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## How Changing Food Buying Behavior of Consumer during Covid-19 Affect A La Carte Restaurant in Lum Luk Ka

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### Abstract

Covid-19 was greatly affected food consumption behavior of people. People started to change a lot of thing in daily life not even a food consumption. Especially, in covid-19 situation people have to worry about food that they eat every day. They started to asked him/herself What should we eat? Is it safe for covid-19? Food consumption behavior that has changed to a new life or new normal has become the direction of doing business or marketing at the moment which changes in consumer behavior. This time will become a catalyst for innovation and new technologies come in to support marketing needs. Food service business, retail business and food manufacturers need to adapt to meet the needs of the consumer market that changes with the current situation.

**Keywords:** Changing behavior, Food consumer behavior, Food business during covid-19

### Introduction

Thailand is a country known for “delicious food”, with lots of delicious restaurants and a “street food” country, but after encountering Covid-19 was greatly affected food consumption behavior of people. People started to change a lot of thing in daily life not even a food consumption. Especially, in covid-19 situation People have to worry about food that they eat every day. They started to asked him/herself What should we eat? Is it safe for covid-19? The COVID-19 pandemic may increase stress levels, and stress can increase or decrease food intake (Wallis D. J., 2021). Food consumption behavior that has changed to a new life or new normal has become the direction of doing business or marketing at the moment which changes in consumer behavior this time will become a catalyst for innovation and new



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technologies come in to support marketing needs food service business, retail business and food manufacturers need to adapt to meet the needs of the consumer market that changes with the current situation. Lum Luk Ka has a lot of big market and restaurant with Thai food cooked to order. We observe that during Covid-19 so many of restaurant are close and never open again. Some restaurant dies from Covid-19. Some are surviving. So, we need to know how changing of consumer behavior during Covid-19 made this type of restaurant dies.

### Research objective

1. To study food buying behavior of consumer before and during Covid-19 pandemic.
2. To study food buying priority behavior of consumer before and during Covid-19 pandemic among different demographic group.

### Research scope

1. Descriptive method was applied using primary data obtained by questionnaire survey. The target group was Thai people who buying food from a la carte restaurant in Lum Luk Ka district before and during Covid-19 pandemic.
2. The researcher survey during July 25 - 15 August 2021.

### Research Methodology

#### Research Methodology

After researcher know problem in Lum Luk Ka district. A sample of 385 Thai people was drawn by Cochran formula which researcher didn't know exactly population and unknown population proportion. Then researcher developed questionnaire by using theories from background review to study overall buying food behavior and buying food priority among demographic group change during covid-19 situation. The variables derived from the concept study and literature review related to Consumer food buying behavior before and during Covid-19 include 6Ws and 1H questions (Who is the target market? What does the consumer buy? Why does the consumer buy? Who participate in the buying? When does the consumer buy? Where does the consumer buy? How does the consumer buy?), 7Ps marketing mix, Demographic segmentation (Kotler P., 2003). Buying decision process (Millwood, 2021). Internal and external behavior (UKessay, 2021).

#### Research process

Descriptive method was applied using primary data obtained by questionnaire survey. The target group was Thai people who buying food from a la carte restaurant in Lum Luk Ka



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district before and during Covid-19 pandemic. The researcher has prepared a questionnaire by dividing section according to the purpose of research has passed the examination and received advice from the advisor completed to testing validity. After the content validity was approved the questionnaire was released for pre-testing. The researcher will test 30 samples from the population to check the reliability of questionnaire, including the clarity that makes the respondent can understand clearly by bring the data from the test, calculate the Cronbach alpha in SPSS. the method of Cronbach improved questionnaire before using the real survey. The result of overall scale showed a result of 0.900. The scale of Buying food priority of consumer in the a la carte restaurant according to each time "before" the epidemic of Covid-19 showed a result of 0.854, and the scale of Buying food priority of consumer in the a la carte restaurant according to each time "during" the epidemic of Covid-19 showed 0.879. The information this research need is primary information and requires information from the survey the tools used in the research are 55 questions which will inquire from the sample prepared information the questionnaire will consist of 6 section include: Section 1 Scrutinize respondent 1 item. Section 2 Demographic factor 6 item. Section 3 Food buying behavior of consumer in the a la carte restaurant "before" the epidemic of Covid-19 7 item. Section 4 Buying food priority of consumer in the a la carte restaurant according to each time "before" the epidemic of Covid-19 17 item. Section 5 Food buying behavior of consumer in the a la carte restaurant "during" the epidemic of Covid-19 7 item. Section 6 Buying food priority of consumer in the a la carte restaurant according to each time "during" the epidemic of Covid-19 17 item.

#### Data collection

This research use descriptive method was applied using primary data obtained by questionnaire survey. 385 Online questionnaires were prepared by using Google Form and it was delivered to the respondents by many available and possible channels including social media such as Facebook, Line, etc and cover all area in Lum Luk Ka district consist of 8 area: Khu Khot, Lat Sawai, Bheung Kham Phroi, Bueng Thong Lang, Lum Luk Ka, Lam Sai, Bueng Kho Hai and Phuet Udom. The researcher survey during July 25 - 15 August 2021. 385 questionnaires were collected through online channels before data analysis.

#### Data analysis

This research comparing percentage and frequency and explanation of food buying priority during covid-19 by using t-test comparing mean and standard deviation in SPSS program.



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## Research Finding

It was found that the most consumer is female. The most consumer is age between 21-30 years old and second place is consumer who has age between 41-50 years old. The most consumer come from bachelor's degree and second place is consumer who has more than bachelor's degree. The most consumer is private company employee and second place is consumer who is student. The most is consumer who has income more than 30,000 Baht and second place is consumer who has income between 10,001-20,000 Baht. The most consumer is single and second place is consumer who has married, have Children.

From the result comparing percentage between food buying behavior of consumer show percentage before and during Covid-19 respectively, it was found consumer buying food cook to order in breakfast change from 4.2% to 5.2%, lunch change from 63.9% to 62.1%, dinner change from 30.9% to 31.9% and late-night change from 1.0% to 0.8%. Consumer order food to eat alone change from 32.5% to 43.4%, family change from 44.2% to 43.4%, group of friend change from 15.8% to 8.3%, group of people who close to you change from 7.5% to 4.9%. Frequency of consumer purchase food 1-2 day/week change from 35.1% to 47.5%, 3-4 day/week change from 37.7% to 28.6%, 5-6 day/week change from 15.8% to 15.6%, everyday/week change from 11.4% to 8.3 %. Consumer paid food by cash change from 74.0% to 34.3%, bank application change from 18.2% to 41.8%, Credit card change from 7.8% to 12.2%, Marketing promotion from government (half-half) during Covid-19 11.7%. Consumer buy Curry change from 14.8% to 16.6%, yum change from 11.2% to 8.1%, puff change from 58.4% to 60.2%, fried change from 11.7% to 9.9%, Sauce change from 2.1% to 2.9%, side dishes change from 1.8% to 2.3%. Consumer buy food from store change from 71.9% to 27%, online purchase change from 21.6% to 60.8%, Call to store change from 6.5% to 12.2%. Consumer spend their money in range of 50 Baht or less than 50 Baht change from 8.8% to 7.5%, 51-100 Baht change from 47.3% to 40.5%, 101-200 Baht change from 27.8% to 28.1%, 201-300 Baht change from 11.2% to 14.5% and more than 300 Baht change from 4.9% to 9.4%.



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Table 1 Comparing overall mean and standard deviation of food buying priority behavior between section 4 and section 6.

Comparative point	Before		During		t	p
	Mean	Std. deviation	Mean	Std. deviation		
1. Employee has a good human relationship.	4.19	0.802	3.94	1.127	4.453	.000
2. Employee wearing a mask and gloves.	3.26	1.368	4.46	0.866	-16.276	.000
3. There are a variety of menus.	4.13	0.869	4.09	1.001	0.770	.442
4. You can order apart from menu (if there is raw material).	3.72	1.097	3.84	1.134	-1.865	.063
5. Not wait for too long.	3.99	0.863	4.11	0.988	-2.485	.013
6. Freshness of food.	4.24	0.833	4.35	0.877	-2.315	.021
7. Taste of food: delicious.	4.26	0.816	4.26	0.847	0.000	1.000
8. Cleanliness of the cooking process.	4.22	0.836	4.51	0.740	-7.551	.000
9. Value for the price compared to the taste.	4.09	0.843	4.21	0.867	-2.804	.005
10. Value for the price compared to the quantity.	4.04	0.817	4.17	0.880	-3.031	.003
11. Shop cleanliness.	4.11	0.894	4.44	0.795	-7.800	.000
12. Many of seats.	3.47	1.132	3.25	1.409	2.545	.011
13. The distance between the table exceeds 1 meter.	3.10	1.231	4.20	1.052	-14.202	.000
14. Good ventilation.	3.71	1.055	4.37	0.938	-10.352	.000
15. Can order food online.	3.22	1.274	4.43	0.887	-15.887	.000
16. Can travel to buy food at the store.	4.25	0.784	3.36	1.413	10.882	.000
17. Can increase the size of the ordered menu by adding a few of prices (special basil with rice).	3.84	0.976	3.75	1.077	1.656	.099

Remark: non-reds are significant at 0.05.



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From table 1, overall result show as there are a variety of menus, you can order apart from menu (if there is raw material), taste of food: delicious and can increase the size of the ordered menu by adding a few of prices (special basil with rice) are not significant at 0.05. employee has a good human relationship, employee wearing a mask and gloves, not wait for too long, freshness of food, cleanliness of the cooking process, value for the price compared to the taste, value for the price compared to the quantity, shop cleanliness, many of seats, the distance between the table exceeds 1 meter, good ventilation, can order food online and can travel to buy food at the store are significant at 0.05.

Hypothesis testing used paired-sample t-test among demographic group

Table 2 Buying food priority change after Covid-19 of income.

	5,000 Baht or less than 5,000	5,001- 10,000 Baht	10,001- 20,000 Baht	20,001- 30,000 Baht	More than 30,000 Baht
Buying food priority of consumer.					
3. There are a variety of menus.	-	-	↑	-	↓
8. Cleanliness of the cooking process.	↑	↑	↑	-	↑
14. Good ventilation.	-	↑	↑	-	↑
15. Can order food online.	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑
16. Can travel to buy food at the store.	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓

Remark: The symbol ↑ mean food buying priority behavior increase during covid-19 more than before covid-19 and ↓ mean food buying priority behavior decrease during covid-19 less than before covid-19.

From table 2, show that food buying priority change after Covid-19 of income are change in different direction, not change and change in same direction.







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covid-19 but the most consumer buy a la carte food by online purchase during covid-19. This covid-19 situation change consumer who go to store dramatically drop from 71.9% to 27% during covid-19 and consumer who purchase online rise from 21.6% to 60.8%. This mean people don't want to go outside the house much. The most consumer spend 50-100 baht to buy a la carte food before and during covid-19 but during covid-19 consumer spend a bit more money. That's mean consumer actually spend a few more money for shipping cost to purchase what they want and to prevent him/herself from covid-19 infection.

From result, show overall buying food priority of consumer can tell researcher that some of buying food priority of consumer doesn't change during covid-19 but most of buying food priority are change during covid-19 especially buying food at store drop, employee wearing mask and glove and order food online rise dramatically during covid-19. This show that before covid-19 consumer actually care about priority when they have to buy food to eat, but during covid-19 situation consumer more careful about buying food priority. (UKessay,2021) also said that Internal and External Influences on consumer buying behaviour. The important thing is (WHO, 2021) said about covid-19 prevention, so food buying priority change when consumer making decision to buy food.

Hypothesis testing used paired-sample t-test among demographic group show deeper result, it shows most of food buying priority behavior of consumer before and during covid-19 are change among different demographic group. Some of male behavior change and female doesn't change or some of male and female behavior change in opposite direction. It happens on all demographic group: gender, age, income level, education level, occupation and family life cycle. Consumer who have different gender, age, income level, education level, occupation and family life cycle are change food buying priority behavior in different way. Some of behavior change to higher level, some of behavior change into lower like (Millwood, 2021) mention that there are many opportunities to influence consumer while they are considering a purchase.

## Suggestions

### For food-related businesses

1. Business owner of food cook to order restaurant should open restaurant cover lunch and dinner.
2. Restaurant should be support payments via bank applications or other non-cash applications.





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3. Restaurant should create a covid-19 prevent system according to government policy by spacing with consumers such as temperature measurement, table arrangement / queue for customers to stay more than 1 meter
4. Restaurant can change to delivery restaurant and promote restaurant by online channel.
5. In workplace, we cannot identify demographic of consumer clearly, but we can digest some of demographic group such as gender occupation and family life cycle. Employee should notice that what kind of demographic of consumer walk-in restaurant and sort work priority of each consumer or group of consumers.

#### Suggestions for the future study

1. Find other factors that may influence food buying behavior during uncertain situation like COVID-19.
2. Conduct real survey in area for more precise data.
3. Both quantitative and qualitative method can be applied in the future study.
4. Can be the references for future study of another research works.

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