

## The Thai Changeful Behavior in Watching the Sport During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Saowalee Kaewchuay<sup>1</sup>, Oam To-aj<sup>2</sup>, Apithai Bumrunpanictarworn<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1234</sup>Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mahidol University

### *Abstract*

The purpose of this study were to study the behavior level in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic, to compare the personal characteristics with the Thai behavior in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to create the guideline to promote the Thai behavior in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study employed a mixed-method design. In the quantitative phase was characterized by an initial quantitative phase of data collection by the questionnaire with 400 participants by selecting through nonprobability sampling, and analyzed with the descriptive statistic and the logistic regression analysis. In the qualitative phase, the 12 participants included the 4 sport media, the 4 sport news reporters, and the 4 sport marketers participated in semi-structure interviews. The results of the quantitative phase found that that the male agreed in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic through the TV digital and the online media was higher than female (Inferential group) 1.62 times, the bachelor degree level, less than bachelor degree, and master degree were higher than the doctoral degree or others (Inferential group) 48504, 32761 and 23693 times, the government retire employee/private was not agreed higher than other careers (Specific) that has been in the inferential group 96296 times, the single and the married was higher than the divorce (Inferential group) 98080 and 31579 times, and the monthly income less than 5,000 Baht was higher than 40,000 Baht (Inferential group) 5.75 times. The qualitative data found the 7 issues of the guideline of promoting the Thai behavior in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic. This research result could be benefit to the entrepreneurs those who like to use the research result as the guideline for being the information base in order to adjust their strategy to the market of the people who watch sport during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keywords: Watching sport behavior, COVID-19 pandemic, Logistic regression analysis

## **Introduction**

In the world situation, during the COVID-19 pandemic, people around the world those who interested in watching sport needed to watch the sport through the TV digital and the online media. People needed to get used to with the watching behavior in this era. Moreover, collecting the data from the poll found that watching the sport on the screen had a positive effect on their mental health during the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the poll, seventy-three percent of avid sports fans said having sports back on TV helped during the pandemic, with 60% saying it helped their own mental health.

In Asia, back to two years ago, when Japan hosted the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics, athletes, coaches and staff from all over the world arrived in Japan amid still strong concerns about the risk of COVID-19 infections spreading during the sporting events. People were not allowed to watch sport at the sport event same as the global standard, they needed to change their watching behavior to watch sport at home instead.

In Japan, it was likely that people were going to be asked to watch the games at home. They were asked to wear the masks, and not to shout loudly when they watch the games, especially if they are in a group setting. In this situation, Japan also supported people to enjoy their watching by connecting with one another via social media and other means using the innovative information communication technologies which was the ways to prevent the spreading of COVID-19 pandemic.

In Thailand, during the COVID-19 pandemic, people didn't go to the sport event just like any other parts of the world, and In Thailand, sport were listed to be top 5 of the favorite content in TV digital during the COVID-19 pandemic. There were a poll from Neilsen Fan Insights found that there were 43,000,000,000 people, or 84% of the whole population watched sport in TV digital, or online media. From the result, it could be imply that Thai people were interested in watch sport in very high level.

Most of the previous papers focused on many areas in this issue, for example, the first one, Boria and Naha studied to gain a deeper understanding of fan behavior in new normal, the change in behavior of sporting fans from purchasing event tickets to watching live broadcasts of events on the Internet. The results showed that the SP-TAM structural model had adequate predictive relevance, and SP had a statistically significant positive relationship with both perceived ease of use and perceived usefulness. The model was thus validated, contributing to the existing body of knowledge on emerging technologies such as the creation of a virtual audience in sports. The study's findings suggested that technology developers should focus on the effects of SP and emphasize practical functions to increase the use intention of sporting fans. Furthermore, professional sporting leagues should prioritize the

use of virtual fan technology to optimize the viewing experience of their fans. The second one, Shohei explored the spectators' worries and attitudes during the COVID-19 pandemic. The results revealed that spectators visiting the arena had significant levels of worry related to the attendees (e.g., "Gathering crowds of people in the arena" and "Possibility that someone in the arena is infected with COVID-19"). The third one, Grieve and Case examined the consumption of sporting events after sport leagues returned from the COVID-19 pandemic. Results from the current study indicated that current sport consumption is at a similar level as it was pre-pandemic. However, the methods of consumption were inconsistent. Participants in the present investigation stated they were watching sports on television less than they were before the pandemic. The last one, Radmann and Karlén investigate how sports audiences have been affected by being unable to attend competitions physically on site during the COVID-19 pandemic. The study showed how Swedish supporters, mainly football fans, have experienced the 2020 season, coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic. The analysis highlighted the importance of physical place for the audience and discusses the relationship between physical sports arenas and digital platforms during the pandemic. Finally, the effects of the suspension of live experiences are discussed. According to the persons studied, something essential fellowship, solidarity, pulse, excitement is lost when sporting events are held without an audience.

The current study attempted to fill this gap in the literature by focusing on the behavior level in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic, to compare the personal characteristics with the Thai behavior in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to create the guideline to promote the Thai behavior in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic.

#### Objective

1. To study the behavior level in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic
2. To compare the personal characteristics with the Thai behavior in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic
3. To create the guideline to promote the Thai behavior in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic

#### Materials and methods

This study utilized a mixed method research by using the quantitative research for studying the behavior level in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic and to compare the personal characteristics with the Thai behavior in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic,

the qualitative research for creating the guideline to promote the Thai behavior in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic

#### Quantitative Study

**Participants.** Four hundred people completed the quantitative survey. The sample was comprised of 400 people those who lived in 52 districts in Bangkok, and watched the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic through the TV digital and the online media. All were selected through non-probability sampling.

**Instrument.** The researchers developed a questionnaire based on the previous literature. The survey consisted of the general information of the respondent, the behavior in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic through the TV digital and the online media, the opinion about the behavior in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic through the TV digital and the online media, and the comment and the other suggestions. The final survey comprised 29 items. The content validity of this survey was determined through Item – Objective Congruence (IOC). Furthermore, the reliability of the expectation was .896.

**Analysis.** The quantitative data was analyzed through descriptive statistics including frequency, mean, standard deviation, and the logistic regression analysis.

#### Qualitative Study

**Participants.** The 12 participants included the 4 sport media, the 4 sport news reporters, and the 4 sport marketers. Participants were again recruited using purposive sampling.

**Procedures.** The researchers discussed the findings from the quantitative process with the six participants at the first step. Then, the discussion topic about creating the guideline to promote the Thai behavior in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic were raised and discussed until the data saturation, and a semi-structured interview protocol guided the interview.

### **Results and discussion**

#### The quantitative study

The behavior level in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic found that most of the samples watched Football (34.2%), the second highest was Volleyball (17.2%), and the lowest one was Motor sports (3.9%). Most of them watched alone (38.5%). They always watch at night time (42%) with the average about 2 to 3 times per week (36%) with two hours continuously (32.0%). It is in line of Sigre-Leirós et.al. The results

showed significant increases in individuals' watching habits (e.g., higher daily time spent viewing, expansion of coviewing practices).

The opinion of the Thai behavior in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic through the TV digital and the online media can be shown in the Table 1

**Table 1. The average and the stand deviation in the opinion of the Thai behavior in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic through the TV digital and the online media**

The opinion of the Thai behavior in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic through the TV digital and the online media		$\bar{x}$	Std.	The opinion level
1.	The aspect of creating the good experience to the customers (Experience)	4.046	0.614	High
2.	The aspect of creating the value (Exchange)	4.042	0.682	High
3.	The aspect of creating the perceiving to the customers (Every place)	3.615	0.839	High
4.	The aspect of making the customer to loyalty to the band) Evangelism)	3.685	0.955	High
<b>Total</b>		<b>3.847</b>	<b>0.611</b>	<b>High</b>

From the table 1 found that the overall average and the standard deviation of in the opinion of the Thai behavior in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic through the TV digital and the online media was in high level ( $\bar{x}$ = 3.847, Std.=0.611). Considering in each aspects found that the highest was the aspect of creating the good experience to the customers (Experience) ( $\bar{x}$ = 4.046, Std. =0.614), the second highest was the aspect of creating the value (Exchange) ( $\bar{x}$ = 4.042, Std.=0.682), and the lowest was the aspect of creating the perceiving to the customers (Every place) ( $\bar{x}$ = 3.615, Std.=0.839). It is in line of Becker and Jaakkola which found that the customer experience is a key marketing concept.

The logistic regression analysis for comparing the personal characteristics with the opinion of the Thai behavior in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic through the TV digital and the online media can be shown in the table 2

**Table 2. The logistic regression analysis for comparing the personal characteristics with the opinion of the Thai behavior in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic through the TV digital and the online media**

The personal characteristics with the aspect of creating the good experience to the customers (Experience)	Disagree			Neither agree nor disagree			Agree		
	B	Exp (B)	P-value	B	Exp (B)	P-value	B	Exp (B)	P-value
<b>Gender</b>									
Male	-0.485	0.616	0.201	-0.076	<b>0.927</b>	0.803	0.485	1.624	0.201
Female (Inferential group)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Chi-Square =2.335, Sig= 0.311, 2 Log Likelihood= 20.065, Cox &amp; Snell R Square= 0.006, Nagelkerke R Square= 0.007</b>									
<b>Age</b>									
Under 20 years old	-1.705	0.182	0.076	-0.194	0.824	0.823	1.705	5.500	0.076
29 – 21years old	-2.257	0.105	0.006	-0.954	0.385	0.217	2.257	<b>9.553**</b>	0.006
39 - 30 years old	-1.823	0.162	0.045	-0.118	0.889	0.887	1.823	<b>6.187*</b>	0.045
49 - 40 years old	-0.258	0.773	0.786	0.386	1.471	0.672	0.258	1.294	0.786
Over 50years old (Inferential group)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Chi-Square =27.544, Sig= 0.001, 2 Log Likelihood= 38.469, Cox &amp; Snell R Square= 0.067, Nagelkerke R Square= 0.083</b>									
<b>Education level</b>									
Less than bachelor degree	-17.305	3.052	0.000	-16.812	4.995	0.000	17.305	<b>32761***</b>	0.000
Bachelor degree	-17.697	2.062	0.000	-17.369	2.862	0.000	17.697	<b>48504***</b>	0.000
Master degree	-16.981	4.221	0.000	-17.101	3.741	0.000	16.981	<b>23693***</b>	0.000
Doctoral degree or others (Inferential group)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Chi-Square =8.566, Sig= 0.199, 2 Log Likelihood= 29.106, Cox &amp; Snell R Square= 0.021, Nagelkerke R Square= 0.027</b>									
<b>Career</b>									
State enterprise employee	-0.405	0.667	0.715	0.393	1.481	0.693	0.405	1.500	0.715

Government employee	0.140	1.150	0.881	0.511	1.667	0.556	-0.140	0.870	0.881
Private company employee	-1.609	0.200	0.181	0.606	1.833	0.521	1.609	5.000	0.181
Personal business	-1.322	0.267	0.181	-0.443	0.642	0.611	1.3223	3.750	0.181
Politician	-0.794	0.452	0.584	19.714	3643 5	0.998	0.794	2.213	0.584
General employee	-0.223	0.800	0.880	1.674	<b>5.333</b>	0.193	0.223	1.250	0.880
Retire/Private	18.382	<b>96206</b> **	0.000	19.404	2672 3	0.989	-18.382	1.039	0.000
Student	-1.402	0.246	0.117	-0.262	0.769	0.747	1.402	4.063	0.117
Unemployment	-0.916	0.400	0.577	0.799	2.222	0.542	0.916	2.500	0.577
Others (Specific) (Inferential group)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Chi-Square =34.606, Sig= 0.011, 2 Log Likelihood= 52.621, Cox &amp; Snell R Square= 0.083, Nagelkerke R Square= 0.104</b>									
<b>Marriage status</b>									
Single	- 17.40 1	2.771	0.000	-16.384	7.662	0.000	18.401	<b>98080***</b>	0.000
Married	- 16.26 8	8.608	0.000	-15.628	1.632	-	17.268	<b>31579***</b>	0.000
Divorce (Inferential group)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Chi-Square =11.238, Sig= 0.024, 2 Log Likelihood= 22.107, Cox &amp; Snell R Square= 0.028, Nagelkerke R Square= 0.035</b>									
<b>Monthly income</b>									
Less than 5,000 Baht	-1.749	0.174	0.008	-0.521	0.594	0.377	1.749	<b>5.750**</b>	0.008
5,000 – 10,000 Baht	-1.371	0.254	0.066	-0.657	0.519	0.321	1.371	3.938	0.066
10,001 – 20,000 Baht	-1.253	0.286	0.077	0.141	1.152	0.823	1.253	3.500	0.077
20,001 – 30,000 Baht	-0.272	0.762	0.758	1.022	2.778	0.203	0.272	1.313	0.758
30,001 – 40,000 Baht	-0.847	0.429	0.324	0.041	1.042	0.957	0.847	2.333	0.324
More than 40,000 Baht (Inferential group)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Chi-Square =22.029, Sig= 0.015, 2 Log Likelihood= 45.384, Cox &amp; Snell R Square= 0.054, Nagelkerke R Square= 0.067</b>									

\*Remark: Exp (B) or Odds >1 The opportunity increase double time,  
Odds < 1 The opportunity decrease

From the table 2 found that the male agreed in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic through the TV digital and the online media higher than female (Inferential group) 1.62 times by having the correlation coefficient (Likelihood ration tests) was no statistically significant difference at 0.006. At the age of 21-29 years old and 30-39 years old agreed in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic through the TV digital and the online media higher than those who had the age over 50 years old (Inferential group) 9.55 and 6.18 times. There

was statistically significant difference at 0.01, 0.05. In the age of under 20 years old and 40 – 49 years old agreed in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic through the TV digital and the online media higher than the inferential group 5.50 and 1.29 times by having the correlation coefficient (Likelihood ration tests) was statistically significant difference at 0.067.

In the bachelor degree level, less than bachelor degree, and master degree agreed in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic through the TV digital and the online media higher than the doctoral degree or others (Inferential group) 48504, 32761 and 23693 times, and there was the statistically significant at 0.01, and having the correlation coefficient (Likelihood ration tests) was no statistically significant difference at 0.021.

The government retire employee/private was not agreed in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic through the TV digital and the online media higher than other careers (Specific) that has been in the inferential group 96296 times, and there was the statistically significant at 0.01. In the other careers agreed in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic through the TV digital and the online media higher than the inferential group between 1.25 to 4.06 times by having the correlation coefficient (Likelihood ration tests) was statistically significant difference at 0.083.

The single and the married agreed in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic through the TV digital and the online media higher than the divorce (Inferential group) 98080 and 31579 times, and there was the statistically significant at 0.01 by having the correlation coefficient (Likelihood ration tests) was statistically significant difference at 0.028.

Those who had the monthly income less than 5,000 Baht agreed in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic through the TV digital and the online media higher than 40,000 Baht (Inferential group) 5.75 times, and there was the statistically significant at 0.01. In the other groups agreed in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic through the TV digital and the online media higher than the inferential group 1.31 to 3.93 times by having the correlation coefficient (Likelihood ration tests) was statistically significant difference at 0.054. It is in line of Malta et.al. The results show that the 45,161 individuals aged 18 years or more participated. During the period of social restriction participants reported a decrease in practicing physical activity and an increase in time spent using computers or tablets or watching TV. Differences were observed according to sex and age group. It is also relevant to Tsuji et al. The results show that the Finnish and Japanese retirees with a high education ( $\geq 13$  years) had less high-duration television viewing. Moreover, there is still another work of Fingerman et al. revealed that



television viewing occurred when participants were alone or with a spouse and was associated with a greater proportion of time sedentary.

The qualitative study

The result from the focus group discussion found that the guideline of promoting the Thai behavior in watching the sport during the COVID-19 pandemic were consisted of many issues which were as follows;

1. Finding the sport contents that are able to convince the people to be interested in sport, then creating the event by having the promotion that covers in every channels. It is in line of Keller et al. which found that the managers often use popular events, such as the Olympics, to advertise their brands more heavily. A price promotion offered around a popular event often generates a stronger sales response than the same promotion at nonevent times.
2. Analyzing the consumer behavior as the generations, such as giving the rewards to fit with the customer segmentation. It is in line of Thangavel et al. which examines the shopping orientation of Gen Z online shoppers. The penetration of Internet and accelerated growth of online shopping have enthused the e-retailers to offer a wide range of goods at greater efficiency than the traditional players.
3. Regarding the convenience for approaching. It is in line of Vyt et al. which found that in a whole, each feature of convenience positively influence consumer response with different intensity levels. Thus, functional convenience has the strongest contribution of the model and explains 31.4% of customer response.
4. Focusing on the data precision, and the data reliable. It is in line of Gagnon and Roh. The results provide evidence that the reliability all have significant, positive impacts on Customer Satisfaction.
5. Increasing the customer awareness by adding the platform channel, and join the promoting campaign with the partners. It is in line of Rahman and Hidayat which research to determine the influence of brand awareness, customer satisfaction. The results found that brand awareness had a negative and significant influence on trust and revisit intention, customer satisfaction had a positive and significant influence.
6. Using the technology, such as the digital graphic. It is in line of Oladipupo which found that digital marketing has positive relationship and significant effect on customer satisfaction. Social media, mobile marketing, email marketing and search Marketing are vital to be utilized to satisfy their customers and achieve higher return.
7. Arranging the loyalty program by opening the new membership in order to get the special privilege. It is in line of Khairawati which found that the member cards and discount promo have a direct effect on customer loyalty.

## Bibliography

### Books and articles

- Becker, Larissa, and Elina Jaakkola, "Customer experience: fundamental premises and implications for research", *J. of the Acad. Mark. Sci.*, 48, 2020: 630–648.
- Carvalho Malta, Deborah, Célia Landmann Szwarcwald, Marilisa Berti de Azevedo Barros, Crizian Saar Gomes, Ísis Eloah Machado, Paulo Roberto Borges de Souza Júnior, Dalia Elena Romero, Margareth Guimaraes Lima, Giseli Nogueira Damacena, Maria de Fátima Pina, Maria Imaculada de Fátima Freitas, André Oliveira Werneck, Danilo Rodrigues Pereira da Silva, Luiz Otávio Azevedo, and Renata Gracie, "The COVID-19 Pandemic and changes in adult Brazilian lifestyles: a cross-sectional study, 2020", *Epidemiol Serv Saude*, 29 (4), 2020: e2020407.
- Chang, Chia-Jung, Bryan Cheng-Yu Hsu, and Mei-Yen Chen, "Viewing Sports Online during the COVID-19 Pandemic: The Antecedent Effects of Social Presence on the Technology Acceptance Model", *Sustainability*, 14 (1), 2022: 341.
- Fingerman, Karen L, Yijung K Kim, Yee To Ng, Shiyang Zhang, Meng Huo, Kira S Birditt, "Television Viewing, Physical Activity, and Loneliness in Late Life", *The Gerontologist*, 62 (7), 2022: 1006–1017.
- Gagnon, Gary B., and Yae Sock Roh, "The Impact of Customization and Reliability on Customer Satisfaction in the U.S. Lodging Industry", *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 8 (3), 2008: 60–78.
- Grieve, Frederick G., and Joseph C. Case, "Sport Fans' Consumption Behaviors Following the COVID-19 Pandemic and Return to In-Person Spectating", *Findings in Sport. Hospitality, Entertainment, and Event Management*, 1 (12), 2021: 83-90.
- Keller, Wiebke I.Y., Barbara Deleersnyder, and Karen Gedenk, "Price Promotions and Popular Events", *Journal of Marketing*, 83 (1), 2018: 73–88.
- Khairawati, Salihah, "Effect of customer loyalty program on customer satisfaction and its impact on customer loyalty", *International Journal of Research in Business and Social Science* (2147–4478), 9 (1), 2020: 15–23.
- Oladipupo, Najeem, "Impact of digital marketing on customer satisfaction", 2021.
- Radmann, Aage, and Sara Karlén, "Spectators longing for live action: a study of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on (football) supporters in Sweden", *Sport in Society*, 25, 2022: 1327-1342.
- Rahman, Moh. Abd., and Anas - Hidayat, "Investigating the Impact of Brand Awareness, Customer Satisfaction and Trust on Revisit Intention toward Beauty Care Clinic in Indonesia", *The International Journal of Business & Management*, 8(6), 2020.
- Sigre-Leirós, Vera, Joel Billieux, Christine Mohr, Pierre Maurage, Daniel L. King, Adriano Schimmenti, and Maèva Flayelle, "Binge-watching in times of COVID-19: A longitudinal examination of changes in affect and TV series consumption patterns during lockdown", *Psychology of Popular Media*, 2022.
- Takamatsu, Shohei, "Spectators' Worries and Attitudes during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Case of a Women's Volleyball Match in Japan", *International Journal of Sport and Health Science*, 19, 2021: 81-86.

Thangavel, Packiaraj, Pramod Pathak, and Bibhas Chandra, “Consumer Decision-making Style of Gen Z: A Generational Cohort Analysis”, *Global Business Review*, 23 (3), 2019.

Tsuji, Taishi, Airi Amemiya, Kokoro Shirai, Sari Stenholm, Jaana Pentti, Tuula Oksanen, Jussi Vahtera, and Katsunori Kondo, “Association between education and television viewing among older working and retired people: a comparative study of Finland and Japan”, *BMC public health*, 18, (917), 2018.

Vyt, Dany, Magali Jara, Olivier Mevel, Thierry Morvan, Nélida Morvan, “The impact of convenience in a click and collect retail setting: A consumer-based approach”, *Int. J. Prod. Econ*, 248, 2022: 108491.

Internet resources

Anzidei, Melanie, “on the ball: How watching TV sports has helped mental health during the pandemic”, <<https://www.northjersey.com/story/sports/2021/03/23/how-tv-sports-helped-our-mental-health-during-covid-pandemic/4767926001/>> [accessed 2 November, 2022].

Wada, Koji, “World watches as Japan tries to manage games amid COVID-19”, <<https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2021/07/09/commentary/japan-commentary/world-watch-tokyo-olympics-amid-covid-19/>> [accessed 2 November, 2022].

Jan, “43 million Thai’s watch sports, penetrate 10 big fan insights High purchasing power - intend to support the product 'Brand Sponsor'”, <<https://www.brandbuffet.in.th/2021/06/10-insights-the-growth-of-sport-in-thailand/>> [accessed 2 November, 2022].