

## Is Japan Near the Tipping Point When Most Restaurants and Cafés Will Become Smokefree?

Jeremiah Mock, MSc, PhD  
Osaka University Center for the Study of Communication-Design

Japan is the only wealthy country where smoking is not banned in restaurants and cafés. In recent years, some restaurants and cafés have, on their own initiative, shifted from a configuration of “separated” smoking areas to being totally smokefree. This raises a big question: will more restaurants and cafés go smokefree? Looking at Japan’s national tobacco control policymaking, the frustrating truth is that as long as the LDP remains in power, policymaking will continue to be reactive, slowly catching up with changes in Japanese culture. So, restaurants and cafés are going to go smokefree based on what owners’ believe, in the words of government policy, are “appropriate measures according to their situation.”

Money talks. Every week, restaurant and café owners are saying to their managers, “show me the money” (profits). So, we need to estimate how many owners are making calculations about potential revenue losses based on smoking. Restaurant and café owners now have to consider two different business model equations:

Smoking Equation: Total customers = nonsmokers who will tolerate smoke + smokers who want to smoke – nonsmokers (and smokers/quitters) who do not want to be around smokers.

Smokefree Equation: Total customers = nonsmokers (and smokers/quitters) who want to be in a smokefree environment + smokers who will tolerate not smoking – smokers who want to smoke.

Will restaurants and cafés start shifting more rapidly to the Smokefree Equation? To answer this, we need to see if we are at a “tipping point.” In anthropological terms, a tipping point is a point in time when a substantial shift in culture starts to take place. A tipping point occurs when a behavior that a small proportion of a population initially adopts starts to be adopted by others more and more rapidly until it becomes the norm. Rogers’ diffusion of innovation model classifies populations that are changing: Innovators (the first 2.5%), Early Adopters (the next 13.5%), Early Majority (the next 34%), Late Majority (the next 34%) and Laggards (the last 16%). The tipping point is at 16-20% adoption (initial Early Majority).

Where are Japan’s restaurants and cafés now in this process? Last year, the Tokyo Metropolitan government surveyed 4,000 establishments and found that 21.3% were smokefree, while 21.1% had separate smoking areas, and 36.7% said they did not want smoking regulated. Rogers’ model suggests that 21.3% smokefree is at the tipping point.

McDonald’s Japan recently announced that they have shifted all of their 3,135 restaurants nationwide to be smokefree. What does this tell us? First, it is important to understand that McDonald’s – the quintessential global corporation – and McDonald’s Japan are currently experiencing their worst sales declines ever. So, McDonald’s, a generally cautious company, has to make significant changes in its business model to attract more customers. According to McDonald’s Japan’s public relations statement, they decided to shift all of their restaurants to be smokefree “in consideration for the health of their customers and employees.” There may be some truth in this statement, but McDonald’s is not known for its concerns for customers’ health or for its employees. McDonald’s is mainly known for localization – adapting its products and services to local cultural preferences, and adapting to emerging cultural trends.

McDonald’s made another statement about going smokefree that tells us more: “Because we aspire to create an environment where all of our customers can enjoy our meals, from young children to elderly people.” In recent years, Japanese have been buying more healthy and organic food. So, going smokefree is pure localization. For McDonald’s, children are the current and next generation of customers, and most children come with their moms (now less than 10% of whom smoke). In Japan’s aging society, McDonald’s needs to attract more elderly customers, many of whom have respiratory sensitivity to smoke or are ex-smokers wanting to avoid smoke. McDonald’s Japan cannot afford to take big risks, so their decision to go smokefree tells us they believe that Japan has reached or even passed the tipping point.

McDonald’s competitors also want to be in the Early Majority, shifting to the Smokefree Equation. Many Kentucky Fried Chicken and Saint Mark’s Cafés have shifted recently to being smokefree. In Kobe’s trendy Sannomiya shopping district, many chain and independent restaurants and cafés have shifted recently to being smokefree during lunch hours.

Shifting from “separated” to smokefree is a clear acknowledgement that “separate” smoking areas are no longer acceptable for most nonsmoking customers. Despite government promotion of “separate” smoking areas, we can see that Japanese society is rejecting the “separated” configuration because nonsmokers realize that they are breathing smoke.

These observations suggest that Japan has recently passed the tipping point. We are now at the beginning of the accelerating part of the trend where more and more restaurants and cafés, joined by McDonalds, will become smokefree. Without any firm government regulations, we can expect that over the next 6-10 years the percentage of smokefree restaurants and cafés will probably increase to 60-70%. How rapidly will this actually happen? That depends on how fast restaurant and café owners realize that they are losing money by not shifting to the Smokefree Equation. It also depends on how fast national, prefectural and local governments catch up with the change that is happening in Japanese culture.

## 英日翻訳

日本のレストランやカフェ全面禁煙の tipping point は近いのか？

Jeremiah Mock, MSc, PhD

大阪大学コミュニケーションデザイン・センター

日本は富裕国中唯一、レストランやカフェ（以下、レストラン等）での喫煙が法的に禁止されていないが、近年自主的に分煙から完全禁煙に踏み切るレストラン等が増えている。そこで生じる疑問は「これからさらに完全禁煙へ移行するレストラン等は増加するか？」である。日本のタバコ規制政策をみると、自民党が政権を握っている限り、残念ながら政策決定はこの先も対応が遅れ、国内文化の変化に辛うじて追いつくという形になるだろう。故にレストラン等の完全禁煙への移行は、オーナーの考えで決定され、政策文言を借りれば「状況に合わせた適切な手段」を取ることとなるだろう。「金がものをいう」。レストラン等のオーナーは店長に、「売り上げをさせ」と言う。喫煙可による利益損失の見込みを、いかに多くのオーナーが見込んでいるか評価の必要があり、以下の二つのビジネスモデル方程式を検討しなくてはならない。

### 【喫煙店方程式】

総来客数 = 店内喫煙可の非喫煙者 + 喫煙希望の喫煙者 - 店内喫煙不可の非喫煙者（及び喫煙・禁煙者）

### 【禁煙店方程式】

総来客数 = 完全禁煙希望の非喫煙者（及び喫煙・禁煙者） + 店内禁煙可の喫煙者 - 店内禁煙不可の喫煙者

先の疑問には、我々が今「tipping point」にあるのか考えるべきである。人類学用語「tipping point（加速的転換点）」とは、ある文化に起こる大きな転換期を示し、少数の集団がある行動を導入し、その後加速的に導入する人口が増え、遂には社会規範つまり大多数の一般的行動になる時のことをいう。Rogers による変化拡散モデルでは、人口を次のように分類した。「改革者（最初の 2.5%）」、「初期導入者（次の 13.5%）」、「早期多数派（次の 34%）」、「後期多数派（次の 34%）」、「最終導入者（最後の 16%）」。「tipping point」とは、人口の 16%~20%が導入する時期を言う（早期多数派が導入し始めるころ）。

日本のレストラン等は、どの段階か？ 昨年東京都による 4000 件の施設調査では、21.3%が禁煙、21.1%が分煙、36.7%が喫煙可と回答した。Rogers のモデルでは、東京都は tipping point に達したと言える。

最近、日本マクドナルド (McD) が 3500 全店舗の全面禁煙化を発表した。この意味は？まず、典型的な世界企業 McD と現在の日本 McD の未曾有の売り上げ減少を理解する必要がある。McD は戦略的企業であり、顧客増加のためビジネスモデルの大変革を必要とした。日本 McD は、「顧客と従業員の健康に配慮して」全店舗を全面禁煙化と述べているが、本当だろうか？McD は顧客や従業員の健康への配慮では評判は良くない。McD の「localization（現地適応）」という方針は有名であり、商品とサービスを現地の文化的嗜好と変化する文化的傾向に順応させるのに長けている。日本 McD の禁煙化声明「小さなお子様からお年寄りまで、幅広い層のお客様のお食事の場として相応しい店舗環境を目指す取り組みとして」という一文には、他の要素もある。近年、より多くの日本人が健康的オーガニック食品を求めている。それゆえ全店舗禁煙化は localization の好例である。McD にとって子供たちは現在と次世代の顧客で、殆どは母親（喫煙率 10%以下）と来店する。日本の高齢化社会において、McD は高齢者を呼び込む必要があり、高齢者の多くはタバコ煙に呼吸器が反応し、煙を避けたい元喫煙者である。McD は大きな危険は冒さない。McD の全店舗禁煙化の決断は、日本が全国規模で Tipping point に達したか、それを過ぎたことを物語っている。

McD の競合業者も禁煙方程式に移行する「早期多数派」になろうとし、最近多くの KFC とサンマルクカフェは店内全席禁煙になっている。神戸三宮のお洒落なショッピング街では多くのレストランやカフェ（チェーン店、独立店）がランチタイムは店内禁煙にしている。「分煙」から全席禁煙への移行は、「分煙」が多くの非喫煙者にもはや許容されず、政府の「分煙」推進にもかかわらず、非喫煙者が「分煙」の受動喫煙被害に気づき、日本社会の「分煙」拒絶が見て取れ、日本は最近 tipping point を通過したと言える。

現在、McD に加え、さらに多くのレストラン等が全面禁煙を導入していく加速的過渡期にある。強固な政府の規制がなくても 6~10 年以内に禁煙のレストラン等は多分 60-70%に増えるだろう。どんなスピードで？それはレストラン等のオーナーが「禁煙方程式に移行しないと、どれほど損失を被るか」を何時、気付くかによる。また政府や地方自治体が、文化の変化に追い付くスピードにもよると思われる。（訳：藤田伊与）