

HOW YOUNG BANGKOK URBANITES INTERPRET "HEALTHY DIET" AND ITS IMPLICATION FOR HEALTHY FOOD PRODUCT

BY

MISS LALITA NEERANATVONG

AN INDEPENDENT STUDY SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF SCIENCE PROGRAM IN MARKETING
(INTERNATIONAL PROGRAM)
FACULTY OF COMMERCE AND ACCOUNTANCY
THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC YEAR 2015
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ENTITLED

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was approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science Program in Marketing (International Program)

Chairman

(Professor Phithip C. Zerrillo, Ph.D.)

Member and Advisor

(Associate Professor James E. Nelson, Ph.D.)

Dean

(Professor Siriluck Rotchanakitumnuai, Ph.D.)

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Author Miss Lalita Neeranatvong

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ABSTRACT

This study is a contemporary topic in applied marketing focusing on health related subject. The first objective is to explore how young Bangkok urbanites interpret the term "healthy diet". Second is to identify segments among young Bangkok urbanites from the interpretation of healthy diet and their characteristic. Third is to understand key attitudes of young Bangkok urbanites toward healthy diet when purchasing healthy food product. Findings of this study illustrate consumers needs, expectations, and factors influencing the purchase of healthy food product; while the results assist the reader on decision making in marketing strategy.

Data and insights were obtained through primary and secondary data. Qualitative research was employed through face to face semi-structured in-depth interviews of 16 young Bangkok urbanites, which defined as Thais age between 17-29 who live in Bangkok center area and classified in SES class A+ to C+. The respondents were non-probability sampling recruiting through personal connection. Observations were taken at food store, and restaurant to witness consumer behavior and relevant factors to healthy food industry.

Independent key variables of this study are set as 1) young Bangkok urbanite socioeconomic characteristics, 2) Attitude toward healthy diet, and 3) Consumer

purchasing behavior of food product. These three variables lead to the dependent variable, which is a purchasing decision criteria toward healthy food product.

In conclusion, this study would give a better understanding of how young Bangkok urbanites interpret "healthy diet" and show the different segments of young Bangkok urbanites through their interpretation of healthy diet. It would give the reader, who prospects to serve healthy food industry, the insights and implications for healthy food product to decide on a strategic business direction. Also, this study would be of interest to Thai government officials, people associated with diet, and health-related positions or firms.

Keywords: Healthy diet interpretation, Healthy diet, Young Bangkok urbanites, Healthy food product, Dietary

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Problem Statement and Research Purpose

Regarding the rising trend of health consciousness in Thailand, consumers are looking for premium quality health and wellness product (Euromonitor International, 2015a). According to the director of Department of Industrial Promotion, Mr.Arthit Wuthikaro said that trend in consuming healthy food is now raising especially in ASEAN+3 (China, South Korea, Japan), especially in processed food industry that grew 5.5 percent in 2014 or estimated at USD 9.43 billion (SmartSME, 2015).

In Thailand, consumers are more sophisticated to food product, and many opt for more premium and natural packaged food. Product experiences indicate the product attributes regarding ingredients quality and benefits value. As a result, many brands incorporate more health benefits across their touch points, which make them able to leverage new proposition rising price in exchange for health benefit (Euromonitor International, 2015a). Therefore, young Bangkok urbanites are targeted for this study regarding high purchasing power.

Also, Thai consumers who are health conscious, they are willing to cook for themselves rather than dining out. Thus, naturally healthy packaged food is more valuable to consumers as its image for health proposition and benefit in food safety (Euromonitor International, 2015b).

This study as a contemporary topic in applied marketing focusing on health related subject aims to understand consumer insights and key attitudes toward healthy diet. Consequently, the findings would assist the manager in healthy food industry targeting the right segment and deciding on marketing strategy. Also, this study would be of interest to Thai government officials, people associated with diet, and health-related positions or firms.

1.2 Research Objective

1. To explore how young Bangkok urbanites interpret "healthy diet".

How they interpret "healthy diet" is the way they express their attitudes, which reflect their interests, perception, and motivation toward healthy diet.

2. To identify segments among young Bangkok urbanites from the interpretation of healthy diet and their characteristic.

The young Bangkok urbanites in the same segments must partly share the same attitude toward healthy diet, and also some of their characteristic. These findings would clearly classify the segments.

3. To understand key attitudes of young Bangkok urbanites toward healthy diet when purchasing healthy food product.

There are distinctive characteristics within each segment, they would be used to explain the motivation and reason of purchasing healthy food product.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A literature review as part of secondary research is to capture the overview of today's healthy diet interpretation and its relation to the food industry. The literature review was mainly extracted from online published sources and articles from various contexts such as Thailand, US, and the UK. The essential information and insights are summarized in the following paragraphs.

Defining healthy diet

The World Health Organization (WHO) defined, "Healthy Diet is a way to protect against malnutrition in all its forms, as well as noncommunicable diseases (NCDs), including diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and cancer" (Fact Sheet N°394, 2015, p.1). While the National Health Service Choices (2016) in England suggested people to consume more variety with the right amount and portion of food in order to maintain their weight and stay healthy. To have a balanced diet is the key to healthy diet and keep you feel best. The Government of Canada (2016) also supported the concept of maintaining health and good feeling by eating variety of foods and being active to reduce the risk of disease, especially obesity.

Nowadays dietary patterns and lifestyle have been shifted from consuming freshly cooked food to processed food, especially food with high energy, fats, sugars, and sodium. Therefore, lack of high dietary fiber such as fruit, vegetable, and whole grains causes of many health problems (UK National Obesity Observatory, 2011). Besides the UK, overweight and obesity are the major public health concerns in the US and many countries. Consequently, the US dietary promoted program called, "ChooseMyPlate" (US Dietary Guidelines, 2015). It suggests people have the right portion of food, do more exercise and avoid sedentary behaviors. While Public Health England (2016) recently launched the new Eatwell Guide, which also advised people on the appropriate type and portion of diet for a day consumption. It interestingly limits fruit juice in total 150 ml a day to ensure that people do not consume an

excessive amount of sugar. This is a part of the cutting down intake list including fat and salt.

Hence, many people perceive healthy eating and weight loss as the same matter (Marie-Claude Paquette, 2005). The dietary guideline has become the definition for healthy eating in public perception, which examined through characteristics of food such as fibers, starches, fat, and naturalness contents. However, other attributes of food such as freshness, homemade and unprocessed food are not included in the ideal eating guide. It rather focuses on limiting diet components instead of suggesting how to balance your meal. For instance, the latest US Dietary Guidelines (2015) recommended to limit intake of calories from added sugar and saturated fat each less than 10 percent per day. Also, healthy eating pattern will help people controlling calorie level to maintain healthy body weight.

Besides the dietary guideline, research by R. Povey et al. (1998) under the topic "interpretations of healthy and unhealthy eating, and implications for dietary change" gives more views on people's understanding of healthy diet. The study completed in a qualitative and quantitative method was to collect people's perception and actual behavior. The result shows that people's perception does not reflect the actual behavior, there are physical and psychological constraints preventing people from having a healthy diet such as money, time, awareness, perception, etc. Therefore, the health promotion should pay attention to the constraints before increasing the total public's knowledge.

Healthy diet in Thailand

The research of "Consumers' attitude and behavior on functional foods" by Moongooluem (1999) was done with Thai age between 22 to 49, who are health conscious, and live in Bangkok. It found that Thai consumers had the positive attitude toward functional food consumption in term of personal reward, confidence, necessity, functional food as part of healthy diet, and safety. On the contrary, the taste of functional food gained the negative score. They perceived health-related activities including healthy diet was the way to reduce the risk factors of diseases.

Nielsen Global Health & Wellness Survey (conducted in January 2015) reported that a willingness to pay a premium for health benefits in developing

countries are higher than others; comparing to 79 percent in Europe, 93 percent people in Asia-Pacific are more willing to pay for healthy food. Consequently, Thai healthy food industry is recently emerging more and more following the global trend.

From the overview report of Thailand health and wellness for food and beverage industry (Euromonitor International, 2015a), even the low rate of GDP growth from 2.9 percent in 2013 to 0.7 percent in 2014, the demand and willingness to pay for superior product benefit does not slow down correspondingly. Thai consumers with the constraints of their work and life, they seek for convenience but still not compromising their wellbeing. Therefore, the opportunities are opened for the player to fill this gap.

According to the cultural approach research from Siam University (Nattakitta, 2014), it found that demand for healthy food in Bangkok area is higher than in the rural area. In addition, women significantly spend more money per time on healthy food, while age is substantially relevant to the amount of spending per time, and frequency of consumption. Aged consumers tend to concern more about health and food quality, however, now healthy diet becomes more popular among young (Panyapiwat Journal Vol.5 No.2, 2014).

In summary of the literature review, the study provided contributions in the following areas. 1) The research on healthy diet and Bangkok consumers is limited. 2)Regarding the recent raising trends of health diet in Thailand, there is not much information on healthy food industry available. Also, the insights of Thai consumers related to this subject are still limited. 3) Consequent to the business feasibility and specific targeting, Bangkok has high potential to emerge business in healthy food product. Research would support on decision making in business accordingly.

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research on the interpretation of healthy diet and its implication for healthy food industry focus mainly on the perspective of young Bangkok urbanites regarding their perceptions and attitudes. It employed qualitative methodology, which is observation and in-depth interview as following steps:

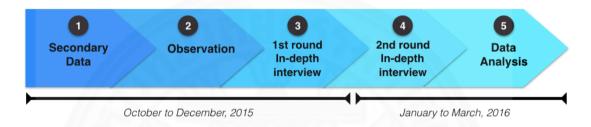


Figure 1: Research Methodology

3.1 Secondary Research

Secondary data was conducted to get an overview of healthy diet concept and interpretation, as well as to have a better understanding of the topic under study. The data was obtained from credible published sources and website both Thai and International. Secondary research sources as follows: 1)Published online report related to healthy diet and healthy food industry 2)Statistic data related to healthy food industry and its opportunity 3)Articles and studies under the area of study.

3.2 Primary Research

3.2.1 Observation

The observation was taken at food store and restaurant, that provide food product around Bangkok area. The purpose of this observation is to witness consumer behavior, healthy and unhealthy food product visibility, as well as other relevant factors to healthy food industry. For instance, 1) Product placement and accessibility 2) Type of customers, 3) Amount of spending, 4) Time spent in selecting a product.

Observation locations were divided into two groups to cover the area of the study. The first group was classified as the place that healthy food is available while another is the place that general or unhealthy food is available. Two groups of observation areas were observed at peak times as following plan.

Observation Location	Time		
1st Group: Healthy Food Availability			
1) Gourmet Market at The Emquartier	Saturday 17:30 - 18:30		
2) Central Food Hall supermarket and food court at Central World	Wednesday 12:00-13:00		
3) Lemon Farm - organic store and restaurant (Chidlom Branch)	Sunday 12:30-13:30		
4) Sustaina - organic store and restaurant	Saturday 17:30-18:30		
2nd Group: General or Unhealthy Food Availability			
5) Tesco Lotus (On-Nuch branch) - Food Court and Supermarket	Friday 18:00-19:00		
6) McDonald's (Paragon Branch)	Saturday 13:00-14:00		
7) Food court at Amarin Plaza	Thursday 12:00-13:00		
8) La Villa Aree - Restaurant and Villa Market	Thursday 18:00-19:00		
9) 7-11 Tha-Prachan Branch	Weekday 17:00-18:00		

Table 1: Observation Time and Location

3.2.2 In-Depth Interview

The key question for an in-depth interview focuses on the attitude of young Bangkok urbanites toward healthy diet specifically from their perceptions. The question guide framework was developed through the first round in-depth interview during October to December 2015. In this period, total three in-depth interviews were conducted to identify key variables of how young Bangkok urbanites define healthy diet. These interviews allowed researcher to ensure the question guide covering all key variables, and also to examine the extent of the framework.

After the first round interview and question guide design, the second round interviews were carried out between January to March 2016. Total 16 in-depth interviews were conducted to gain insights and attitudes toward healthy diet. The food images were used during the interviews session as a medium to elicit their perceptions. The 12 images represented seven images of end-dish food and five images of food package. All were selected under three criteria: 1) image represents unhealthy food, 2) image represents healthy food, 3) image with some clue of healthy or unhealthy components (e.g. whole-wheat bread burger, grains and nut in vivid artificial color).

Furthermore, the socio-demographic information was needed for observing and interpreting data pattern to identify the segments. All respondents were required to provide socio-demographic information, which are age, gender, number of family member, household income, occupation, education, location and type of resident.

Ultimately the interview with the entrepreneur in healthy food industry was conducted to gain more insight of the industry, and understanding of what information they need for strategic decision making in their business.

3.3 Sampling Plan

The respondents are young Bangkok urbanites, which defined as Thais age between 17 to 29 who live in Bangkok center area, and have purchasing power regarding family income of SES class A+ to C+ (Thailand Marketing Research Society, 2014). (Appendix A) The respondents were diversified by gender, background, occupation and others, which to avoid the similar results and extent segments span. Therefore, they were divided into two types, which were Ordinary group, and Special group.

Ordinary group (n=10)	Special group (n=6)
Ordinary people with the different background in education and occupation. (Male: n = 5, Female: n = 5)	 University students (Male: n =1, Female: n =1) People who work in fitness, health food store, health care, or health related industry. (n=2)
	3) Shopper at health food store (n=2)

Table 2: Respondents Type

3.4 Data Collection

Due to the limitation of time and financial constraint, respondents were selected through non-probability sampling and acquired through personal connection. The in-depth interviews with young Bangkok urbanite were semi-structured face to face interview, which approximately took time between 30 to 40 minutes. The interviews were standardized as much as possible to ensure that all key topics are covered. Each interview was recorded and later transcribed.

During October to December 2015, total three in-depth interviews were conducted to identify the framework and to complete the question guide or 16 in-depth interviews, which were carried out during January to March 2016. The interviews including the interview with the entrepreneur in healthy food industry were for the purpose of obtaining data to meet the objectives accordingly.

3.5 Data Analysis

This study fully obtained the data through the in-depth interview. Therefore, the unstructured and subjective data was first transcribed. Then, it was manually described and grouping in three attributes, which are positive, negative, and other response. The purpose of data classification was to identify the linkages to the healthy diet interpretation and to find the patterns; which were used to interpret and analyze following the study objectives. The theoretical framework was employed to define research key variables, which reflect the understanding of young Bangkok urbanites' key attitude toward healthy diet when purchasing healthy food product. As a result, the segments of young Bangkok urbanites were identified from the analysis, which was harmonized through storytelling. Also, the verbatim statements were used to provide the evidence supporting the summary, and for assertions of the segments and insights.

3.6 Theoretical Framework

3.6.1 Independent variables are:

 Young Bangkok urbanite socioeconomic characteristics: Age, Gender, Household Income, Occupation, Education, Location and type of resident

- 2. Attitude toward healthy diet (e.g. What are healthy diet and its benefit? What is not healthy diet?, Does healthy diet important to you?)
- 3. Consumers purchasing behavior of food product:
 - What kind of product they purchase in-store
 - Where they usually buy food, and how often
 - Who have influenced their purchase of food product
 - Time spent and amount of spending
 - Purchasing purpose (e.g. your own consumption, buy for others, gift giving, business purpose)
- **3.6.2 Dependent variable** is a purchasing decision criteria toward healthy food product. Samples of the criteria affect the decision are the environment of selling space, price, product attributes- (e.g. convenience, value for money), perceived quality from the product appeal and provided information.

3.7 Limitations of the Study

Due to the limit of time and resources, this study aims to be a preliminary research exploring the healthy diet concept among young Bangkok urbanites. The limitations are as follow:

- Regarding a small sample size through non-probability sampling method, findings from the in-depth interviews may not represent the entire Bangkok population.
- 2. Sample selection may not cover all types of young Bangkok urbanites to reflect accurately on segmentation.
- 3. The limitation of this study insignificantly affects the report in summary and recommendations for Bangkok healthy food product industry parts.

Overall, the limitations of this study did not vary the findings and result, but the small sample size may cause an inappropriate use of this study for case study or proof supporting business decision. Therefore, the further quantitative study may generalize the data to represent the entire population of the target group.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Secondary Research Key Finding

Global Healthy Food Industry Overview

In 2015, Euromonitor International (2015c) reported that global sales in health and wellness product rise at estimated 7 percent reaching USD 732 billion. Malaysia and Chinese are the major contributions as emerging markets. The most leading categories are Naturally Healthy, and following by Fortified/Functional, which are for the benefits of energy boosting and food intolerance in general wellbeing.

As Pornsri (2013) reported in Conference Paper for the 14th Agricultural Conference, there are many opportunities for Thai to expand healthy product to oversea market, as now only one percent market shares of the total market in global. In Europe, England and Germany are the most valuable market for food product; there is high demand for healthy food concerning food reducing risks in obesity and heart disease, digest system, and energy boost. Also, the US and Japan were ranked as high demand for healthy food, especially Japan in aging society era. Besides the mature market, China with the rising of purchasing power and demand is another important market to be focused. Overall, they demand healthier product, but not neglecting the concern in food safety as the standard.

Thai Healthy Food Industry Overview

According to Institute of Nutrition, Mahidol University (2009), the objectives of the research and development for healthy food are to meet the market needs while satisfying consumers, and to create the distinctive product positioning. To analyze the opportunity for healthy food market, Pornsri (2013) suggested the structure of healthy food category into five groups which are 1) safety, 2) nutrition, 3) functional, 4) period of life and 5) others (e.g. eco-friendly, Halal, raw food, nano food, etc.). Among the groups, functional food is what perceived as closest to healthy diet regarding Thai market trend. It is defined as the food that consists of essential

elements, which have beneficial health effects more than standard nutrition. With the ability to protect or relieve consumers from the particular diseases, it also helps improving consumers' health and wellbeing (Institute of Nutrition, Mahidol University, 2009). For example, "BRAND'S or Scotch" is the concentrated extract drink of the essence of chicken, it claims to give people extra energy to cope with work or school activities.

In addition to functional food definition, there are numerous studies supporting on Nutraceutical and Functional Food (NFF) market, which valued approximately at USD 30 billion for Southeast Asia market in 2013 (Natasha D'Costa, 2014). Averagely, Thailand import of NFF product estimated USD 3,000 per year with more than 10 percent annual growth (NFF R&D center, 2015). Thus, the current studies of Nutraceutical and Functional Food Research and Development Center, Prince of Songkla University (2015), focus on ingredient benefits for functional food such as prebiotics and probiotics for the digestive system and bioactive from Thai grains. The prebiotics and probiotics are the active ingredients adding in milk powder, functional drink, etc. Each brand carries the patented ingredients such as an added probiotic fermented milk - Yakult, which has long been popular for Thais. With the support of research document, the ingredients can be legally claimed as a product benefit, which is considered as a competitive advantage to win over competitors.

Thai Eating Behavior

Since the Western culture penetrated into Thai society, the eating pattern has also been evolved through time. Thai people follow the Western culture neglecting the traditional way of eating. This change has turned Thai people to face the same health disease as the Western people have met (Bureau of Nutrition, 2012). Thai consumers nowadays are careless about food quality and safety. According to Thai National Health Examination Survey, from the year 2010 to 2012 the obesity problem in people age more than 15 increased especially in women which rising from 34.4 percent to 40.7 percent. The survey also reported Thai dietary pattern shifted from consuming vegetable to others; they consume meat at 97.4 percent, high-fat food at 86.3 percent, processed food at 83.2 percent, and soft drink at 71.7 percent

(Chanthakan & Sasithorn, 2014). Also, the survey of Thai consumption behavior in Bangkok shows that people between age 20 to 30 tend to consume more fast food due to the convenience and ease of access, regardless of education level (Thailand Institute of Environment, 2005).

4.2 Observations Key Finding

4.2.1 Food Stores

Between two groups of observation site, it is clearly differentiated by product variety, availability, price range, how products have been offered, and the environment. These factors are the mediums connecting to the right target customers. The healthy food availability group offers a wider range of variety and price comparing to the second group - general or unhealthy food availability, that offers mostly mainstream product. The key findings from the observations at the food stores were summarized as follows.

The more variety of the product the more complexity in closing sales.

In healthy food availability stores, customers spent more time in selecting a product from 30 seconds to 5 minutes. Also, they sought into product information on the label, signage, and with salesperson. It is because of the product is new to them, they do not know its usage and benefits. And if they are about to pay three times more, they need to know why this product is worth for their money. Consequently, the store like Gourmet Market at the Emquartier, it sets two to three salespersons per booth to assist and introduce the product, especially for new or premium food section. However, not every store affords to do so, therefore, in-store radio, leaflet, and signage is used for giving information.

The general or unhealthy product availability stores offer less complex of product variety. Mainly the products have high awareness since the decision was partly made prior. The planned purchase shorten time in closing the sales while promotion triggers a purchase of mainstream products more effectively. Mostly the promotion items were placed at the entrance or at the center where easily reach. Also, the systematic store layout, especially for hypermarket helps shopper done their activity faster.

Location draws the different customers.

As observation diversely done in term of location, and types of store, it shows the different customers visited the store, which reflects the amount of spending, need, and time spent. For healthy food availability store which located in community mall or standalone shop (Lemon Farm and Sustaina), they focus on organic product to serve higher degree of health conscious people. They offer limited product range but instead using specialized products to draw customers. For example, Sustaina, located in Phromphong, is a Japanese area, so the products are selected to fit with Japanese cooking such as homemade tofu. While Lemon Farm offers organic food and product for holistic health care in Ploenchit area. Moreover, both stores provide ready to eat product, and restaurant included to response customer's need of convenience. Most of their customers tend to buy in small amount- not over than ten pieces, comparing to supermarket.

Among general or unhealthy food store, there are three different kinds of the store to respond each purchasing need. The hypermarket or Lotus On-nut located at BTS line offers full product range. It mostly focuses on price sensitive customers who buy and stock products more than a week. While Villa Market focuses on imported product, located in the city area - Ari; it is the area that easy to draw foreigners and Thais who can afford imported product. The convenience store 7-11 has become more influential in everyday living since it opens 24 hours to fill up people stomach whenever people need. It penetrates in every street of Bangkok, so it mostly opens on the walking street. At Tha-Prachan branch, which is near the university, consequently crowded with the students. They mostly buy snacks, meal, or refreshment.

The environment creates the image of food store.

The environment is the crucial touch point to communicate the offering to customers. In-store visibility navigates shoppers to reach product quickly and acts as a role to trigger the purchase. Most of healthy food available store decorate healthy food section in natural mood and tone, using woven basket, wood box, chalkboard, and handwritten signage as displays. On the contrary, hypermarket-Tesco Lotus, and convenience store-7-11 dominantly display their product together with promotional sign to attract and create purchase at point of sales. Their objective is to get more

attention to gain more sales. They do not give much effort on creating the emotional experience through store environment. For example, Tesco Lotus places fresh produces in generic shelf and price sign while the Gourmet Market at The Emquartier displays fresh produces in woven basket with handwritten sign showing price and product information. In conclusion, the environment is not only creating shopper experience and perception of product quality but also it is what people judge for the price they willing to pay.



Figure 2: In-store display of Tesco Lotus and Gourmet Market at The Emquartier (from left to right)

4.2.2 Restaurants

The observed restaurants are mainly located near the food stores. Therefore, there are the linkages between the food store and restaurants in term of the location, environment, customers, and price offering; which summarize in the following key findings.

Convenience and budget food embrace urban lifestyle.

The food court with price range THB 40 to 100 is to respond people who are in rush and have limited budget. The taken observation at food court Amarin, Central World, and Tesco Lotus proved that there is a high demand. All seats of these food

courts were full and to be queued, especially at lunch time. Only Tesco Lotus that crowded all day, as it is located at the transportation hub of home and offices.

Food court at Amarin Plaza attracts people from many office building, because of the price and variety of the menu offering vegetarian, local food such as Southern food, and famous street food shop. Therefore, people come here because of its various offering and value for money. While Central World gains its customer from Central World office building, and people who visit the plaza. It offers general food that can be found in any food court in Bangkok. As a crowded hub for BTS transportation, Tesco Lotus utilized the space as much as possible to add more variety of shop to cover a wider range of offering. Tesco Lotus provides more variety of dessert and beverages such as crepe, fruit frappe, etc.

All in all, people in Bangkok have many constraints in their life including time and money; therefore, convenience trend well responds and embrace urban lifestyle. However, even they are in rush, they still want to indulge themselves by selecting the food they feel delicious or suit them well. These needs result in the vast variety of food choices both in food court and convenience store to meet everyone's preference.

The environment differentiates the customer's experience.

The atmosphere at the healthy food restaurants, which are Sustaina and Lemon Farm, are entirely contrast with observed food courts, and McDonald's. They decorated with light color, using natural material, and serving in natural touch tableware. Differently, the food courts and McDonald's use vibrant color and utilize the space to maximize sitting area, which is the environment that rushes people to finish their meal. The healthy food restaurants only provide ten tables that are for 30 seats maximum, and the menu is also limited due to the ingredients and cooking time.

Regarding food display and shop visibility in the observed food courts at Amarin Plaza, Central World, and Tesco Lotus, the shop name or highlight dish image is the most dominant element to tell customers instantly their menu offering among the clutter environment. The dish images representing the appetite appeal seem not to be important, as most of the people are regular customers. However, the utensil in the kitchen help differentiates the shop by look and feel. For example, terra cotta pot represents the local Thai dish.

Each restaurant represents customer's preference.

From the observation at healthy food restaurant, regular customers are acquainted with restaurant staff. Thus, we can assume who are their regular customers from the conversation when taking the order. Accordingly, the finding shows that major customers of observed health food restaurants are foreigners, who live in Bangkok, and follows by Thais. Averagely the age of customers are from 35 to 55 years; they usually come with their family on the weekend.

The customers of the food courts are Thais as majority following by some foreign tourist. Most of them are office workers, as these food courts located in the business area along the transportation line. The finding shows that most people dress up their dish with the provided seasoning in front of the food shop. There is no choice to avoid MSG or excess food flavoring, especially for pre-cooked food. Even some shop put the sign of "Clean Food Good Taste", which established by Thai government to guarantee their quality, but people would rather choose the store that they feel delicious. The long queue is the evidence of their preference.

4.3 In-Depth Interviews Result

The interpretation of "healthy diet" was investigated through the terms given to "healthy diet" and "unhealthy diet" across the 16 in-depth interviews with young Bangkok urbanites (Female = 10, Male = 6). Nine respondents hold the Master's Degree while the rest hold the Bachelor's degree. Most of them were the employee (n=10), and two out of ten were the fieldwork employee. The others were two university students, and four business owners in the different field such as food, cosmetic, and electrical appliance. They mostly live in detached house or townhouse with more than four family members including their parents. Only a few respondents live alone in flat or condominium.

Regarding "healthy diet", almost all respondents mentioned "vegetable" (n=12) as an important element for healthy diet, following by "fat-free" (n=11) as an attribute or criteria to judge on the degree of healthiness. The majority said they have tried to avoid fat meat, oily, and deep-fried food when they want to have a healthy dish. The insight of having healthy food to lose weight reflects through the most used terms. Fat was the first rank indication for unhealthy diet, either for healthy diet fat

was concerned to be avoided in the top rank. It is interesting that half of the respondents said, "The food I like is unhealthy food"; they supported that healthy food is normally not delicious.

Moreover, the healthy concept of "clean food" was in the interest of respondents. It was further investigated the meaning, and they described it as the food that least passed processes and least added seasoning. Also, "least processed food" concept was purely mentioned as a definition of healthy diet, while "processed food" was perceived as unhealthy diet. Therefore, it can be implied that this concept is now in the trend for young Bangkok urbanites. Furthermore, the elements supporting the idea of healthy diet were more elicited, and ranked as below table.

Terms most used to describe "Healthy diet"	1	Terms most used to describe "Unhealthy diet"	
// 445 /435 355/4	N	7	N
Vegetable	12	Fat/ Oily food (Deep fried, Fat meat)	11
Fat-free	11	The food I like	8
Not delicious	10	Eating too much	7
Clean food	7	Food to indulge myself	7
Least processed food	7	What make you fat	6
Five food groups	4	Processed food	6
Balance in portion & type of food	3	Frozen food	5
Organic food	3	High sugar contained food	5
Fresh	3	Junk food	5
Clean	3	Grilled food	4
Japanese food is the most healthy food	3	Snack	4
Less sugar add	3	Chemical contained food	4
No artificial substance	3	MSG	4
Vitamin & Fiber	2	Contaminated food	3
Raw food	2	Soft drink	2
Fish	2	Toxic	1
Salad	2	GMO	1
Brown rice	2		
Good for digestion	2		
No MSG	2		
Too delicious is surely not healthy food	2		

Table 3: Terms most used to describe "Healthy Diet" and "Unhealthy Diet"

4.4 In-Depth Interviews Key Finding

According to the result, that shows the most used terms in describing healthy diet and unhealthy diet, and the details from the interview; the key finding was concluded to illustrate the distinct opinion of young Bangkok urbanites toward "healthy diet" as follows.

Healthy diet should consist of five food groups.

Thai people are taught in school to have five food groups in order to have sufficient amount of nutrient for body. Therefore, university students, who still close to the classroom theory, instantly defined five food groups as healthy diet at the beginning of the interview, as well as the nutritionist who is familiar with academic area. Result show that the respondents in the special group mentioned more about five food groups, comparing to the ordinary group who rather mentioned having vegetable more for good health.

Balance is the key to being healthy.

An ordinary respondent stated that "none of the food is unhealthy, but it is least benefit to health." Also, a special group respondent supported this thought by suggesting that people should "eat right", which means you can eat anything if you eat it in the right portion and watch out your habit. Each meal should be balanced in variety of food. For instance, one day you should eat rice, meat, vegetable, and fruit; but not eating too much of one thing.

Healthy diet is tasteless.

Most of the respondents think that healthy food is tasteless because it is less seasoning add, more vegetable, and no rich flavor. One of the respondents in ordinary group supported, "The food I like is the food with no benefit for health such as junk food, fried and oily food, and dessert." Bad food is the food that they need for indulgence when they feel tired, exhausted, and stressed. Soft drink and sweets are the most mentions for stress relief during working hour.

The food that least passes processes is quality food and good for health.

Refer to recent trend of "clean food" in Thai society; it was mentioned during the interviews asking what is healthy diet. Respondents perceived that clean food is the food that least passes process to preserve the nutrition, and also adding less seasoning as possible. The special group respondent, who work in the event marketing for infant nutrition, said that "healthy diet for me and everyone should be the food that least passes processes, and freshly made." She added, "Packaged food is not real healthy food because it already passed through many processes." Also, this comment was supported by one of the ordinary group, "I think the nutrient in food was diluted through the processes of cooking, packing, and transporting to the shelf." He feels that the processes and environment changes would affect the quality of food.

Ingredient is the essential element in healthy diet.

Respondents who think that ingredient is the key factor for healthy diet, they rather trust in home cook quality; because they know the source of ingredients, cooking method and the mixtures of the dish. Therefore, they pay more attention in grocery shopping. The food brand, label, and store environment are the key judgment for ingredient quality. For example, they only buy fresh fruit and vegetable that labeled or certified organically grown, the free range egg, and non-MSG added food. The respondent gave her opinion, "I rather choose organic labeled vegetable because at least there is a guarantee. Vegetable is what we eat it fresh, so it is better to have the chemical free one."

Homemade is best

The concept "homemade is best" was raised during the interview when asking where would you find the healthy diet. One respondent answered, "I do not believe that I can have healthy food out of home. Even at the good restaurant, it is still unsure what is added in our food." However, the people who believe in homemade quality, they struggle with the real-life practice. They do not have time to cook by themselves, also the motivation to do it everyday.

Tangible evidence is the proof of product quality.

Some respondent believed that the environment does reflects the quality of food. The places are the key to indicate product standard. One of the respondents said, "Food from supermarket should be cleaner than food from fresh market, because of the difference level of quality assessment" He supported his thought that there is no strict measure and practice to do quality check of the product in fresh market. When comparing to a chained store, there are many policies to control product quality before it is on shelf.

Healthy diet is complicated for everyday life.

A critical constraint to have healthy diet is a choice availability. The respondents cannot find healthy food around their area, and some are too expensive to afford for everyday living. University student said, "If I want to eat other food apart from university canteen, I have to order it one day prior, or even carry it from home. And there is no one at home cook for me either." She feels that how to have good food, she need to put a lot of effort in. Although healthy food is good, but it is not that delicious to persuade people to do so. Also, other respondents, who have time limited, do not want to spend their time preparing food. They give the priority to other things, convenience is what they seek for their busy life.

The fear is the main reason to begin having healthy diet

The fear comes from only two main reasons for all respondents to start having healthy diet. First, they are afraid of gaining weight. Second is to prevent them from illness and diseases like cancer, diabetes, and heart disease. The respondents gave an opinion, "I do not want to get sick like some of my relatives and friends. I should start having healthy diet." Most of the respondents think they want to prevent the illness, but when probing into their actions; it gave the opposite result. Although they shared the same thought, they do not have healthy diet because of many constraints. Also, they still not take it as an urgent thing to do.

Healthy diet is the pleasure of everyday life.

Besides the fear, there is some, who think healthy diet is a pleasure and do not take it as a serious thing in life. They mentioned that they continue having healthy food to stay in good condition, and enjoy the benefits of it. The respondent gave her opinion, "When I have a right balance of food, it is not only help for long term. It does help maintaining weight, and curing acne problem." Additionally, they personalized their intake follows their needs and feeling, thus, they are seeking for food that matches with them.

4.5 Segments of young Bangkok urbanites

Regarding key findings above, the young Bangkok urbanites can be categorized into three distinctive segments, which were Self-indulgence, Functional focus, and Healthy creation. Although each segment has the different attitude and perception toward "healthy diet", all segments have some thought in common. They all responded and reacted with the image shown during the interviews that "vegetable or fresh greenish things" represented healthy food. On the other hand, fried, fat and oily food were surely not good for health. Lastly, they were all afraid of being sick and gaining weight as the major reasons to eat healthy food. Thus, the following paragraph gives the description of each segment's characteristics through the interpretation of healthy diet.

Segment 1: Self-indulgence (n=5)

The Self-indulgence segment least cares about healthy diet. They think healthy diet is tasteless. They prioritize taste as the first attribute when selecting their meal while other segments concern more of other attributes. Most of them were office employee, who have limited time, especially for morning and lunch. Therefore, convenience is also an important factor they concern. One of the respondents said, "I only need some food to fill up my stomach and need to get back to work".

On the contrary of their careless of health over taste and convenience, they mostly perceive that the best healthy food is homemade one. Thus, they do not believe that they could have healthy food out of their home as the cooking processes at the restaurant can not be observed and inspected. One respondent told, "I do not trust in

the quality of the food at the restaurant. At home, we at least selected the trustable brand for ingredient and clean it properly before cooking. However, I do not have time to cook, and not even want to cook. I would better eat out." So, they continue eating at the restaurant or food stall, as they feel healthy diet is complicated and take too much time for everyday life.

Segment 2: Functional focus (n=6)

The Functional focus segment concerns more on health. This group of people rather relies on scientific evidence or tangible proof. The respondent said, "I rather believe my mom because she is the professor of Biochemistry. She surely knows correct information." Therefore, doctors or scientists are trustable influencers for this segment. The tangible evidence is used to examine the truth. For instance, the environment of food store is the key to indicate product quality. One respondent said, "I only buy food from supermarket, which assures me with their policy to control the quality." Hence, the essential key to healthy diet starts with the quality ingredients, which need supporting proof stated on label such as trusted brand, certified organic mark, quality guaranteed, etc. For the one who want to control weight, the calories thumb is important information to have on pack.

The other concept that was adopted by this group is "Clean food" and "Raw food"; which were defined as the food that least passes processes, the more nutrition was kept. This concept conforms to the particular idea of quality ingredients. The Clean food is recently popular and in the interest of young health conscious people. However, the former theory of five food groups is still recognized to follow as routine practice to ensure fundamental amount of nutrient for the body need.

In term of satisfaction toward healthy diet, this segment also perceived that healthy food is not delicious same as Self-indulgence group. But they are able to accept it, as they pay attention to the quality of ingredient more. The respondent who works as a cabin crew said, "I have to plan my meal in order to have physical readiness when going on board. It is important for me to have food for health rather than delicious food." While another respondent gave an opinion, "The food that too delicious and full-flavored is surely not healthy." He gave the reason that seasoning, MSG, artificial elements made the food delicious more than it should be, so food

without these components should be healthy food. Eventually, Functional focus segment still need some "unhealthy food", which was described as the food I like such as junk food, snack, fried food, to nourish their appetite sometimes.

Segment 3: Healthy creation (n=5)

The Healthy creation segment believe that none of the food is unhealthy. An ordinary respondent stated, "none of the food is unhealthy, but it is least benefit to health." Balance the intake suiting yourself is the key to have healthy diet. Their principle is to feel their body's need, and eat what you want in appropriate portion, not eating too much. One respondent in the special group said, "It is fine to have some sweets to satisfy me appetite, but only need to control the intake amount." Therefore, this group is quite flexible for food choice, as they always have alternatives to personalized the meal follows their diet principle. For instance, if today they already had a lot of meat, then the next meal would be more of vegetable.

The attitude of not taking healthy diet as a serious thing in life is what different from the other segments, that perceived healthy diet as a complexity in life and need an effort to do so. They see healthy diet as a part of life that make them feel good and enjoy life. The Healthy creation believes more in themselves, while still open for new things to inspire them. Therefore, the images about healthy food, lifestyle, and self-improvement in online media inspire this segment to take an action. For instance, "A nice photo on Instagram inspires me to buy these ingredients and cook for myself", the shopper at the health food store said.

Among three groups they are the most who willing to try new product if there is anything interesting match their need. Most of them are in the special group respondents- occupation in health-related industry and shopper at health food store, which has awareness and interest of healthy food above the normal standard. With the higher degree of knowledge, they require less of educating marketing communication, but rather need full product information to judge by themselves. Also, they are willing to pay more for healthy product when compared to other segments. "Normally healthy food price should be higher than general food. If it is priced low, I will query whether the product is not that good quality", the respondent gave her opinion when describing healthy diet.

4.6 Interview with the Entrepreneur in Healthy Food Industry Key Finding

According to the objective of this study, besides the understanding of young Bangkok urbanites' interpretation, it needs the implication for the business objective as well. Therefore, the interview with Ms. Suwanna Langnamsank, the owner of Lemon Farm was conducted to gain the insight and identify the requirement for healthy food industry.

Lemon Farm is the health food retailer with ten branches providing holistic health and wellbeing product. In general half of products on shelf were labeled by Lemon Farm brand, as there are not much organic or health product producer in Thailand. Also, not many Thai natural or organic products obtain the guarantee or certification. Therefore, sourcing its product is to ensure the product quality, while building trust with the customers.

From the brand point of view, "Healthy diet" is under the concept of "eat well live well", which Lemon Farm brought from the Macrobiotic principle to introduce and communicate to consumers. Wholegrain and brown rice are the highlight and basis of this principle. More than ten years that Lemon Farm has continually educated Thai consumers through events and publications. However, there are only small group of customers who are interested in healthy diet, mostly are the oldies and sick people.

Although nowadays young customers in healthy food industry are increasing due to the higher awareness of healthy food, the retailer still has the issues to drive its sales. Even people are more aware of healthy diet but do not afford to pay for healthy product. While some lacks of knowledge to start eating healthy. Thus, it is not feasible to expand this kind of specialty store. Nevertheless, retail store is not the only solution to offer the products. With the rising trend of health, the way to respond the customers need should be foreseen and implemented within time.

CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

From the data analysis and result of how young Bangkok urbanites interpret "healthy diet", the implications for healthy food product were concluded in the view of business, education, and social as follows.

Young people concern more on how the food was made.

The result shows that young Bangkok urbanites interest more of how food was prepared. They mentioned about cooking processes, homemade, and ingredients sources, which apparently reflected their perception of food today. Although delicious taste still plays a significant role in food choice, "how it was made" has significantly become a consideration factor as well. Thus, the entrepreneur should ensure the process quality through the end product. Also, it is possible to include the unique method, good source of ingredients, and what give the value as a product claim.

Positioning healthy food product

Among three segments, Healthy creation has the highest potential to grasp the business opportunity. From the interviews of Healthy creation segments, respondents are more knowledgeable than other groups regarding their background and interest. Hence, they are willing to try new product, also willing to pay more for the superiority of product benefit. Although it is not difficult to convince the trial for this group, it is hard to catch them. They might switch to other product after finding what better suit them. Their characteristic of actively updating trend would need the marketer who foresees the upcoming trend to catch this segment, also think of how to bond this type of customer.

A solution for healthy diet is better than telling how good it is.

When talking about healthy diet, most of the respondents have the constraints that have prevented them from having healthy food such as time, money, preferences, etc. Therefore, it would be more practical to give a suggestion for people to overcome

those barriers instead of telling how good the healthy diet is. For example, to encourage people to have breakfast, it could be a product like on-the-go breakfast or a campaign suggest easy and delicious menu to inspire people.

Misleading communication to consumers should be more aware.

Regarding high competition in the current store environment, especially in FMCG industry; product images and claims are used to drive sales. Consumers now are more knowledgeable and seek for the benefit that matches with their need. But in reality, consumers hardly read the label; they judge from the visual and the readable message one glance at shelf. Therefore, the company takes the opportunity to create the communication that may have misleading message to gain more sales. For instance, the beautified food image can immensely make an impact on the perception. The package in the natural look using vegetable image, brown paper texture, handwritten font can convince consumer to believe that product is the healthy one.

Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and Office of the Consumer Protection Board are the parties that should involve in preventing wrong or harmful communication to consumers. Even the current regulations, there are still many gaps opportunities to take advantages. The communication should do best in getting consumers' attention, while not to misleading them. This study gives the understanding of people's perception, which would help to identify gap in current regulation to amend further in its detail.

The goodness of traditional Thai food should be promoted locally and globally.

According to the interviews, few respondents mentioned Japanese food is the healthiest food among other national food. While some respondent perceived Thai food, that they have at home, is healthier than European food, as it consists more of vegetable and less of red meat. Also, Japanese people are noticed that their life-span are longer regarding their aging society. Hence, the nationality and way of life have also been considered as factors reflecting health and wellbeing.

Regarding long history of Thai culture, Thai food is one of the famous recognition across the world in term of unique taste and delicacy. Thai herbs were ingredients, that made Thai dish flavourful and distinctive taste; yet they give the

health benefits as well. Thai people should take the opportunity to promote Thai food to be recognized as a healthy diet. Food as part of Thai culture, it can promote our country, and indirectly benefit to the economics as well.

Healthy food for all.

Not only in the remote area that people could have low quality of life but in the city like Bangkok, there are many people have been struggling with their life. Food is one of the fundamental factors that affects life quality, it can bring people pain and illness if they have it wrongly. Therefore, this study partly pointed out the thoughts and perceptions of young Bangkok urbanites to find the possibility to uplift people's standard of living in term of health and food relation. The insights give the understanding of how people think and act, which is the connection to bring people better living. For instance, most of all think healthy food is not delicious, but this perception can be changed through new experience and knowledge. The company, which is willing to embrace the health and wellness recognition, may bring the insights to create a campaign, build the community, etc. This act will give a good reputation while sustaining customer loyalty through the strong community.

Future research suggestion

Setting this study as an initial research to explore and understand the insights of young generation in Bangkok toward healthy diet. The future studies that will enhance the results and broaden the outcomes are as the following suggestion.

- 1. The quantitative study of how young Bangkok urbanites interpret healthy diet should be employed to identify the possible segments accurately.
- 2. Broaden the target sampling from only Bangkok area to the major city in Thailand. This will diversify the population, which the data will be able to represent the young Thai. While giving the better estimation of the research finding in term of segmentation.
- Regarding health and wellbeing, food is not one important factor, although activities and lifestyle are related to health as well. Therefore, the study of relation between healthy diet and lifestyle activity should be further investigated.

4. To scope down focusing on business objective. The quantitative and qualitative study of healthy diet in specific category such as beverages, cooking ingredients, or indulgence dessert should be conducted to gain the result for a particular product.



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APPENDIX A TABLE OF SOCIO-ECONOMICS STATUS SCALE IN BANGKOK 2014

	Table of Socio-Economics Status Scale in Bangkok 2014								
Class	Family Income								
	ВКК		UPC-Urban		UPC-Ruler				
Е	0-7,500	3%	0-5,000	7%	0-3,200	9%			
D	7,501-18,000	21%	5,001-10,000	23%	3,201-6,500	24%			
C-	18,001-24,000	22%	10,001-15,000	23%	6,501-11,000	28%			
С	24,001-35,000	25%	15,001-22,500	20%	11,001-20,000	22%			
C+	35,001-50,000	17%	22,501-33,000	13%	20,001-24,000	6%			
В	50,001-85,000	8%	33,001-55,000	9%	24,001-35,000	6%			
A	85,001-160,000	3%	55,001-85,000	3%	35,001-58,000	3%			
A+	>160,001	1%	>85,001	2%	>58,001	1%			

Source of information: Thailand Marketing Research Society

APPENDIX B QUESTION GUIDE FOR IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW

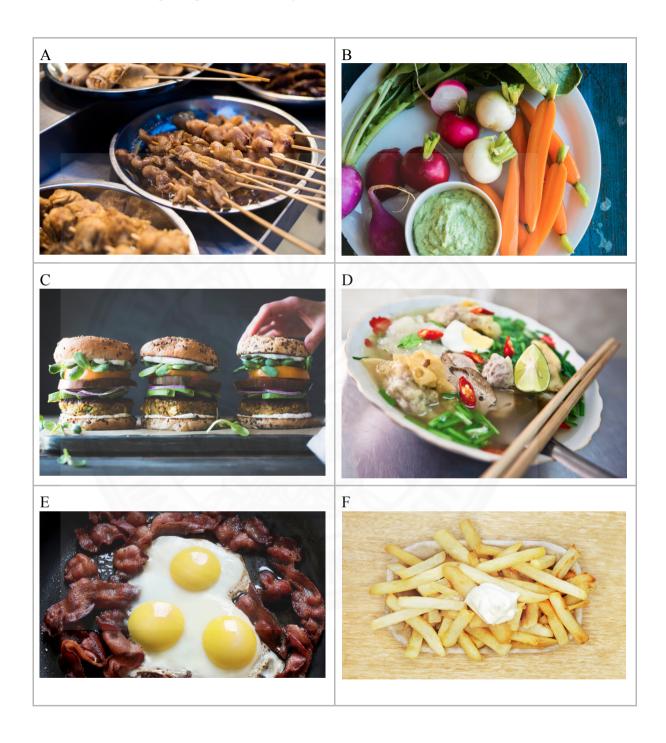
Gender:	Male / Female	Age:		
Occupati	on:			
Househol	d income (Baht /	month):		
1) 4)	less than 35,000 85,001-160,000	2) 35,001-5 5) more that	0,000 n 160,001	3) 50,001-85,000 6) Refuse to answer
Your hig	hest education lev	el:		
1)	1) lower than Bachelor's degree 2) Bachelor's degree			
3)	Master's degree		4) Higher th	an Master's degree
Type of r	esident:			
1)	Detached house	2) Townhouse	3) Conc	do or Service apartmen
4)	Flat	5) Official res	idence	
6)	Others (Please spe	ecify)		
Resident	Location:			

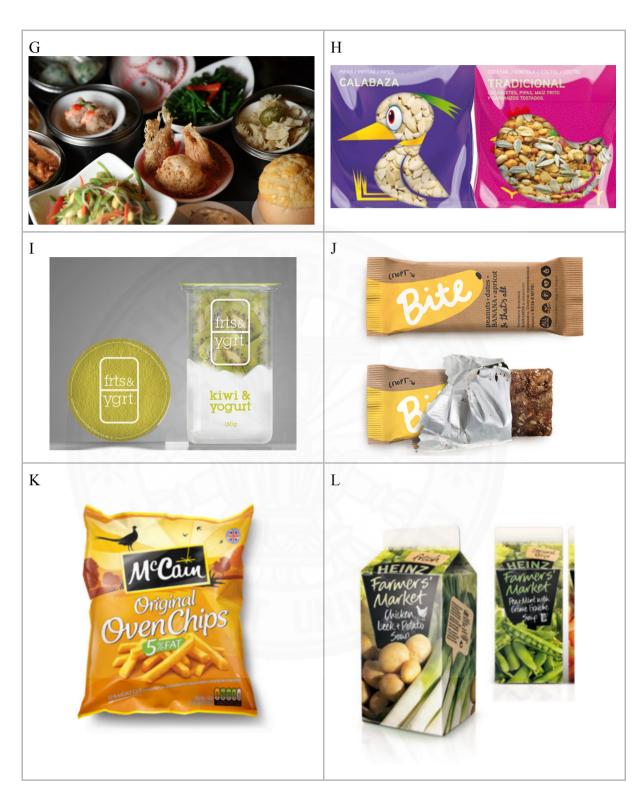
Question guide for in-depth interview with young Bangkok urbanites

Young Bangkok urbanites perception and attitude toward healthy diet

- 1) What is healthy diet in your perspective? Could you give an example of healthy food?
- 2) What make you think of healthy diet? Could you give 3 or more words/ things that represent healthy diet?(e.g. menu, food, brand, mom, homemade, etc.)
- 3) What is unhealthy diet in your perspective, please give an example of its?
- 4) Could you give 3 or more words/ things that represent unhealthy diet?
- 5) What is the principle of healthy diet? What is the component of healthy food?
- 6) Between 1 to 7, 1 is the least healthy, and 7 is the healthiest, what degree represent your diet.
- 7) Do you think healthy diet is important to you? Why?
- 8) When do you need healthy food? And Where would you find it?
- 9) If you are now eating healthy food, why do you choose it?
- 10) Who around you do have healthy diet?
- 11) Who do you think is a role model for you in eating well?
- 12) What limit you from having a healthy diet? Do you think healthy diet is expensive, difficult to do, or else?
- 13) What will persuade you to have a healthy diet?
- 14) What kind of food do you think it suits you well?

15) What images represent "healthy diet"? (You can select more than one answer)





(Source of images: A- G:http://www.offset.com, H:http://pinthemall.net/pin/531777dbb51b5/, I:https://thietkebaobiblog.files.wordpress.com/2013/02/fruit-yogurt-designed-by-mika-kac3b1ive.jpg?w=620, J: http://www.packagingoftheworld.com/2012/06/bite.html, K:http://creativexcess.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/11/frozen-food-packaging-design-4.jpg, L: http://www.packagingoftheworld.com/2009/11/heinz-farmers-market.html)

Young Bangkok urbanites behavior:

- 1) What did you have for your latest meal?
- 2) Could you please tell how you select and buy your food?
- 3) Do you cook, or who cook for you? Do you think 'healthy food' is necessary to cook by yourself or someone in your family?
- 4) If you do not cook, where and what do you usually buy for a meal? Do you think the food you usually buy is healthy food?
- 5) How much do you willing to pay for one healthy meal?
- 6) Who or what is your influence on food choice?
- 7) What source of information have been influenced you the way of eating?

APPENDIX C PROJECT TIMELINE

	2015	2016					
Activities	October- December	January	February	March	April	Мау	
Data collection							
Secondary research, Observation & First round in-depth interview							
Second round in-depth interview-part 1							
Progress report 1 submission		25					
Second round in-depth interview-part 2							
Progress report 2 submission			16				
Second round in-depth interview-part 3							
Data Analysis & Report							
Initial comprehensive report submission					7		
Revised comprehensive report submission						6	

BIOGRAPHY

Name Miss Lalita Neeranatvong

Date of Birth November 15, 1988

Educational Attainment 2016-2014: Master's Degree Program in

Marketing (MIM), Thammasat University

2012-2007: Bachelor of Industrial Design,

Chulalongkorn University

Work Position Packaging Design Specialist

Nestle (Thai) Ltd.

Work Experiences 2014-2013:

Visual Merchandiser

DKSH (Thailand) Limited