - Spicy
 - Garlic
- Dish:
 - Tikka Masala
 - Naan
 - Saag paneer
 - Gulab jamun
- Ambiance:
 - Cozy/comfy atmosphere
- Service
 - Quality service
 - Friendly staff
 - Water refills
 - Enough napkins
- Generous portions/great deal
- Delivery

Themes: Japan

- Food:
 - Flavorful broth
 - spicy
 - usage of “real” ingredients
 - Tasty alcohol
- Ambiance:
 - Minimalist/cozy interior/ hole in the wall, no air conditioning
 - *“unlike overhyped pretentious places”*
 - *“felt like I was transported to Japan”*
- Service
 - cash only
 - great/attentive service



Tarek E. Elite 2023

Westbury, NY

✉ 20 ★ 128 📸 738

...



7/17/2022

📸 6 photos

This was a very pleasant surprise even though we were eating on the sidewalk! A prefix 3 course meal for \$20.95 was an absolutely great deal. Lamb and shrimp dishes are \$1 more :-) Appetizer + Main Course + dessert or a drink!
Great Indian flavors and authentic. Service was good and portions were very satisfying. Would repeat again.



[See all photos from Tarek E. for Seva Indian Cuisine](#)

⊕ Useful 2

☺ Funny

😎 Cool

...



Alfiya C.

Manhattan, New York, NY

✉ 1 ★ 12 📸 8

...



6/12/2023

Got their lamb spring roll and rice + lentils.

The lamb spring roll was everything I'd imagine an Indian spring roll can be! Crispy outside juicy and perfectly spiced + seasoned minced meat inside. Their green chutney is fab not for the faint of heart though. The lentils were made delicately in the sense that it had spices but not spicy just very flavorful. Their basmati rice that came with the lentils was fluffy each grain was separate from the



Julia H. **Elite 2023**

Brooklyn, NY

509 171 353



3/14/2023

5 photos

As I say with most reviews. Raku has been on my list for months lol. They are very popular so I had been eyeing the resy looking for a perfect time to cop a reservation with my partner. I would recommend booking about a week in advance, especially for the friday/weekend spots. we went on a saturday at 7:30 and it was definitely busy. though we arrived at 7:35 we had to wait a few minutes to be seated. there were also walk-ins waiting (i overheard the wait was about an hour or so). cute vibe inside, cozy but not too tight and service was standardly fine.

I will preface by saying I have frequented Ehime, Japan countless times as I have family there so I have grown up eating fresh udon regularly. I was also excited about their small plates/apps as they have a lot of traditional ones here.

Did the fried oysters and sabazushi to start (would have also done the fried chicken but I knew I wouldnt be able to eat that much). sabazushi- PERFECT. High quality rice, lightly salted fish, I could have eaten all seven by myself. Kaki furai also solid.

For my entree I ordered the yamakake because I will always prefer cold udon to hot (sorry not sorry). my partner got the curry udon with chicken. of course I thought mine was better lol but the curry udon broth was well done. not too spicy or salty.

The yamakake udon was wonderful, the noodles themselves not as thick as i am accustomed to, but perfectly chewy and slippery and delicious. you can tell its made by hand.

India

huge
packed basmati course
awesome night found day thats places green
medium first quality roll pudding
home tasted portion deal you're prix next now
portion deal you're prix next now
usually know samosas friendly quite something
creamy two sweet far come special enough fresh
new make menu dish sauce give hot perfect
comes perfectly tasty kheer back amazing paneersure
heat flavor garlic back eat aloo flavorful
nan mango dishes lot service meal think tandoori
fan flavors came live full even fix cant thing
another meat things long say well best rice try attentive
long say well best rice try attentive
table lassi want id spicy love pretty staff many
years friend went ill delivery last tried wasnt
options every authentic bit small spring nothing
spot ordering wait way buffet favorite portions side
overall veggie fixe recommend spice appetizer
coming excellent everything times actually
price since experience feel
cuisine going eating
restaurants prices honestly

Japan

Limitations/Discussion

- Sample Size
- Types of restaurants
- Location
- Extensive discussion of authenticity
- Discussion of authenticity in reviews is guided by a combination of factors

Challenges/Lessons Learned

- Yelp star ratings
- Complexity of computational studies
- Future research

References

- Kovács, B., Carroll, G. R., & Lehman, D. W. (2014). Authenticity and consumer value ratings: Empirical tests from the restaurant domain. *Organization science*, 25(2), 458-478.
- Seva Indian Cuisine* [Reviews]. Yelp. Retrieved June 28, 2023, from SEVA INDIAN CUISINE - 915 Photos & 1424 Reviews - 34-11 30th Ave, Astoria, New York - Indian - Restaurant Reviews - Phone Number - Menu - Yelp
- Raku* [Reviews]. Yelp. Retrieved June 28, 2023, from RAKU - 2804 Photos & 1521 Reviews - 342 E 6th St, New York, New York - Japanese - Restaurant Reviews - Phone Number - Yelp