



IMPROVING SERVICE DESIGN FOR THAI MASSAGE AND SPA INDUSTRY IN  
THE NEW NORMAL AND BEYOND

BY

MR. PATTARAKORN NITKITSOMBOON

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE DESIGN, BUSINESS  
AND TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY

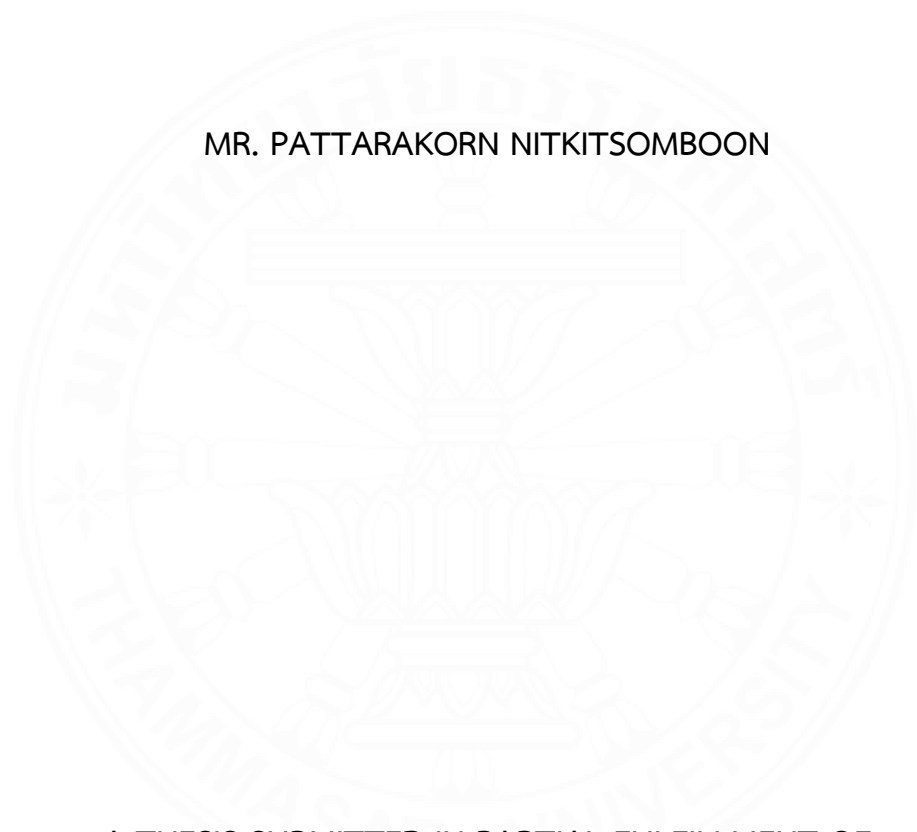
ACADEMIC YEAR 2022

COPYRIGHT OF THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY

IMPROVING SERVICE DESIGN FOR THAI MASSAGE AND SPA INDUSTRY IN  
THE NEW NORMAL AND BEYOND

BY

MR. PATTARAKORN NITKITSOMBOON



A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF  
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE DESIGN, BUSINESS  
AND TECHNOLOGY MANAGEMENT FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC YEAR 2022

COPYRIGHT OF THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY

THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY  
FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE AND PLANNING

THESIS

BY

MR. PATTARAKORN NITKITSOMBOON

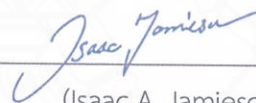
ENTITLED

IMPROVING SERVICE DESIGN FOR THAI MASSAGE AND SPA INDUSTRY  
IN THE NEW NORMAL AND BEYOND

was approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for  
the degree of Master of Science (Design, Business and Technology Management)

on January 4, 2023

Chairman



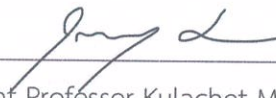
(Isaac A. Jamieson, Ph.D.)

Member and Advisor



(Assistant Professor Kallaya Tantiyaswasdikul, Ph.D.)

Member and Co-Advisor



(Assistant Professor Kulachet Mongkol, Ph.D.)

Dean



(Assistant Professor Asan Suwanarit)

Thesis Title	IMPROVING SERVICE DESIGN FOR THAI MASSAGE AND SPA INDUSTRY IN THE NEW NORMAL AND BEYOND
Author	Mr. Pattarakorn Nitkitsomboon
Degree	Master of Science
Major Field/Faculty/University	Design, Business and Technology Management Faculty of Architecture and Planning Thammasat University
Thesis Advisor	Assistant Professor Kallaya Tantiyaswasdikul, Ph.D.
Thesis Co-Advisor	Associate Director Isaac A. Jamieson, Ph.D.
Academic Year	2022

## ABSTRACT

The Thai massage and spa service industry has been a source of revenue for Thailand for a long time, and massage therapists have traditionally found steady employment. Thai massage can be used as treatment for a wide variety of diseases as well as for relaxation. Disease therapy with Thai massage can have a significant positive impact. This industry has been dramatically affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and has struggled with its long-term consequences. The Total Quality Management Framework (TQM) can be used for improving organizational service performance and identifying how to implement a suggested strategy under changing conditions such as the COVID-19 crisis. As a result, the purpose of this study was to analyze difficulties and opportunities to enhance the service design of this industry during the COVID-19 crisis, to improve its service management using the TQM Framework, and explore industry preparedness for the post-COVID-19 phase. This study used a qualitative approach that included in-depth interviews to collect data from three massage and spa businesses in Phuket to acquire deep understanding and insightful information from direct experience, and a quantitative approach using questionnaire to examine the behavior and experience of customers using their services before and during the COVID-19 pandemic. Findings revealed that businesses had significant customer loss and a reduction in staff. The industry modified their COVID-

19 prevention methods to attract more domestic consumers, and they managed staff reductions through job rotation, which requires multitasking abilities. In terms of preparation, staff must maintain good health to assure the safety of massage and spa customers, and businesses are considering hiring more staff in the future to accommodate consumer demand. This study provides useful guidance and recommendations concerning massage and spa service design to survive the COVID-19 crisis and prepare for future crises, as well as secondary data for future research.

Keywords: Thai massage industry, Thai spa industry, COVID-19 crisis, Total Quality Management Framework, New normal



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The achievement of my thesis would not have been possible without the assistance and encouragement of my adviser, the committees, and the staff of the Design, Business and Technology Management, Faculty of Architecture and Planning, Thammasat University.

I would like to express my most sincere appreciation to my research adviser, Assistant Professor Kallaya Tantiyaswasdikul, Ph.D., who not only reviews and edits the work but also gives advice and direction. For this reason, I would like to express my gratitude to the Assistant Professor Kallaya Tantiyaswasdikul, Ph.D., the Associate Director Isaac A. Jamieson, Ph.D., and the Assistant Professor Kulachet Mongkol, Ph.D. for their assistance with my study. Throughout the entirety of the teaching and learning process, I was given any and all criticisms and recommendations that may help me advance and enhance my research.

I would like to express my appreciation to each and every member of staff at DBTM and APTU who has been helpful and kind at all times. I would like to express my gratitude to my friends who are pursuing master's degrees in the DBTM programme, for all of the support that they have given me.

In addition, I would like to express my gratitude to all of the individuals who took part in my in-depth interview and questionnaires and who generously gave me some of their valuable time throughout the interviewing process.

In closing, but certainly not least, I would like to express my gratitude to my family, my relatives, and my friends for their love and support during the entirety of the process of producing this thesis.

Pattarakorn Nitkitsomboon

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	(1)
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	(3)
LIST OF TABLES	(7)
LIST OF FIGURES	(8)
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background and Problem Statement	1
1.2 Research Gap	5
1.3 Research Question	5
1.4 Aims	6
1.5 Objectives	6
1.6 Scope and Limitation of the Study	6
1.7 Research Framework	7
1.8 Timeframe	9
1.9 Expected Outcome	9
CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE	11
2.1 Massage and Spa Industry	11
2.2 COVID-19 and Impacts	12
2.3 Service Design	14
2.4 Massage and Spa Service in Pandemic Situations	16
2.5 Total Quality Management Framework (TQM)	17

	(5)
2.6 Case Study of Massage and Spa Protocols during COVID-19	19
2.6.1 Employee Preparedness Process	19
2.6.2 Customer Arrival and Intake Process	20
2.6.3 During the Session	21
2.7 Measures to Help Reduce COVID-19 Risk	22
CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	24
3.1 Research Populations and Samples	24
3.2 Data Analysis	25
3.2.1 Online Survey Analyse Method	25
3.2.2 Interview Analyse Method	25
3.3 Research Instrument	26
CHAPTER 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	27
4.1 Results from In-depth Interview	27
4.2 Results from Online Questionnaires	28
4.3 TQM Framework for Service Test Results from In-depth Interview	32
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	42
5.1 Conclusions	42
5.1.1 Massage and Spas	43
5.1.2 Customers	43
5.2 Limitations	44
5.3 Recommendations	44
REFERENCES	46

APPENDICES	52
APPENDIX A	53
APPENDIX B	58
APPENDIX C	60



## LIST OF TABLES

Tables	Page
1.1 Research framework	7
4.1 Demographic results	28
4.2 Utilisation of massage and spa services prior to and during the COVID-19 period	30



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figures	Page
1.1 Timeframe	9
4.1 TQM framework guideline	34
4.2 TQM framework guideline (Continue)	35
4.3 Plan for massage and spa services based on the TQM framework	40



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background and Problem Statement

The massage therapy sector in Thailand has been well-established as a source of revenue for the country for a considerable amount of time, and as a result, massage therapists have traditionally been able to secure stable employment. However, as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak, massage and spas were forced to close, either temporarily or permanently. This resulted in lower incomes for employees, as well as numerous challenges for business owners. The number of customers has decreased as a direct result of the fear that COVID-19 will spread, and this research will be one of the schemes for effectively managing services and building more trust for customers in the future, whether those customers are experiencing a crisis or are experiencing normal circumstances.

A day spa is a business that offers a variety of services aimed at enhancing one's health, appearance, and relaxation through personal care treatments such as hair, massages, and facials. A day spa is differentiated from a destination spa by the unavailability of overnight accommodations (Spy, 2013).

People in Thai society nowadays are fiercely competitive creating work-related stress. Lifestyles and families lead to changes in consumption habits. Consumers are growing increasingly concerned about their health because when one is in good health and strong, the efficiency of one's work or activities increases. As seen by the diligence with which one exercises to promote and preserve one's health to be strong, health is the foundation of a person's performance and happiness. Thai traditional medicine, which was passed down from ancestors, was used in the past to treat ailments and prevent numerous diseases that could occur.

The Thai massage service industry has been firmly established for many years as a source of revenue for the country, and massage therapists have traditionally obtained

steady employment. Thai massage can be used as a type of treatment for a variety of diseases, for relaxing, and even to help ensure easier birthing. Disease therapy with Thai massage can have a very positive impact. In particular, it is exceptionally useful for disorders that cannot be cured with needles or modern therapy (Dangin, 2012).

Massage is a broad phrase that refers to a variety of touch therapies. Massage is essentially the manipulation of soft tissue (Fritz, 1995). Massage treatments involve a wide range of techniques, including pressure, kneading, rubbing, and mobilization (Hemmings, 2001). A typical massage session lasts 60 minutes (Fritz, 1995), however a treatment can last a few minutes (Moyer et al., 2004) or several hours (Avraham, 2001; Lambert and Setthakorn, 1992; Shapiro, 1999).

In the treatment session, a number of stretches, many of which are comparable to yoga postures, are used, including static stretching, dynamic movement, and myofascial release. A Thai massage session might last up to two hours (Mercati, 1998). Massage is one part of Traditional Thai Medicine that has seen a renaissance in Thailand during the last few decades. Massage is occasionally used with herbal medicines, diet, and spiritual or supernatural healing by Traditional Thai Medicine practitioners (Banpasirichote, 1989).

Thailand has a lot of opportunity for providing health-related services, and wellness tourism, including spas, Thai massages, and beauty salons. The Thai government has been supporting businesses in this industry since 2004. The Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board and the Ministry of Public Health have set the vision of Thailand as a World Class Healthcare Destination by proclaiming the policy of developing the country to be an international health centre. It is one of the primary services within Thailand's strategic plan to become a global health centre by promoting Thailand as Asia's "Capital Spa". Thai users are increasingly concerned about their health and appearance. Thailand's Government Revenue: Gross: Excise Department: OT: Sauna & Massage Service statistics were reported to be 8.570 million baht in Jun 2018. This is an increase above the previous month's figure of 8.450 million baht. Thailand Government Revenue: Gross: Excise Department: OT: Sauna & Massage Service data is updated monthly,

with an average of 10.090 million baht between October 1989 and June 2018, a total of 345 observations (CEIC, 2018).

The tourism industry and traditional Thai massage are important sectors that generate economic growth and sustain development in Thailand, enhancing the country's competitive edge. The service industry generates the majority of the country's revenue, which is essential for economic development in areas such as human resource management, business infrastructure, and technology development. As a result, the Thai government strives to boost tourism and traditional Thai massage businesses through projects such as Amazing Thailand, a TAT-created effort (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010).

Service design is the process of designing and structuring a business's resources, including people, props, and processes, in order to improve both the employee and customer experience directly (Gibbons, 2017). Service design enables organizations to view their offerings through the eyes of their customers. It is a method of service design that balances the needs of the consumer and the business, with the goal of delivering seamless and high-quality service experiences. Service design is rooted in design thinking and applies a creative, human-centered process to improving existing services and developing new ones. Service design is a way for businesses to get a real sense of their services through collaborative methods that involve both customers and service delivery teams. This allows for holistic and meaningful improvements (Miller, 2015).

There was a pandemic of COVID-19, a severe virus that spread widely in a short period of time, until the beginning of 2020. It was declared a global epidemic by the World Health Organization. The disease first appeared in late December 2019 in Wuhan, the capital of Hubei, China, and quickly spread to 203 nations around the world as of 9 April 2020, less than a month after the WHO declared a pandemic outbreak (Association of Southeast Asian Nations, 2020). The crisis has an impact on the daily lives of businesses and people of all kinds. To stop the spread of the disease, many countries have placed international transportation and travel on hold, stopping operations. Another service

industry that has been adversely impacted by the crisis is the spa and Thai massage industry. This is due to the government's notification of an emergency decree to temporarily close such places of business from January 2020 to April 2020.

When situations continue to get better because the number of infected people has dropped, the government has removed the lockdown and permitted businesses to reopen for a three-month period. Several considerations have been made to ensure that the firm remains open and operational after it reopens. Despite maintaining strict disease control measures and not providing full service. However, the number of service customers returned to use the service on the first day. People become stagnant after a while as a result of the changing lifestyles of more cautious people and fewer tourists. However, The Thai massage and cannot avoid being exposed.

As a result of this ongoing crisis, businesses must consider adjusting their organisation's services in trying to adapt with changing situations and consumer habits while reducing the impact and creating new opportunities for the organisation. All business owners and operators, including massage and spa operators, may confront a variety of issues and challenges. They cannot help but adapt their business procedures and operations to COVID-19's new normal in order to stay afloat throughout the crisis. In reaction to the COVID-19 crisis, businesses have put in a lot of effort to survive by adopting various business management strategies to alter their business operations. During this pandemic, it is critical that massage and spa operators grasp the underlying issues, challenges, and viable responses.

Furthermore, the emergence of COVID-19 has had a significant influence on the global and local economies, as well as small and large-scale companies. Many businesses have been forced to shut down as a result of the current pandemic, which has been resultant from significant changes in business methods and consumer behaviours, such as social isolation and more time spent at home, as mandated by global governments. Due to imposed disease outbreak control measures, such as travel restrictions and entry bans on travelers from countries with certain levels of active COVID-19 cases, the current

pandemic has had a significant impact on the tourism and hospitality sectors, which are key pillars for economic growth in many countries.

The Total Quality Management (TQM) framework is used as a criterion for the creation and improvement of services. TQM prescribes a set of techniques for organisations to do this, with the path to successful continuous improvement based on the use of strategy, data, and effective communication to embed a quality discipline into the culture and operations of the organisation. The aims of TQM are to eliminate waste and boost efficiency by ensuring that the organization's product (or service) is produced correctly the first time.

## **1.2 Research Gap**

As a result of the current COVID-19 pandemic situation, it is very difficult for massage and spa businesses to remain viable. This situation indicates that there is urgent need to investigate and provide suggestions on how this situation can be affectively addressed.

## **1.3 Research Question**

How can researching the history and trends within the massage and spa sector, and the existing and proposed infection risk mitigation measures for the healthcare industry, improve the service design and resilience of the Thai massage and spa industry in the new normal and beyond?

## 1.4 Aims

To create and develop a principle to improve service design for massage and spa businesses that enables them to be more inclusive and work more effectively both during normal conditions and those experienced during a pandemic.

## 1.5 Objectives

1) To study the existing processes and preventive measures undertaken by massage and spa businesses.

2) To Identify the elements that influence customer behavior when it comes to using massage and spa services before and during a pandemic.

3) To develop a new service design plan for massage and spa businesses in order to help customers feel more comfortable and provide a better experience in the new normal and beyond.

## 1.6 Scope and Limitation of the Study

### 1) Content Scope

This project aims to improve massage and spa service design so that it is more resilient for clients in the new normal and beyond.

### 2) Population Scope

Massage and spa businesses in Phuket were chosen for in-depth interviews. The massage and spa businesses must be open before, during, and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The questionnaire population includes all massage and spa customers before, during, and after the COVID-19 outbreak.

### 3) Location Scope

The rationale for focusing on Phuket province is the diversity of a target population that includes Thai locals and travelers, as well as the ease of observation and interviewing. The questionnaires for this present work focused specifically on customers for massage and spa services in Phuket.

### 4) Limitation

Due to the COVID-19 situation and the limited time period, it was not possible to collect all of the survey results (approximately 400 people who used massage and spa services both before and during COVID-19 from the three massage and spa establishments that the author interviewed), and thus we were able to collect the survey results of 123 people.

## 1.7 Research Framework

**Table 1.1** Research framework

Research objectives	Methodologies	Expected result
1.To study the existing processes and preventive measures of massage and spa.	<p><b>Primary data</b> : In-depth interview with owners and employees</p> <p><b>Secondary data</b> : From Literature review</p>	Understanding existing procedures and preventive actions, as well as analyzing understanding business results.

**Table 1.1** Research framework (Continue)

Research objectives	Methodologies	Expected result
<p>2. Identifying elements that influence customer behavior when it comes to using massage and spa services before and during a pandemic.</p>	<p><b>Primary data</b> : Online questionnaires and In-depth interview with customers</p> <p><b>Secondary data</b> : From Literature review</p>	<p>To compare the gap between before and during the pandemic and determine the explanation for the change in customer behavior data from real experience.</p>
<p>3. Develop a new service design plan for massage and spa businesses in order to help customers feel more comfortable and provide a better experience in the new normal and beyond.</p>	<p><b>Primary data</b> : Online questionnaires and In-depth interview with owners, employees, and customers</p> <p><b>Secondary data</b> : From Literature review</p>	<p>To have a better service design for massage and spa business that will help them be more resilient and productive in the new normal and beyond</p>

## 1.8 Timeframe

Description	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
Selection of the research topic	■	■											
Collection of data from journals		■	■	■									
Scoping aims and objectives		■	■										
Conducting literature review		■	■	■	■	■	■						
Research question		■	■	■	■								
Initiative research plan review		■											
Research methodology			■	■									
Poster proposal				■									
Proposal examination					■	■							
Selection of appropriate research					■	■							
Collect data from in-depth interviews						■							
Collect data from questionnaires						■							
Data analysis						■	■	■	■				
Create draft TQM framework for service design									■	■			
Test TQM framework for service design											■		
Receive feedback											■		
Research report												■	
Submission of final report												■	■

Figure 1.1 Timeframe

## 1.9 Expected Outcome

1) A detailed set of guidelines on best practice service design, building layout and management measures that can be used to help get businesses up and running again with increased consumer confidence

2) Knowledge of how to create an improved customer service and more inclusive services that are more appropriate for the new normal and beyond.

3) Help make massage and spa businesses even more healthy and resilient, and further increase their appeal to both locals and medical tourists in the new normal and beyond.

To improve massage and spa service design in the new normal and beyond that can be applied by that industry in general. To investigate the variables that make customers feel both comfortable and uncomfortable, how consumer behaviour changes during a pandemic, and how this industry may improve its reliability and responsiveness in massage and spa services to make customers feel safe and comfortable.



## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### 2.1 Massage and Spa Industry

Thailand's spa sector has been growing since 1995, and it became Asia's spa capital in just ten years, around 2005, and it was ranked second in the world for spa destinations in 2009, behind Australia. Staff members at Thai spas are known for their service, warmth, and gentleness. Since the 1970s, the spa business has been a major source of money for Thailand. Hotel or resort spas, day spas, club spas, medical spas, cruise spas, mineral spring spas, and destination spas are the seven major segments of the spa sector (Cohen and Bodeker, 2008).

Most Thai people choose day spas because they focus more on Thai traditional massage, whereas most foreigners prefer hotel spas because they offer a range of spa types are luxurious and easier to discover. The average number of customers per month in the day spa industry is around 355 individuals, whereas the average number of customers in the hotel spa industry is around 491 people, but this was before the COVID-19 pandemic (Hirankitti, Mechinda, and Manjing, 2009). In the spa industry, women have always been the majority of spa goers, whereas males feel apprehensive about going into a room and taking off their clothing, and they do not want to be touched by other guys (Mcneil and Ragins, 2004).

Thailand's health tourism industry has been gradually increasing, competing with neighboring countries like Singapore and Malaysia. This is because Thailand has a competitive advantage in terms of service operations. Attractions are one of the tourism factors involved in organizing a variety of health tourism activities. Furthermore, one of the aspects that tourists are concerned about is the availability of facilities.

Spa operators should understand the trends and interests of their future customers in order to maintain a high level of service quality. The quality and variety of

services and products supplied, the pricing range, the friendliness and competence of the staff, the design, atmosphere, ambience, and cleanliness of the facilities are all crucial tactics for a successful spa. They should have a variety of packages to provide to different types of customers, such as honeymoon, family, and senior packages.

Even in the pandemic situation, the massage and spa businesses should always retain and communicate with valuable consumers on a regular basis. The crisis event is not an exception for lost connections. Many businesses have discovered that using social media is the greatest and possibly cheapest way to contact their target audience and to build customer loyalty. As a result, the company should keep its audience up to date on its actions, including daily messages. Perhaps a statement does not need to be related to the firm's current activities. The hotel, for example, is not required to just broadcast messages promoting its hotel. Everyday issues, on the other hand, offer a chance for sharing. The audience will find it valuable to learn how to keep safe during a pandemic during this time. The new normal living philosophy is also useful for sharing.

Massage and spas should take infection risk mitigation measures to ensure that their facilities are safe and sanitary. Separate zoning, one-way walking, social distancing, counter shield, natural ventilation and air movement, and use of air purifiers are all safety steps they should take. To regain client confidence, the first step is to improve the brand image by promoting the fact that massage and spas are fully equipped with safety measures and are knowledgeable about COVID-19, amongst other things and that whenever customers are satisfied with a spa experience at a particular destination, it has both the short run and the long run behavioural effects, of which revisit intentions is one.

## **2.2 COVID-19 and Impacts**

The illness COVID-19 is the respiratory infection caused by the recently identified coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2. The novel virus was initially discovered on December 31st, 2019 in Wuhan, Hubei, China (World Health Organization, 2020). "Coronavirus Disease

2019" (abbreviated COVID-19) was declared by the World Health Organization on February 11, 2020, as the disease's official name. This illness was formerly known as "2019 novel coronavirus" or "2019-nCoV." (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020). This illness was formerly known as "2019 novel coronavirus" or "2019-nCoV." (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020). Even more dangerous than the ordinary cold is Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), both of which are caused by a wide family of viruses called Coronaviruses (CoV) (SARS-CoV). This means that coronaviruses may spread between animals and humans. There were many studies which revealed that SARS-CoV and MERS-CoV were spread from civet cats to people. An whole new strain of the coronavirus (COVID-19) has been discovered in animals, although no human cases have yet to be reported.

The World Health Organization (WHO) states that with regards to transmission, the virus spreads between individuals, particularly when an infected person is in close or direct touch with another person (less than 1 meter apart). Larger respiratory droplets to smaller aerosols may transmit the virus from the mouth or nose of a person infected with the virus by coughing, sneezing, speaking, singing, or breathing activities. COVID-19 may infect people if the virus enters their mouth, nose, or eye. Respiratory droplets are the primary mode of transmission for viruses, according to current research. There are other ways to become sick that do not involve contacting a contaminated surface like a doorknob or handrail without washing your hands beforehand (World Health Organization, 2020). Aerosol transmission risks can increase in specialised settings, such as restaurants, gyms, nightclubs, workplaces, and places of worship like churches, temples, and mosques, when infected individuals spend a lengthy amount of time with other people (World Health Organization, 2020).

Dry cough and exhaustion are the most typical symptoms of COVID-19. Additional, less frequent signs and symptoms include a painful or aching throat, diarrhea, nausea or vomiting, dizziness, a rash on the skin or a coloring of the fingers and toes, as well as congestion in the nose and eyes, headaches, and conjunctivitis (also known as red

eyes). Perhaps if someone is sick, they may simply have moderate symptoms, or even no signs of infection at all. High fever (over 38 °C), trouble breathing, lack of appetite, chest discomfort or pressure, and disorientation are all signs of the COVID-19 illness that should not be ignored.

Hospitalization is seldom required for mild to severe sickness, and most infected patients are able to return to their normal routines without being hospitalized (World Health Organization, 2020). These include adults over the age of 60, those with preexisting health issues including diabetes, high blood pressure, heart and pulmonary issues as well as those with obesity or cancer. At the same time, anybody of any age may get COVID-19 and become extremely sick or even die (World Health Organization, 2020). Although children have been less impacted by COVID-19 than adults, they are nonetheless susceptible to infection. If a kid has a preexisting medical issue, they are more likely to suffer from serious sickness. There is a paucity of information on which underlying medical issues in children put them at greater risk. Obesity, medical complexity, severe genetic disorders, severe neurologic disorders, inherited metabolic disorders, congenital (since birth) heart disease, diabetes, asthma and other chronic lung diseases, and immunosuppression due to malignancy or immune-weakening medications all increase the risk of severe illness in children. These children are also more likely to be obese (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2020).

### **2.3 Service Design**

Service design is a proactive activity that is intrinsically holistic. To develop a worthwhile experience, service designers must understand the activities that take place behind the scenes and the business processes that support them. And, in order to implement these processes, they must consider the end-to-end experience of numerous stakeholders, not just the individual moments. And they have to find a way to pay with

that in mind, considering the business needs of the organisation and the appropriate use of technology and risk mitigation methods.

Service organisations identified the critical nature of the customer experience in determining customer satisfaction and loyalty. A consumer gets an experience when he or she feels something or gains information as a result of some level of contact with the elements of a context produced by a service provider (Pullman and Gross 2004). Numerous service organizations are increasingly putting the customer experience at the center of their service offering (Haeckel, Carbone, and Berry 2003; Pine and Gilmore 1999; Pullman and Gross 2004; Voss, Roth, and Chase 2008).

Experience-centric service organizations provide services that place a high value on the customer experience. The term "experience design" refers to the process of creating customer-centric services. However, because customer experiences are built by their perception of a chance encounter and interactions designed by a service provider (Hume et al. 2006), enterprises cannot totally control these experiences. Rather than providing experiences in and of themselves, experience-centric service providers build or stage the conditions necessary for customers to have the desired experiences (Edvardsson and Olsson 1996; Gupta and Vajic 2000). Prerequisites often include the experience's fundamental concept or activity and the setting in which it occurs.

The collection of tangible service elements, more precisely the physical environment in which a service is given or an experience is generated, is frequently cited as a significant factor affecting consumer perceptions and behavior. Environmental psychology, on the other hand, is the study of the influence of environmental factors on persons and their subsequent behavior (e.g., Mehrabian and Russell 1974). According to this concept, the physical environment may be created to elicit specific feelings and behaviors, making good control of atmospheric factors critical for creating appealing service experiences (Hoffman and Turley 2002). The atmospherics is the practice of designing purchasing environments with the goal of eliciting particular emotional responses in the customer that increase using service propensity (Kotler 1973; Turley and

Milliman 2000). According to Bitner's (1992) servicescape theory, environmental factors are observed by consumers and staff alike and result in cognitive, emotional, and physiological reactions. These internal responses have an effect on how consumers and staff engage socially, including their approach and avoidance behaviors. While approach behavior may be motivated by a want to remain, investigate, and interact, avoidance behavior may be motivated by a wish to flee or be ignored.

## **2.4 Massage and Spa Service in Pandemic Situations**

Many businesses types are struggling during the COVID-19 pandemic, and massage and spa businesses are among them. It has been estimated that 10% of such businesses that have closed in Thailand have done so temporarily and that of the remaining, 70% are permanently closed. For Tangible service business, the more effectively an experience engages the senses, the more memorable it will be. Nowadays, the safety factor also has to be taken to account to a far greater extent. If people cannot experience massage services due to a crisis, businesses providing such services will have a serious problem. Potential barriers for such businesses during the pandemic situation include lack of technological skills, change capabilities, and traditional professional culture (Matichon, 2020). Lack of awareness, and promotion of, best practice measures to reduce COVID-19 risk also act as potential barriers.

As the pandemic situation can change customer behaviour, people may change their attitude and perceptions, especially with regards to safety and risk, therefore businesses need to find a new customer behaviour model to reduce risk for the present and the future. Marketing and business models should be developed to be more proactive and ready for any pandemic situation, including a new one, such as combining new business model with existing one, developing completely new business model, follow marketing trend at that time and adapt with the service, banding together alongside other companies to advance innovation, shift from globalisation to localised models with a

boost to local customers, etc. Another important matter for massage and spa services is the environment inside the building. Adding vegetation can increase both customer and employee's wellbeing by helping filter the air and helping reduce local temperature. With regard to lighting, it is important to provide suitable exposures to sunlight and daylight because both can help immune system functioning and also help inactivate pathogens, including SARS-CoV-2 (Jamieson, 2020).

To collect research data, Service design tools could help a lot such as the customer journey as one of the frameworks in the service design process to find touchpoint, pain point, emotional of customer to summarize into personas and develop the service to solve the problem during pandemic situation.

## **2.5 Total Quality Management (TQM) Framework**

TQM was invented by Walter A. Shewhart in the form of statistical quality control. It was initially implemented at Western Electric Company in the form developed by Joseph Juran. W. Edwards Deming, who is widely regarded as the father of quality control, quality circles, and the quality movement in general as a result of his missionary efforts in the United States and around the world, helped Japanese business exhibit TQM on a massive scale (Sridharan, Mattu, & Yadav, 2022).

This is a management strategy for achieving long-term success by focusing on customer satisfaction. All organisational members participate in a TQM effort by working to improve processes, products, services, and the culture in which they operate. Total Quality Management is a management system for a customer-focused firm that has all employees participating in continuous improvement. It integrates the quality discipline into the organization's culture and actions through strategy, data, and effective communication. Many of these ideas may be found in today's quality management systems, which are the successors to TQM. The eight principles of overall quality management are as follows:

1) Customer focused: The level of quality is ultimately determined by the customer. The consumer determines if an organization's attempts to increase quality are worthwhile, whether it is through employee training, incorporating quality into the design process, or upgrading systems or software.

2) Employee involvement: All employees work together to achieve a common goal. Only once fear has been removed from the workplace, empowerment has occurred, and management has given the appropriate environment can total employee commitment be achieved. Continuous improvement efforts are integrated with typical business activities in high-performance work systems. One type of empowerment is self-managed work teams.

3) Process centered: A emphasis on process thinking is an important aspect of TQM. A process is a set of processes that take inputs from internal and external sources and change them into outputs that are provided to clients (internal or external). The steps necessary to complete the process are outlined, and performance measurements are regularly checked to detect unanticipated variance.

4) Integrated system: TQM focuses on the horizontal processes that connect each functions, despite the fact that an organization may consist of many different functional specializations grouped into vertically structured divisions.

5) Strategic and systematic approach: A strategic and systematic approach to attaining an organization's vision, mission, and goals is an important aspect of quality management. This process, also known as strategic planning or strategic management, entails the creation of a strategy plan that prioritizes quality.

6) Communication: Effective communications has a key role in preserving morale and inspiring personnel at all levels throughout periods of organizational transition, as well as in day-to-day operations. Strategies, methods, and timeliness all play a role in communications.

7) Continuous improvement: TQM emphasizes continuous process improvement as a major component. Continuous improvement forces a company to be analytical as well as creative in order to become more competitive and effective in achieving stakeholder expectations.

8) Fact-based decisions: Data on performance measurements are required to determine how well a company is performing. TQM necessitates that a company gather and evaluate data on a regular basis in order to improve decision-making accuracy, reach consensus, and make predictions based on prior performance.

## **2.6 Case Study of Massage and Spa Protocols during COVID-19**

Sanitation and hygiene will remain in effect, but there will be several additional issues to traverse, such as measuring a client's temperature, working with a mask, and ensuring a client's comfort while wearing a mask.

### **2.6.1 Employee Preparedness Process**

- Hygiene protocols continue to be standard and prevalent. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) suggests taking measures to ensure everyone conforms to respiratory hygiene, cough etiquette, and hand hygiene. Provide materials for respiratory hygiene and cough etiquette, such as alcohol-based hand rub (ABHR) with 60–95% alcohol, tissues, and no-touch waste receptacles.

- Put on and adjust the mask before the client arrives. Consider wearing clothing that can be changed between sessions in order to protect yourself and your clients further. Keep hair pulled back and away from the face. No long nails, jewellery, open-toed shoes, flip-flops, or sandals; all other practitioner sanitary standards apply. Practitioners should take their temperature prior to the start of each work day to verify they are not exhibiting coronavirus symptoms.

- Avoid shaking hands and hugging clients. Consider informing customers that, for the duration of the session, you will minimise casual talk and engage in only the minimal necessary in-session conversation.

- Treatment table arrangement will appear substantially identical, however all linens and bedding will be changed for each client. Use materials with impermeable barriers to cover your table, table warmers, etc., such as mattress pads. On top of this barrier, you can layer fleece pads, sheet sets, blankets, etc. that are machine-washable. Place comparable impermeable covers on bolsters and pillows. Cover the face cradle with a ready-made, disposable cover and a pillowcase, leaving a large hammock-like pocket underneath that could collect client aerosols when they are prone. Each client will have an entirely distinct table arrangement.

- If possible, consider opening treatment room windows. Before your client arrives, ensure that the high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) purifier is activated.

### **2.6.2 Customer Arrival and Intake Process**

- Take the client's temperature with a non-contact thermometer upon arrival; reschedule the appointment if the temperature is 37°C or higher. If the customer is not wearing a mask, as requested during the phone call reminder, offer them a cloth mask before proceeding.

- Initiate doorway screening list inquiries: Have you had a fever of 100°F or higher over the past 24 hours? Do you currently experience or have you lately experienced any respiratory or flu symptoms, sore throat, or difficulty breathing? Have you had contact with somebody diagnosed with COVID-19 or exhibiting coronavirus-like symptoms within the past 14 days?

- Allow sufficient time for a thorough health history review with new customers and regular updates with existing ones.

- After reviewing the client's health history, inquire about their willingness to wear a facial covering during the session. Remember that face masks,

including homemade varieties, protect others from catching your illness, but the practitioner is not protected unless the client is also wearing a face mask. If the client is unable to wear a mask due to health or comfort concerns, consider utilising a N95 medical mask for yourself once adequate supply return to the market.

- Request that clients use hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol, per the CDC) prior to entering the treatment room and verify that it is applied generously and correctly. Provide instructions on how to proceed with the session, including fresh instructions on where to place clothing, the availability of hand sanitizer, and the cleaning processes you wish to discuss with clients to put them at ease. Explain to them that the space has been thoroughly sanitised, but to put them at ease, they are invited to wipe down any remaining surfaces.

- Facial massage - Confirm with the client that they are comfortable with you applying hands-on work to their face; working through their face covering as necessary to address sinuses, muscles around the temporomandibular joints, or lymph nodes in this area (if performing lymphatic drainage work), consider using gloves for this portion of the treatment. Or, prior to the session, exclude this sort of massage from the list of activities that will not be performed during the session.

- Before allowing clients to disrobe at their own pace, provide them with the normal pre-massage instructions. Before returning, thoroughly wash hands up to the elbows following WHO-recommended best practises.

### **2.6.3 During the Session**

- Clients who are wearing facial covers may find prone positions uncomfortable. Consider placing a cotton pillowcase on top of the face cradle and its cover. Drape it so that it forms a closed hammock beneath the face cradle that could absorb aerosols exhaled by a patient who cannot comfortably wear a face covering during face-down orientation. Before turning this client over from the prone to the supine position, request that they cover their face.

- Consider employing side-lying positioning to address the lateral and posterior areas of the body, given the possible pain clients may experience when wearing a mask in prone position.
- Hand massage - Reserve handwork for the conclusion of your treatment plan.
- Before leaving the treatment room, remove gloves (if required), use hand sanitizer according to CDC application standards (at least 60% alcohol), and use a prepared paper towel to open and close the treatment room door (ABMP, 2020).

## 2.7 Measures to Help Reduce COVID-19 Risk

As a result of frictional charging between their clothing and the surface on which they sat, individuals can frequently generate a large charge upon slipping out of a seat. Seating that is covered in cotton is less prone to accumulate charge than seating covered in ordinary textiles. It is possible to reduce the accumulation of static charge on clothing and seating by using anti-static sprays or anti-static dryer sheets. The degree to which hair may attract pollutants is influenced, to some extent, by the amount of moisture that it contains. Additionally, coconut oil and products derived from it have natural properties that make them effective antibacterial, antifungal, and antiviral agents. A small amount of coconut oil worked through the hair can help minimise electrostatic charge.

The drier skin is, the greater the risk that it can develop extra charge, which has the potential to attract airborne infections. Properly washing and sanitising one's hands can help avoid the spread of infection. Regular cleaning and disinfection should be performed on surfaces that are regularly used, such as computer keyboards, desks, phones, handrails, and doorknobs. Surfaces that are often touched, such as computer keyboards, desks, phones, handrails, and doorknobs, should be cleaned and disinfected

on a routine basis and when cleaning, try to avoid recirculating dust as much as possible, and try to clean in regions that have low electric fields (Jamieson, 2020).



## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research use qualitative and quantitative methodologies to acquire a thorough understanding and insight into the service challenges and management of massage and spa management and operations during the COVID-19 crisis. This chapter on research methodology will justify the methodology used in this research. It contains a step-by-step guide to assist you in completing this study. This chapter will discuss the study's research design and methodology, as well as research strategies, sample size, sampling procedure, and research instrument.

#### 3.1 Research Populations and Samples

The population assessed for in-depth interviews are for all the massage and spa businesses located in Phuket. In order to qualify, the massage and spas businesses have to be operated before, during, and after the COVID-19 outbreak. It is separated into four massage groups and spas, the first of which has been running for more than ten years, the second for more than twenty years, the third for less than five years but before the COVID-19 period, and the fourth for more than twenty years.

The four massage and spa cases are the locations taken into account for samples. These were comprised of a massage and spas that has been operational for more than 20 years, a massage and spa establishment that has been open for over ten years, and a massage and spa establishment that has been open for less than five years prior to the COVID-19 period. All of the massages and spa businesses used as the samples have been open prior to, during, and following the COVID-19 lockdowns. The purposive sampling technique will be utilized to recruit possible interviewers in this situation. To collect data from the samples in response to the research objectives, in-depth one-on-

one interviews are used. Interviews, in general, consist of relevant data expressed through words, patterns, and impacts (Saunders et al., 2009).

A sample group of 22 respondents was taken from these, with three groups and another one of respondents formed: one massage and spa owner from each group, three massage and spa staff from each group, three clients from each group, and another one owner. Questionnaires were distributed to all massage and spa customers during the COVID-19 outbreak. A total of 123 respondents were sampled from three massage and spa establishments in Phuket because due to the COVID-19 situation and the limited time period, it was not possible to collect all of the survey results (approximately 400 people who used massage and spa services both before and during COVID-19 from the three massage and spa establishments that the author interviewed). Respondents were provided demographic information and information on their use of massage and spa services before and during the COVID-19 pandemic.

## **3.2 Data Analysis**

### **3.2.1 Online Survey Analyse Method**

Online questionnaires will be utilized to examine behavior, experience, and motivation that could be used to help consumers and employees feel as safe and comfortable with massage and spa services as they did before the COVID-19 situation.

### **3.2.2 Interview Analyse Method**

In-depth interviews will be used to investigate the problems, behaviors, and motivations of interviewees who are massage and spa service owners, staff, and consumers in order to determine the issues and current safety measures.

### 3.3 Research Instrument

The interview is structured around open-ended questions. Open-ended questions elicit additional information from respondents, such as their feelings, attitudes, and understanding of issues (Kothari, 2004). As a result, they are advantageous for researchers collecting qualitative data in order to gain a better understanding of specific service issues and a more insightful interpretation of research results.



## CHAPTER 4

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1 Results from In-Depth Interview

The four massage and spas' owners that were interviewed have implemented disease preventive and control measures, including the use of alcohol, thermometers, social distancing, and early bookings to alleviate congestion, help reduce risk of infection, and help address customer safety concerns. However, the four owners assert that even when such preventive measures are in place to reduce the risk of infection, they are insufficient to reassure the majority of Thai clients about utilizing the service. They stated that many foreigners, both those who follow disease prevention measures and those who do not, appear to have little or no apparent concerns about COVID-19 and continue to utilize the service.

Thai customers' behaviour toward the service has shifted dramatically. Customers now anticipate not only a good massage, but also a more safe and attentive service throughout the process, from the reception experience through to the end of the service. As a result, massage and spa services must now compete more aggressively at each stage of the service in order to attract customers.

The most significant service challenges during COVID-19 are convincing customers to trust massage and spa services and adapting service strategies to fit the behavior of both Thai and foreign customers, because Thai customers are extremely cautious and concerned about COVID-19, whereas foreign customers are careless and ignore preventative measures in this situation.

During the COVID-19 crisis, all remaining staff members have been made obliged to perform additional duties in addition to their regular responsibilities, as other staff members have left to pursue other employment opportunities and replacements are

difficult to locate. Everyone must assist one another in order for the massage and spa industry to continue both at the present time and when normal service is resumed.

Massage and spa establishments that do not discuss daily services issues with owners and staff are more likely to become stuck and run into problems than establishments that discuss daily issues and seek immediate solutions. Because every day there will be a minor service issue, but if it is not resolved, customers will feel unimproved and dissatisfied.

#### 4.2 Results from Online Questionnaire

A survey of massage and spa usage behaviour, both before and during COVID-19, was undertaken using an online questionnaire (Google Form) with customer participants from three massage and spa services. The questionnaire consisted of 22 questions and was divided into three sections as follows: 1) general information on massage and spa clients 2) customers' massage and spa service behaviour prior to COVID-19, and 3) customers' massage and spa service behaviour during the COVID-19 period.

The questionnaire surveyed 123 clients, representing 30.75% of all customers who used massage and spa services before and during COVID-19 —responses were classified as follows:

**Table 4.1** Demographic results

		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	29.3	29.3%
	Female	63.4	63.4%
	LGBTQ+	7.3	7.3%
	20 or younger	0.8	0.8%

Age	21-29	47.2	47.2%
	30-39	26.8	26.8%
	40-49	14.6	14.6%
	50-59	10.6	10.6%
	60 or older	-	-
Status	Single	67.5	67.5%
	Married	32.5	32.5%
Education Level	Secondary School	0.8	0.8%
	Bachelor of Arts	85.4	85.4%
	Master of Arts	12.2	12.2%
	Doctor of Philosophy	0.8	0.8%
	Vocational certificate	0.8	0.8%
Career	Student	16.3	16.3%
	Business Owner	22	22%
	Private Company Employee	36.6	36.6%
	Civil Servant/ State Employee	17.1	17.1%
	Freelancer	2.4	2.4%
	Housewife/ Househusband	2.4	2.4%
	Doctor	3.2	3.2%
Monthly Income	Less than 5,000 Baht	4.1	4.1%
	5,001-10,000 Baht	4.9	4.9%
	10,001-15,000 Baht	5.7	5.7%
	15,001-20,000 Baht	17.9	17.9%
	20,001-25,000 Baht	10.6	10.6%
	25,001-30,000 Baht	18.7	18.7%
	More than 30,001 Baht	38.2	38.2%

Of the 123 respondents to the online questionnaire, 29% were male, 63% were female, and 7.3% identified as LGBTQ+. 67.5% of respondents were single, while 32% were married. It was made clear that the majority of customers for massage and spa services are female and single. The majority of participants (47%) were between the ages of 21 and 29, followed by 26.8% between the ages of 30-39, 14.6% between the ages of 40-49, 10.6% between the ages of 50-59, and 0.8% under the age of 20. The majority (85%) of respondents in this study held a bachelor's degree, followed by a master's degree (12.2%).

The percentages for secondary school, doctoral degrees, and vocational certificates were all the same at 0.8%. Most of the respondents (36.6%) were employees of private companies, followed by business owners (22%), civil servants/state employees (17.1%), students (16.3%), and physicians (3.2%). 2.4% were freelancers, and 2.4% were housewives or househusbands. In this study, 38.2% of respondents reported having an income greater than 30,001 baht, 18.7% reported having an income between 25,001 and 30,000 baht, 17.9% reported having an income between 15,001 and 20,000 baht, 10.6% reported having an income between 20,001 and 25,000 baht, 5.7% reported having an income between 10,001 and 15,000 baht, 4.9% reported having an income between 5,001 and 10,000 baht, and 4.1% reported having an income less than 5,000 baht per month.

**Table 4.2** Utilisation of massage and spa services prior to and during the COVID-19 period

		Prior to the COVID-19 crisis Percentage	During the COVID-19 crisis Percentage
Number of using massage and spa services per month	1-2 times	74.8%	96.7%
	3-4 times	22%	3.3%
	5-6 times	3.3%	-
	More than 6 times	-	-

Date and time of using massage and spa service	Morning/Weekdays	4.1%	8.1%
	Midday/Weekdays	24.4%	20.3%
	Evening/Weekdays	37.4%	18.7%
	Morning/Weekends	8.1%	27.6%
	Midday/Weekends	61%	40.7%
	Evening/Weekends	43.9%	22.8%
Time spent using massage and spa services per visit	Less than 1 hour	0.8%	3.3%
	1 hour	31.7%	56.1%
	2 hours	50.4%	37.4%
	3 hours	17.1%	3.3%
	More than 3 hours	-	-
Types of massage and spa	Thai massage	89.4%	90.2%
	Hot stone massage	28.5%	14.6%
	Swedish massage	8.1%	1.6%
	Sports massage	2.4%	0.8%
	Oil massage	55.3%	20.3%
	Body scrub	0.8%	0.8%
Spending per time	100-450 baht/hour	37.4%	56.9%
	451-750 baht/hour	39%	35%
	More than 750 baht/hour	23.6%	8.1%
The need for massage and spa services at home	Yes	21.1%	19.5%
	No	78.9%	80.5%

The major reasons for decreased massage and spa visits during COVID-19 are concern about the disease's spread (74.8%), followed by a lack of time (30.1%), inconvenience (26.8%), expensive pricing (9.8 %), alternative relaxation (3.2%), and unsatisfactory massages and spas (0.8%).

Most customers use massages and spas less frequently during COVID-19, mostly only 1-2 times a month.

Throughout the COVID-19 period, more customers visited massage and spa services on weekday and weekend mornings than before the COVID-19 period. Customers use the service less during the day and evening on weekdays and weekends than they did before COVID-19.

Customers used Thai massage services significantly more during the COVID-19 period than they did before the COVID-19 period. Although hot stone massages, Swedish massages, oil massages, and sports massages have decreased in popularity due to the COVID-19 pandemic, body spas have remained consistent.

Before COVID-19, customers typically spent between 451 and 750 baht per hour on massage and spa services. However, throughout the COVID-19 period, expenditure decreased significantly, with the majority of customers paying between 100 and 450 baht per hour.

Customers' time spent on massages and spas has been cut to only one hour, down from an average of two hours pre-COVID-19.

The majority of people, both pre-and post-COVID-19, do not want massages and spas in their homes. However, more people do not desire massages and spas in their home.

#### **4.3 TQM Framework for Service Test Results from In-depth Interview**

An in-depth interview was conducted, and the results of that interview were compared with the eight TQM factors. Based on the comparison, it appears that some

massage and spa establishments have already implemented some of the TQM protocols, while other massage and spa establishments have never implemented TQM framework. As a result, a flowchart was created for each TQM item applicable to massages and spas that have followed the TQM framework as well as massages and spas that have not yet followed the TQM framework.



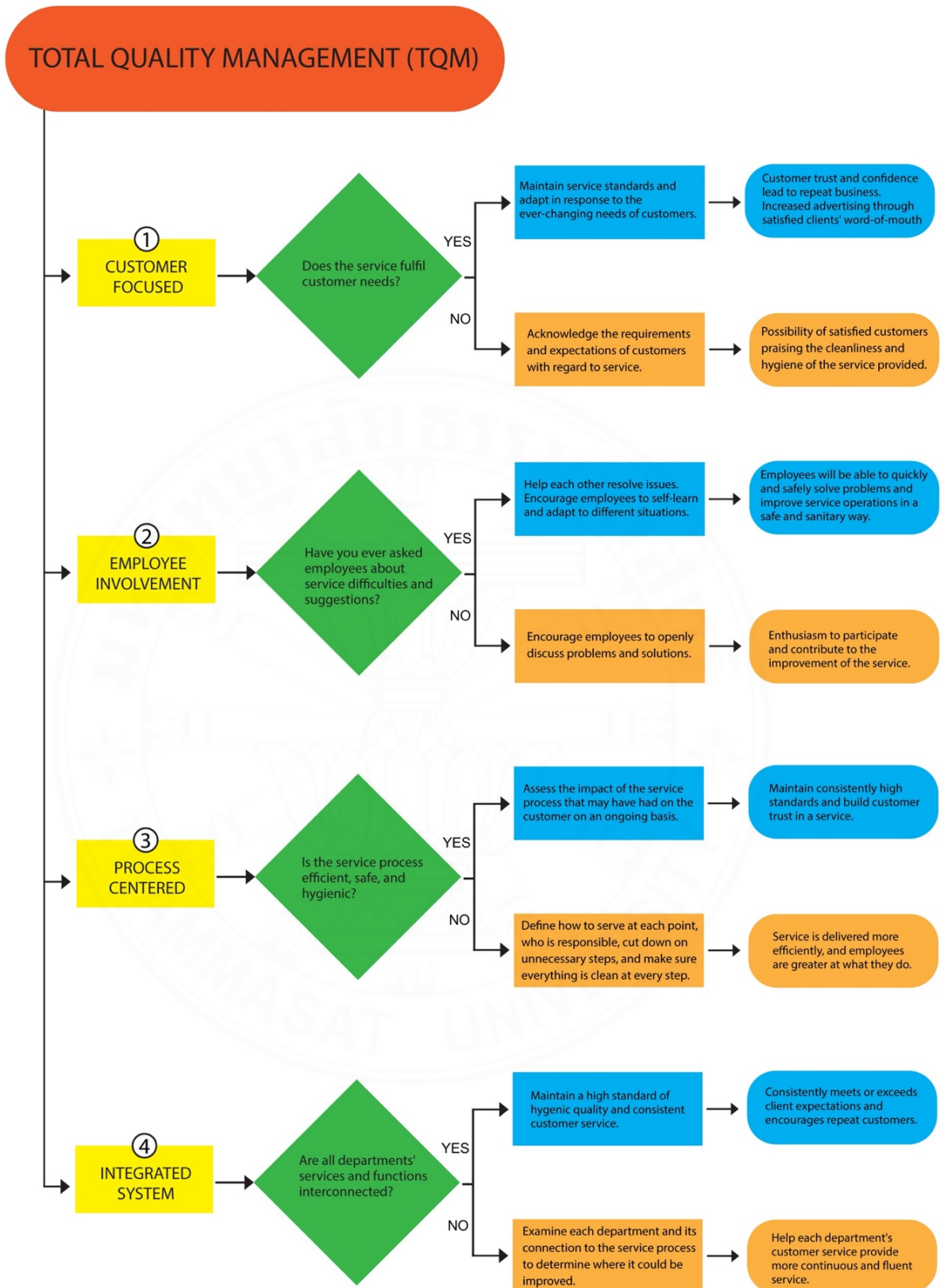


Figure 4.1 TQM Framework Guideline

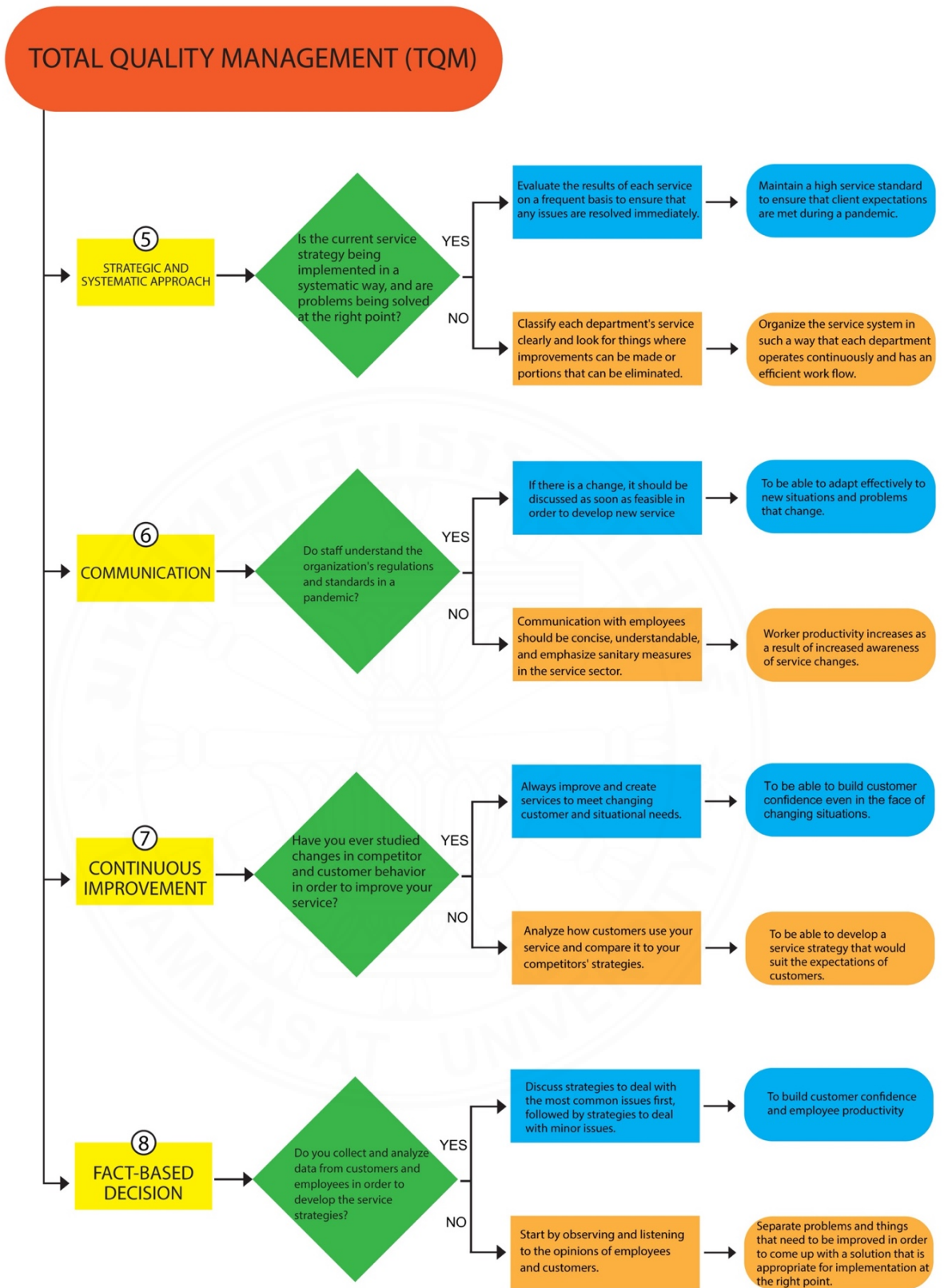


Figure 4.2 TQM Framework Guideline (Continue)

Two (massage and spas location 1 and 3) out of four massage and spa establishments that participated in in-depth interviews agreed to test the TQM platform, inquiring as to which of the eight TQM techniques had been implemented and the results. Any unutilized item will be used and the results reported as follows:

### **Massage and spa location 1**

1) Customer Focused: They make it a point to inquire about their clients' levels of satisfaction and suggestions for enhancements on a regular basis. As a result, the vast majority of their clients continue to use the service because they believe it to be reliable and risk-free.

2) Employee Involvement: The proprietor will on occasion solicit complaints and recommendations from the employees, which has resulted in service issues that have not been resolved. But after taking the recommendation from TQM and questioning the employees about the issue of which aspect of the service is held up each day after the store is closed, they found the solution and came up with a way to improve the quality of the service the next day, as well as the ability to resolve issues that employees face more effectively than in the past and come up with a solution to the problem right away. After that, establish a setting in which employees are free to voice their concerns and make recommendations without fear of retaliation.

3) Process Centered: Their services are safe and hygienic, but their service processes are inefficient; as a result, they do not have an efficient service process. So they follow the TQM suggestion by conducting analysis and measurements of the activities that are currently being carried out in order to identify potential areas for improvement as well as steps in the process that are causing inefficiencies. However, every time there is customer service, there will be an unexpected incident such as a client being dissatisfied with a portion of the service and causing an interruption in service; as a result, this clause is not effective enough to apply to serve as a basis for serving customers.

4) Integrated System: In order to turn fewer workers during COVID-19, owners have assigned several workers to multiple positions and made training available to staff who need to learn new processes and who are interested in exploring advancement prospects. As a result, workers perform more effectively and are better equipped to replace their service responsibilities.

5) Strategic and Systematic Approach: Service strategies have been modified to be correct and safe under hygienic procedures at each step, including social distance, masks, alcohol at various points, and disinfection prior to service. A reservation service is also available to reduce the risk associated with a large number of clients, allowing customers to use the service with confidence. The massage and spa continue to uphold this standard, leading customers to return with confidence.

6) Communication: Although the owner has rarely inquired about service issues from the staff, the owner nonetheless emphasizes the significance of delivering clean and sanitary services, requiring employees to always be on the lookout for service issues. The outcome is constant, rigorous service that our clients can see and trust on.

7) Continuous Improvement: The proprietor of the shop always investigates the service strategies of competitors in the same province and neighbouring regions. In addition, they frequently visit the massage and spas of competitors to observe how the service modifications might be applied in practise. In order to be flexible, it is necessary to locate extra online classes in both the massage and spa business and other industries.

8) Fact-based Decision: They gathered customer feedback and analysed the difficulties, after which they identified the key service problem that customers confront the most and prioritised its resolution. As a consequence, they were able to raise customer satisfaction since customers could observe constant improvement.

Before the recommendations from this research were implemented at this massage and spa, six applications of the TQM framework were used. These applications were Customer Focus, Integrated System, Strategic and Systematic Approach, Communication, Continuous Improvement, and Fact-based Decision. Each of these applications contributes to the highly effective nature of this massage and spa's service. However, after introducing two more clauses in addition to the TQM framework, namely Process Centered and Employee Involvement, the problem became obvious and was ultimately resolved. As a result, service was provided in a more timely and effective manner, which was the desired outcome. Providing service from employees and allowing employees who have issues to assist in finding solutions to those issues are both examples of employee engagement.

### **Massage and spa location 3**

1) Customer Focused: Both owners and employees engage in friendly interaction with clients and frequently request feedback, causing both Thai and foreign customers to return because they value friendly service that is still sterile and constantly bring criticism that needs improvement for resolving.

2) Employee Involvement: Every day, the owner discusses and inquires about service issues with the entire workforce, allowing service issues to be resolved swiftly and making employees' jobs simpler because they are willing to express their ideas.

3) Process Centered: After implementing the TQM platform, the management of the service system is more organised and unnecessary components have been eliminated, allowing workers to work more quickly and efficiently since they have a clearer understanding of the service system and its functions.

4) Integrated System: After implementing a process centered to employee services and making work more effective and faster, the subsequent

development of integrated systems rarely differences since employees can already give good customer experience at different points of service from process centered part.

5) Strategic and Systematic Approach: As a result of the owner discussing and resolving service issues with the employees on a daily basis, there is constant improvement in the service strategy and problems are resolved on the spot. As a result, the service rarely encounters major issues and can continue to maintain this level of quality, which is a factor that encourages customers to use the service again.

6) Communication: They have a Line group as a communication channel so that all employees are aware of updates, policy changes, and new processes beyond the working hours, and the owner always communicates with employees, as he is also an employee, to make employees feel comfortable with him, as he would like to include employees in decision-making whenever possible. This allows the owner and employees to alter or enhance service in response to a shift in client behaviour.

7) Continuous Improvement: After analysing the services of competitors, the owner has yet to identify anything more prominent and adaptable, as daily team discussions ensure that the service is always suited to the customer's needs, hence ensuring customer satisfaction.

8) Fact-based Decision: The decisions that the owner makes are always based on the data facts from the perspective of the employees and the customers. This resulted in the rapid resolution of service issues and an increase in overall customer satisfaction.

Because of the tight relationship that exists between the owner of this massage and spa and the employees, each time there is an issue with the service, they are in constant communication with one another. Prior to this research, this massage and spa had adopted four TQM criteria: customer-focused, employee involvement, communication, and fact-based decision making. These four criteria enable owners to manage their services more efficiently, are able to solve problems more quickly, and lead

to the invention of new service strategies that always meet the needs of customers. The remainder of TQM handles the system in a bit better manner after testing and installing the other four components, but the outcomes are not significantly different from the initial one.

**Plan for massage and spa services based on the TQM framework**



**Figure 4.3** Plan for massage and spa services based on the TQM framework

This model of service for massage and spas is based on the actual use that customers make of these establishments, as well as the application of the TQM framework to each individual aspect of service, with the goals of improving efficiency and finding solutions to problems. providing quicker service. Also, It will apply the infection protection measures at each and every stage, and it will give extra services to clients, such as masks

and COVID-19 testing kits for customers who have not previously received the test results before arriving to utilise the service.



## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Conclusions

The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant influence on the massage and spa industries. During the pandemic outbreak, massage and spa businesses have had a difficult time dealing with service issues and other hurdles. It is essential for them to have an understanding of the underlying service problems, to effectively handle the problems, and to prepare themselves to sustain the massage and spa service business through the Total Quality Management (TQM) framework for organisation service performance improvement in changing environments such as the COVID-19 crisis. As a result, the purpose of this research was to create and develop a principles to improve service design for massage and spa businesses. These principles would enable these businesses to be more inclusive and work more effectively both during normal conditions and those experienced during a pandemic, how they handle the service problems and challenges through the TQM framework.

For the purpose of this study, a questionnaire based on the quantitative method and a qualitative research method involving an in-depth interview were used to elicit profound comprehension and insightful information from nine massage and spa customers, nine massage and spa employees, and four owners of massage and spa businesses. The outcomes of this research indicated that during the COVID-19 crisis, the four massage and spa case studies were able to reopen and fully resume their activities. On the other hand, other massage and spa establishments are still unable to do so, and some have been closed permanently. According to the findings of the study that was conducted using the TQM framework, these four massage and spa establishments have successfully adapted to the changes that have been brought about by the COVID-19 crisis, despite the fact that they have run into challenges and been required to make greater

efforts to deal with difficulties in the early phase and provided an overview of the events that occurred about massage and spa, as well as the perspective of the client as follows:

#### **5.1.1 Massage and Spas**

- All massage and spas have implemented sanitation procedures in accordance with the Ministry of Public Health in order to provide services, and additional services are also managed in order to increase the trust of customers. These additional services include the use of air purifiers, cleaning, and disinfecting after customers have used various services, amongst other things. Even after the lockdown period has ended, there are still fewer visitors due to concerns about the spread of virus and the inability of some individuals from outside the country to enter the country. But despite the influx of new customers brought about by the government's decision to allow foreigners back into the country and the Thai people's general trend toward greater laxity, the massage and spa continue to practise strict disease prevention measures.

#### **5.1.2 Customers**

- There are a great number of worries and misgivings among Thai people over the spreading of COVID-19. As a result, before choosing to employ massage services or spas, customers are carefully assess if there are stringent precautions in place and how clean they are. The number of customers who utilised massage and spa services during the Covid-19 period was lower than the number of customers who utilised these services during the pre-COVID-19 period. The majority of the clients who utilised these services during the COVID-19 period were repeat clients who returned to the service, and the amount of money that clients spent each time they utilised these services also decreased.

- Customers who are not citizens of the country are barred from using the service at any time during the lockdown. However, once the country reopens its borders to visitors from other countries, customers who are not citizens of the country will be able to use the service as usual without needing to be as concerned about its

sterility, and this is one of the reasons why Thai people are not frightened to return to use the service as much as they were before worried of transmitting the disease to tourists who visited the country.

## **5.2 Limitations**

1) The consumers' confidence in making use of massage and spa services has improved to the same level as it was before COVID-19. This means that it is one of the elements that could lead the TQM test to not generate clear findings because the customer behaviour that returns is quite the same as it was in the period before to the implementation of COVID-19.

2) Different client groups and customer service behaviours exist at each massage and spas.

3) Some large massage and spa establishments are not prepared to test the TQM framework due to their inability to provide complete monitoring and communication due to their high number of employees.

## **5.3 Recommendations**

After applying all eight TQM frameworks to massage and spa services, it was discovered that the most important thing was that the owners had constant inquiries from their customers and had meetings with staff every day to ensure they asked about service problems encountered on a daily basis in order to come up with a service strategy to solve problems that were encountered quickly and to the point. As a result of the high-efficiency of massages and spas, service problems that occur on a daily basis are communicated between the staff and the owners. Additionally, the opinions of customers are gathered in order to find solutions to these issues, and this is done even before being advised by this research. As a result, the suggestion to massage and spa establishments is

that, despite having service issues due to the COVID-19 situation, continue to provide excellent care. Organizations should make an effort to adopt the TQM framework, concentrating on the component that emphasises customer and employee participation in service development.



## REFERENCES

- Anantamongkolkul, C. (2020). pp. 95–96. *An Early Response To COVID-19 : The Case of Phuket Tourism Business : Conclusion and Implication*. Suranaree J. Soc.Sci. Association of Southeast Asian Nations. (2020). ASEAN Policy Brief. Retrieved October 11, 2020, from [https://asean.org/?static\\_post=asean-policy-brief-2](https://asean.org/?static_post=asean-policy-brief-2)
- Bhrammanachote, W. (2016). pp. 127–129. The Performance of Emotion Management in TheThai Spa Industry : The Spa Context in Thailand. University of Stirling.
- Boonyanan, A., Robinson, H., & Fong, D. (2013). pp. 150–151. *Relationship and Knowledge Management in Construction*
- Boonyarit, R., & Phetvaroon, K. (2011). pp. 74–77. *Spa Service Quality : The case of the Andaman tourism cluster (Phuket, Phang Nga and Krabi, Thailand) : Importance Performance Analysis*. Prince of Songkla University.
- Ceicdata, (2018). Thailand Govt Revenue: Gross: Excise Dept: OT: Sauna & Massage. Retrieved April 18, 2022, from <https://www.ceicdata.com/en/thailand/government-revenue/govt-revenue-gross-excise-dept-ot-sauna--massage-service>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). If You Are Immunocompromised, Protect Yourself From COVID-19. Retrieved October 12, 2020, from <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/immunocompromised.html>
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020). If You Are Immunocompromised, Protect Yourself From COVID-19. Retrieved October 10, 2020, from [https://www.bot.or.th/Thai/MonetaryPolicy/Documents/PressMPC\\_22020](https://www.bot.or.th/Thai/MonetaryPolicy/Documents/PressMPC_22020).
- Chanin, O., Khunchumnan, P., Amphansookko, S., Thingyai, K., Rodnuen, J., & Sriprasert, P. (2015). pp. 1146–1153. *Guidelines on Health Tourism Management for Middle Eastern Tourists in Phuket Province : Data Collection*. Procedia Computer Science.

- Cheung, K. M. (2016). pp. 231-232. *Effectiveness of Social Work Treatment and massage Therapy for Nursing Home Clients : Studies on Massage therapy*. University of Houston.
- Choeychid, P. (2019). pp. 56-60. *Domestic tourism behavior and consumer group media exposure in Bangkok and travel decision making were examined after the Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic : Travel Decisions After the Covid-19 Crisis*. Thammasat University.
- Cohen, M., & Bodeker, G. (2008). pp. 81–82. *Understanding the Global Spa Industry Spa Management : Future Trends in the Global Spa Industry*. ACADEMIA.
- COVID Massage Protocols | ABMP Back to Practice*. (2020, April 23). Associated Bodywork & Massage Professionals; www.abmp.com. <https://www.abmp.com/back-to-practice/session-protocols>
- DeFeo, J. A. (2019). What Is Total Quality Management. Retrieved November 23, 2021, from <https://www.juran.com/blog/what-is-total-quality-management/>
- Fiesel, T., Koziel, K., & Lauf, A. (2017). pp. 16–17. *Strategic plan Elegance salon and Day spa : Critical Success factors*. Gensler.
- Gibbons, S. (2017, July 9). *Service Design 101*. Nielsen Norman Group; www.nngroup.com. <https://www.nngroup.com/articles/service-design-101/>
- Hashemi, S. M., Jusoh, J., Kiumarsi, S., & Mohammadi, S. (2015). pp. 2394–2629. *Influence factors of Spa and Wellness Tourism on Revisit Intention : The Mediating role of International tourist motivation and tourist satisfaction : Satisfaction and Revisit intention*. Granthaalayah.
- Haeckel, Stephan H., Lewis P. Carbone, and Leonard L. Berry. (2003). pp. 18-23. *How to Lead the Customer Experience : Marketing Management*. MITSloan Management
- Hirankitti, P., Mechinda, P., & Manjing, S. (2009). pp. 11–15. *Marketing Strategies of Thai Spa operators in Bangkok metropolitan : Data Analysis*. ICABR.

- Hussain, R., Nasser, A. A., & Hussain, Y. K. (2014). pp. 167–169. *Service quality and customer satisfaction of a UAE-based airlines : Service Quality Dimentions*. Air Transport Management.
- Jianpinitnun, J. (2018). pp. 16–17. Information Providing Service Guideline for Thai Elderly Domestic Passengers : Universal Design. Thammasat University.
- Jamieson, I. (2020). pp. 17-22. Contact Charging : Excess Charge and Pathogens. Bio Sustainable Designs.
- Jamieson, I. (2020). pp. 23-26. Healthier facades : Increasing value and tapping into the Lucrative Wellbeing Market : Sunlight, Glazing, and Pathogen Growth. Bio Sustainable Designs.
- Kamolchaiwanich, S. (2019). pp. 116–124. *Developing Smarter Lifetime Homes that Enhance Wellbeing for All Generations : Blueprint for Developing Smarter Lifetime Homes that Enhance Wellbeing for All Generations*. Thammasat University.
- Lee, J., & Han, S. H. (2021). pp. 55–57. *The Future of Service Post-COVID-19 Pandemic, Volume 1 : Transformative Value Co-creation in Healthcare Service in the COVID- 19 Era*. Springer.
- Mcneil, K. R., & Ragins, E. J. (2004). pp. 33–34. Staying in The Spa Marketing Game : Target Markets. Journal of Vacation Marketing.
- Mehta, S., Saxena, T., & Purohit, N. (2020). pp. 292–293. *The New Consumer Behaviour Paradigm amid COVID-19 : Permanent or Transient? : Consumer Behaviour Approaches in Time of Crisis*. SAGE.
- Miller, M. E. (2015). “How Many Service Designers Dose It Take to Define Service Design?” at <https://blog.practicalservicedesign.com>.
- Ministry of Public Health. pp. 14–15. *Safely measure management in building during COVID-19 : Safely measure management in hotel*. ASA.

- Na Ayudhaya, N. (2019). pp. 2-3. *The Impact of COVID-19 in Tourism to Thailand : A Study of Impact from Thailand's Travel Policies and Regulations to it Tourism sector : COVID-19 to Tourism situation*. Thammasat University.
- Navarrete, A. P., & Shaw, G. (2020). pp. 247–248. *Spa tourism opportunities as strategic sector in aiding recovery from Covid-19: The Spanish model : Spas and Covid-19 in Spain: A context of opportunity?*. SAGE.
- Poonlumert, T. (2020). pp. 9-10. *Risk Perception, Communication and Protective Behaviors During The COVID-19 : Guidelines for preventing coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID- 19)*. Thammasat University.
- Priyono, A., Moin, A., & Putri, V. N. A. O. (2020). pp. 3–5. *Identifying Digital Transformation Paths in the Business Model of SMEs during the COVID-19 Pandemic : Digital Technology-based business model*. MDPI.
- PubMed. (2020). WHO Declares COVID-19 a Pandemic. Retrieved April 18, 2022, from <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/32191675/>
- Pullman, Madeleine E. and Michael A. Gross. (2004). pp. 551-578. *Ability of Experience Design Elements to Elicit Emotions and Loyalty Behaviors* Decision Sciences.
- Rodrigues, C. A. (1995). pp. 32-47. *A Framework for Defining Total Quality management : Competitiveness review*. MCB UP Ltd.
- Sangri, E., Chattukul, A., Chadchavalpanichaya, K., Polkerd, P., & Lavong, A. (2021). pp. 113–115. *Examining Service Quality of Thai Traditional Massage : Service Quality*. Buriram Rajabhat University.
- Spy, S. (2013, April 9). *What does a day spa offer? : Good Spa Guide*. What Does a Day Spa Offer? : Good Spa Guide; [goodspaguide.co.uk](http://goodspaguide.co.uk).  
<https://goodspaguide.co.uk/features/what-does-a-day-spa-offer>
- Sridharan, M., Mattu, S., & Yadav, I. (2022, January 4). *TQM: How To Gain Competitive Advantage Through Quality?* Think Insights; [thinkinsights.net](http://thinkinsights.net).  
<https://thinkinsights.net/strategy/tqm-framework/>

- Stickdorn, M., Hormess, M., Lawrence, A., & Schneider, J. (2019). pp. 110–111. *This is Service Design Doing : Service Prototypes*. O'REILLY.
- Sukviboon, P. (2020). pp. 82-84. *A Survey of Behavior Changing During the COVID-19 : Behavioral changes during the pre-COVID-19 outbreak period During the COVID-19 outbreak and after the COVID-19 outbreak*. Thammasat University.
- Suttikun, C., Chang, H. J., & Bicksler, H. (2017). pp. 2–3. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management : Spa industries*. Crossmark.
- Thienthaworn, A. (2018). pp. 51–52. *Design Thinking and Business Innovation Strategies in Creative SMEs : Human Centred Approach An Insight in to Customer-Centric Service*. University of Brighton.
- Vichayacoop, V. (2020). pp. 6-7. *A Study on How COVID-19 New Normal Trend Effect Customer's Perception and Needs in Hygiene Product : The COVID-19 Pandemic and Mental Health Impact* . Thammasat University.
- Walker, J., & Barker, J. (2000). pp. 441–442. *An Exploratory Study of a Multi-Expectation Framework for Service : Measuring Service Quality*. Service marketing.
- Wannasilp, T. (2020). pp. 8-9. *Factors affecting Touchless Payment Service use in the Digital Cashless Society after the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak in the Bangkok metropolitan area : term definition*. Thammasat University.
- Zomerdijk, L. G., & Voss, C. A. (2009). pp. 2–4. *Service Design for Experience-Centric Services : Experience- Centric Service and Experience Design*. SAGE.
- รัฐวดี แดงอินทร์. (2555). *ปัจจัยทางการตลาด และพฤติกรรมของผู้บริโภคที่มีต่อการใช้บริการธุรกิจขนาด  
แผนไทย.ในเขต 3 จังหวัด. ชายแดนภาคใต้. ยะลา: บัณฑิตวิทยาลัย  
มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏยะลา.*
- มติชน. (2563). *โควิดจุดสปราย-นวดไทยแจ้งถาวร 70% ผู้ประกอบการร้องรัฐไ้การเหลียวแล แม่ธุรกิจสุด.  
บอบซ้ำ. สืบค้นเมื่อ 12 ธันวาคม 2564, จาก [www.matichon.co.th](http://www.matichon.co.th).  
[https://www.matichon.co.th/economy/news\\_2754120](https://www.matichon.co.th/economy/news_2754120)*



Appendices



## Appendix A

### Questionnaires

#### Part I : General Information about respondent

##### 1. Gender

 Male LGBTQ+ Female Prefer not to answer

##### 2. Age

 20 or younger 30-39 50-59 21-29 40-49 60 or older

##### 3. Status

 Single Engaged Married Prefer not to answer

##### 4. Education Level

 Primary school Bachelor's Degree Other (Please state) Secondary school Master's Degree

##### 5. Career

 Student Private company employee Freelancer Other (Please state) Business Owner Civil servant/ State employee) Housewife/ Househusband

## 6. Monthly Income

- |                                               |                                            |
|-----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 5,000 THB  | <input type="checkbox"/> 5,001-10,000 THB  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10,001-15,000 THB    | <input type="checkbox"/> 15,001-20,000 THB |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 20,001-25,000 THB    | <input type="checkbox"/> 25,001-30,000 THB |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More than 30,001 THB |                                            |

## Part II : Massage questions

## Massage by a Licensed Massage Therapist BEFORE the COVID-19 Pandemic

1. On average how many times a month did you get a massage BEFORE the COVID-19 pandemic?

- |                                    |                                            |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 times | <input type="checkbox"/> 3-4 times         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5-6 times | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 6 times |

2. What time of day did you typically receive a massage? (You can select more than one option)

- |                                            |                                            |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Morning/ Weekdays | <input type="checkbox"/> Midday/ Weekdays  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evening/ Weekdays | <input type="checkbox"/> Morning/ Weekends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Midday/ Weekends  | <input type="checkbox"/> Evening/ Weekends |

3. How long did you spend on average at the premises each time?

- |                                            |                                  |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 1 hour  | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 hour  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 2 hours           | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 hours |
| <input type="checkbox"/> More than 3 hours |                                  |

4. Which type(s) of massage did you primarily receive? (You can select more than one option)

- |                                          |                                                                |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thai massage    | <input type="checkbox"/> Thai Herbal Ball Hot Compress Massage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swedish massage | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports massage                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oil massage     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please state)                  |

5. Based on your response to previous question, on average how much do you pay for a massage service?

- 100 – 450 THB For 1-hour massage
- 451 – 750 THB For 1-hour massage
- 751+ THB For 1-hour massage

6. Were you willing to receive in-house massage from Licensed Massage Therapists?

- Yes
- No

Massage by a Licensed Massage Therapist DURING the COVID-19 Pandemic

1. On average how many times a month did you get a massage DURING the COVID-19 pandemic?

- |                                    |                                            |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 times | <input type="checkbox"/> 3-4 times         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 5-6 times | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 6 times |

2. If you received fewer than 2 massages per year from Licensed Massage Therapists, which of the following applied. [You can select more than one option]

- |                                               |                                       |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dislike of massages  | <input type="checkbox"/> High costs   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inconvenience        | <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please state) |                                       |

3. What time of day did you typically receive a massage? (You can select more than one option)

- |                                            |                                            |
|--------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Morning/ Weekdays | <input type="checkbox"/> Midday/ Weekdays  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Evening/ Weekdays | <input type="checkbox"/> Morning/ Weekends |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Midday/ Weekends  | <input type="checkbox"/> Evening/ Weekends |

4. How long did you spend on average at the premises each time?

Answer \_\_\_\_\_

5. Which type(s) of massage did you primarily receive? (You can select more than one option)

- |                                          |                                                                |
|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Thai massage    | <input type="checkbox"/> Thai Herbal Ball Hot Compress Massage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swedish massage | <input type="checkbox"/> Sports massage                        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Oil massage     | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Please state)                  |

6. Based on your response to previous question, on average how much do you pay for a massage service?

- |                                                           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 100 – 450 THB For 1-hour massage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 451 – 750 THB For 1-hour massage |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 751+ THB For 1-hour massage      |

7. Were you willing to receive in-house massage from Licensed Massage Therapists?

Yes

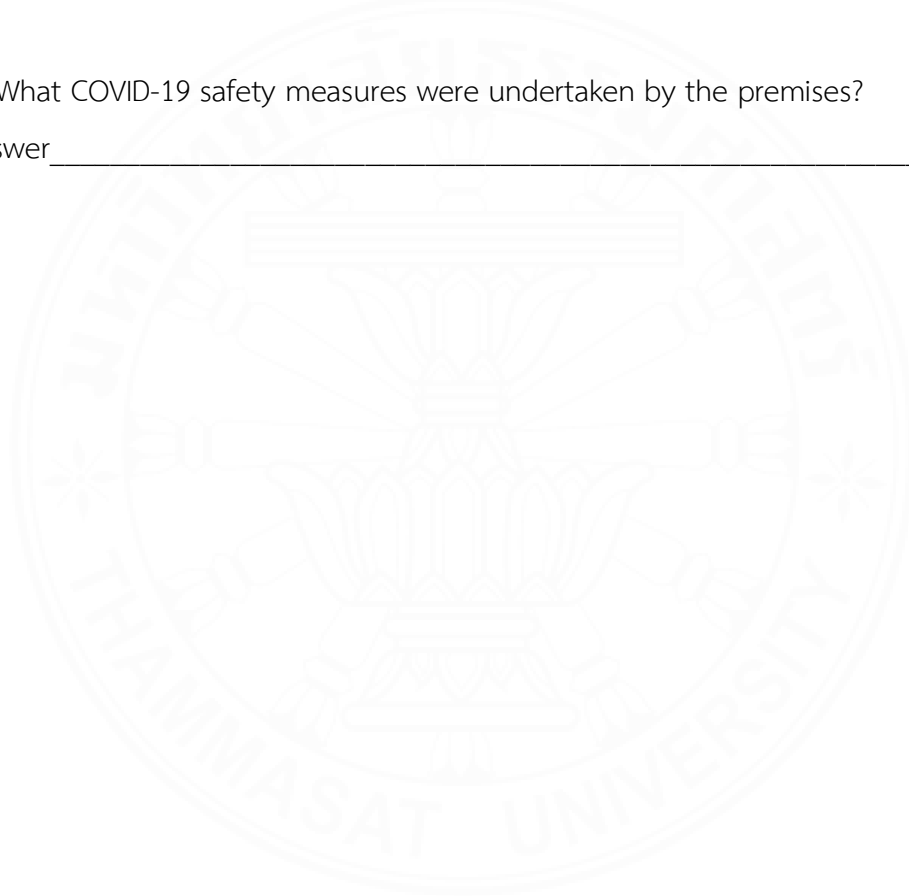
No

8. Which processes / activities made you feel uncomfortable or unsafe at massage service during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Answer \_\_\_\_\_

9. What COVID-19 safety measures were undertaken by the premises?

Answer \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX B

### In-depth interview

#### For Massage and Spa Owner

1. What are the challenges with your service strategy creation and implementation during the COVID-19 crisis, and what are the solutions?
2. How will you develop your service design in order to be prepared for the post-COVID-19 period as well as subsequent recurring incidents?
3. Do you have any problem with your existing service system during the COVID-19 crisis, and if yes, how do you handle the problems?
4. Are there any issues that have arisen as a result of the current service during the COVID-19, and if yes, how do you handle the issues?
5. Is there any staffing issues during the COVID-19 crisis, and if so, how do you handle the problems?
6. Do you have any more challenges or difficulties besides the issues outlined above during the COVID-19 crisis?
7. How do you manage or deal with the additional problems or difficulties brought on by the COVID-19 crisis?

#### For Massage and Spa Staff

1. Do you have any opinions about what challenges you encountered with service strategies during the COVID-19 crisis?
2. Do you have any suggestions about how your massage and spa organization should develop service strategies in order to be prepared for the post-COVID-19 phase and future repeating incidents?
3. Have you experienced any problems with your organization's new normal service during the COVID-19 crisis, and if so, how have you dealt with the problems?

4. Do you think your existing organization's service is appropriate for operations during and after COVID-19? If not, what are the difficulties or impediments to following your organization's service? How do you deal with the issues?
5. Do you have any more challenges or difficulties besides the issues outlined above during the COVID-19 crisis?
6. How do you manage or deal with the additional problems or difficulties brought on by the COVID-19 crisis?

#### **For Massage and Spa Customer**

1. How often do you use massage and spa services?
2. How do you feel about the massage and spa services you use?
3. Are you satisfied with the massage and spa services you had during COVID-19, and if so, how?
4. What are the benefits of the massage and spa services during COVID-19 compared before COVID-19?
5. Do you have any suggestions about how the massage and spa business should manage or address the service issues caused by the COVID-19 crisis?
6. Do you think how a massage and spa organization should prepares to provide massage and spa services to customers after the post-COVID-19 phase?

## Appendix C

### The Profile of In-depth Interview Respondents

Due to confidentiality concerns, the names of all respondents to in-depth interviews, including massage and spa places, massage and spa owners, staff, and customers, were kept secret. The owner in Massage and Spa 1 was referred to as "O1," the owner in Massage and Spa 2 was referred to as "O2," and the owner in Massage and Spa 3 was referred to as "O3." Massage and Spa 1 staff were referred to as "S1, S2, and S3," Massage and Spa 2 staff were referred to as "S4, S5, and S6," and Massage and Spa 3 staff were referred to as "S7, S8, and S9." Massage and Spa 1 customers were referred to as "C1, C2, and C3," Massage and Spa 2 customers were referred to as "C4, C5, and C6," and Massage and Spa 3 customers were referred to as "C7, C8, and C9."

The profiles of respondents to in-depth interviews, including owners and staff at massage and spa locations 1,2, and 3 are provided in Table 1.

**Table 1 Profiles of Massage and Spa owners and staff at massage and spa locations 1,2,3, and 4**

Respondents Work	Gender	Position	Responsibilities	Experience (Year)
---------------------	--------	----------	------------------	----------------------

#### Massage and Spa location 1

O1	Male	Massage and Spa owner	Internal systems management and customer service	10
----	------	--------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------	----

Table 1 Profiles of Massage and Spa owners and staff at massage and spa locations 1,2,3, and 4 (continue)

Respondents Work	Gender	Position	Responsibilities	Experience (Year)
<b>Massage and Spa location 1</b>				
S1	Female	Massage and Spa Therapist	Thai/Oil massage Face/Body treatment	7
S2	Female	Massage and Spa Therapist and Receptionist	Thai/Oil massage and customer service	4
S3	Male	Massage and Spa Therapist	Thai/Oil massage and customer service	3
<b>Massage and Spa location 2</b>				
O2	Male	Massage and Spa owner	Internal systems management and customer service	22
S4	Female	Massage and Spa Therapist	Thai/Oil massage Face/hair treatment	13
S5	Female	Receptionist	Customer service	4

Table 1 Profiles of Massage and Spa owners and staff at massage and spa locations 1,2,3, and 4 (continue)

Respondents Work	Gender	Position	Responsibilities	Experience (Year)
<b>Massage and Spa location 2</b>				
S6	Female	Massage and Spa Therapist and Receptionist	Thai/Oil massage and customer service	4
<b>Massage and Spa location 3</b>				
O3	Female	Massage and Spa owner	Internal systems management and customer service	4
S7	Female	Massage and Spa Therapist	Thai/Oil massage Face/Body treatment	6
S8	Female	Massage and Spa Therapist and Receptionist	Thai/Oil massage and customer service	9
S9	Male	Massage and Spa Therapist	Thai/Oil massage and customer service	4

Table 1 Profiles of Massage and Spa owners and staff at massage and spa locations 1,2,3, and 4 (continue)

Respondents	Gender	Position	Responsibilities	Experience (Year)
-------------	--------	----------	------------------	----------------------

Massage and Spa location 4

O4	Female	Massage and Spa owner	Internal systems management	21
----	--------	--------------------------	-----------------------------	----

The profiles of customers to in-depth interviews at massage and spa locations 1,2, and 3 are provided in Table 2.

Table 2 Profiles of Massage and Spa customers at massage and spa locations 1,2,and 3

Respondents	Gender	Age (Year)	Types of Massage and Spa Service use	Frequency of Massage and Spa Service use
<b>Massage and Spa location 1</b>				
C1	Female	27	Thai massage	2/ month
C2	Female	42	Face/Hair treatment/Oil massage	2/ month
C3	Male	32	Thai massage/ Oil massage	1/ month
<b>Massage and Spa location 2</b>				
C4	Male	56	Thai massage/ Oil massage	2/ month
C5	Female	31	Face/Body treatment	1/ month
C6	Female	42	Thai massage	2/ month
<b>Massage and Spa location 3</b>				
C7	Female	25	Thai massage/ Hair treatment	1/ month
C8	Female	30	Thai massage/ Oil massage	1/ month
C9	Female	23	Thai massage/Hot stone massage	1/ month

## Service Problems and Challenges of Massage and Spa during COVID-19 Crisis

### Location 1

This place is surrounded by nature, which is only a short distance from the downtown area. Thai customers are the major customers of the massage and spa, accounting for nearly 90%. However, following the COVID-19 outbreak, the massage and spa was temporarily closed from March to June 2021 in order to comply with government-imposed measures to contain and prevent the spread of the virus. Furthermore, massage and spa services are among the industries that have a lot of close contact or high-touch. COVID-19 can spread through these industries. Consumer behavior changes in terms of cleanliness and social distance have compelled enterprises to accelerate adjustments in order to re-establish consumer confidence, especially by raising the quality of service safety to meet current public health standards.

*“More than 90% of our customers are Thai. When the government issues a temporary closure order and the district is forced to close, we lose a significant amount of revenue. While the COVID-19 outbreak was serious at the time, there were both groups of customers who were terrified of being touched and refused to use the service following that, and those who desired further massages due to the pain associated with working from home,”* Expressed by O1.

*“The majority of our customers are Thai. Due to the small number of foreigners, even when the country is closed, we continue to have customers, although fewer. However, during the business's temporary shutdown, we were without income and no salary, so the shop's owner cooked food to sell to help us survive until the shop reopened. However, customer behavior has changed. Many repeat customers are*

*still fearful of returning to use the service. Perhaps it's for safety reasons and a fear of getting too close to other,”* Expressed by S1.

Following the reopening of the massage and spa in June 2021, there were few domestic or Thai customers due to fear of the extraordinary COVID-19 epidemic. They have developed a greater awareness of the importance of hygiene and sanitation in public spaces and services. Massage and spa services are among the companies that are particularly vulnerable to COVID-19 because they involve physical proximity between the service provider and the customer. Additionally, consumers have been seeking the highest standards of hygiene and cleanliness wherever they visit. However, the increased number of international customers is more than Thai customers, as foreign visitors are seeking a place to unwind following their country's COVID-19 crisis.

*“After reopening, I'm surprised at how many Thai customers have disappeared because they're worried about the epidemic and unsure whether we're maintaining a high standard of cleanliness in the service. However, a small number of people have returned to using the service due to the pain associated with working from home for an extended period. However, it is more strange that, despite the fact that there were few foreign customers during the pre-COVID-19 period, more foreign clients came than Thai people when the service was opened. When I inquired as to why, international customers responded that the COVID-19 situation in their country is extremely severe, stressful, and draining. When Thailand reopens, they want to visit and experience the country's relaxing activities,”* Expressed by O1.

*“Due to the increase in foreign customers, we have been unable to adjust and have had a slight interruption in service. Almost all foreign customers are much less concerned with service hygiene*

*than Thai customers, which makes us afraid that we may be infected by foreign customers. I believe we should continue to provide this quality of strict service in terms of sanitation, whether during or after COVID-19, to ensure that both Thai and foreign customers receive the same level of service. Although we must work harder, we must increase trust in our clients' service,”* Expressed by S3.

*“Before to the COVID-19 crisis, the majority of customers walked-in to use the service. However, during the COVID-19 crisis, customers will call to inquire whether the service is being used by a large number of people or not. They will not come if there are too many people.”* Expressed by S2.

The most significant service challenge during COVID-19 is convincing customers to trust massage and spa services. This massage and spa use daily cleaning and disinfection procedures to ensure customer safety during COVID-19, but the issue now is that the majority of customers are unaware of the measures taken by the massage and spa to ensure customer safety.

“While serving customers and offering promotions or discounts are not difficult, the most difficult and time-consuming aspect is convincing them to trust our service, desire to use it again, and keep uninfected by COVID-19 here. For the solution, we must plan for cleaning measures in the back-end, but the front end must consider how to educate customers about the steps we take to keep the service safe for them to use. For instance, customers are unaware that we clean and change the bedsheets daily, while other massage and spa places use reusable towels to cover the face pillow, we use single-use paper, and many customers are unaware that we change it after each

customer uses it. Every time we serve the next customer, we spray.” Expressed by O1.

*“I deal with two types of customers: those who are really concerned about COVID-19 and others who are not. I’m afraid of customers who are unconcerned with COVID-19 because I have to go home after work to be with my family, and I would not want to serve customers who are careless. I used to recommend preventative measures to customers, but if they are unwilling to follow my advice, they will ignore me entirely,” Expressed by S2.*

Furthermore, they face difficulties managing and serving a large number of concurrently booked customers on some days. Even so, this massage and spa has never had a customer infected with COVID-19. When customers come to use the service under this sort of situation, they generally understand the severity and comply effectively.

“There is a minor issue with the back-end; at times, when a large number of customers arrive at the same time, we are unable to serve them effectively; however, other factors, such as social distancing, wearing masks, or customers being unable to open the mask and drink or eat food while waiting, are not an issue. Customers fully understand this situation. I am still stressed every day since, despite the fact that we are a service business, our team must maintain close contact with customers. As a result, I must manage this risk and hope there is no COVID-19 infraction here. I spoke with other massage and spa businesses, and they stated that no one infected COVID-19 at a massage or spa, but rather at bars, pubs, and some other public locations, therefore I believe that when we were forced to temporarily close due to government policy, it was not fair to us. Another issue is

that massage therapists are required to wear masks when working with customers. This causes them to become fatigued more quickly, which is especially for older massage therapists. I do not yet have a firm plan for this, but for the time being, I will simply give the elderly massage therapist more rest time.” Expressed by O1.

For additional services to increase confidence in cleanliness for customers, the massage and spa has an ATK test kit for customers who want to check before entering, a temperature measurement, alcohol gel, a mask for customers who don't bring or need two layers, and a selection of massage points that customers want to avoid for some customers who do not want the staff close to their faces.

*“Our massage and spa center follows to high safety standards. All staff have gotten at least two vaccinations and will be tested for COVID-19 using the ATK test right before serving customers. This reopening must place a high value on safety in order to regain confidence. To help in purifying the air inside the massage and spa, Additionally, I purchased a ULV electric sprayer for roughly 20,000 baht to destroy germs daily to ensure this location is safe for service. Customers who wish to use the service during the COVID-19 situation must make a reservation by Facebook, Line, or phone call; I have suspended walk-in service for the time being, and maybe permanently, if this move enables customers to feel comfortable while using the service. We therefore enhance customer security by providing an ATK test kit for customers who wants to check prior to entering the service, conducting temperature checks, providing alcohol gel at convenient locations, and also providing free masks for customers who do not bring or would like to wear two layers for peace of mind prior to using the service.,”* Expressed by O1

They will continue to adhere to preventative measures service standards after the COVID-19 incident. They feel that after this, customers who come to use the service expect not only massages and spa treatments, but also service that is clean, uncrowded, and disinfected before and after service. and additional services that contribute to the customer's comfort when using the service. COVID-19 has raised the bar for service standards, as this incident radically changed customer behavior.

*“For the post-COVID-19 period, it will be more difficult since customers will expect more than just massage therapy or spa treatments; they would expect a higher level of hygiene each time they use the service. Therefore, we cannot return to normal service as it was prior to COVID-19; instead, we must maintain a high standard of hygiene indefinitely, because if we return to the old service as it was prior to the COVID-19 crisis, customers will believe that our standard has dropped, as they will be familiar with service strategies used during COVID-19. One customer told me that "your massage and spa center is similar to others in terms of massage therapy and spa treatments because those things are determined by the massage therapist and most of them pursue the same standard, but what factors that set you apart and makes you better than other places is the way you care for your customers through your service and the cleanliness of the space."*,  
Expressed by O1.

There was two customers who was a customer of a massage and spa before to COVID-19 and continued to use the service during the COVID-19 period because they believed in the massage and spa's hygiene measures. These two customers are loyal customers and have always received excellent service. Additionally, the business owner takes care of consumers on a daily basis, both before and throughout the COVID period, demonstrating trust in the care of service

*“I visit twice a month to use massage services. I have been a customer at this massage and spa for around four years. Every time I come to use the service, the owner of the shop is always present to serve alongside the staff. There is a high level of service, which includes using umbrellas to pick up customers from their cars, providing uncrowded waiting areas, and serving beverages and snacks. However, having several staff can give an appearance of disorder. After the massage and spa reopened, I had the same level of confidence in using the service as I did previously because to my trust in their service. In fact, I have no idea what the massage and spa measures are because there is no mention of them on social media. However, when I spoke with the owner of the massage and spa, I learnt that they do ATK checks weekly and also provide a test kit for customers who wants to check, sanitize, and disinfect the massage area prior to and following service. Additionally, having the entire business sanitized before and after hours increases my confidence in continuing to use the service. However, I believe that other customers who are unaware of the massage and spa's measures would avoid using the service out of fear of spreading the disease. I also believe that the service that has changed throughout the period of COVID-19 has one positive aspect for customers: cleanliness and lack of overcrowding while using the service and I would advise them to maintain this level of service even after COVID-19,” Expressed by C1.*

*“I come at the beginning and middle of each month. I'm not sure how long I've been a customer here, but it dates all the way back to the pre-COVID-19 pandemic. I visited other massage and spa places as well, but only here did I witness the owner personally providing service and paying close attention to things such as COVID-19*

*prevention measures and cleanliness. That is why I return here during COVID-19 and am quite satisfied with the service. I believe that there is no need to change the seats in order to create additional space, as the seats that they alter are already very far apart from other customers. Additionally, and this is something that no other place has done, the staff here will bring an umbrella to pick up at the car when you arrive to use the service. ATK inspections, masks, and cleaning are performed at several intervals during the service, including before and after customers use it. I believe that the benefit of service during COVID-19 is that we are receiving cleaner and safer service, which provides us with peace of mind if we come to use the service during a crisis and wish to continue doing so. However, if possible, I'd like them to increase the amount of space available for customers to sit and eat snacks for additional service. It could be a public space,"*  
Expressed by C2.

Another customer who visited this massage and spa a few times before to COVID-19 expressed doubt that he would return during the COVID-19 period. However, he returned to use the service due to frequent back-pain and heard many people mention that the service is excellent, safe, and strict about the number of customers allowed per hour, so he return to use the service, but remain concerned about COVID-19 as before.

*"I was only here a few times prior to COVID-19, but I've been coming here about once a month recently because the work I do frequently causes me back pain. Indeed, I am still concerned about contracting COVID-19 when I use the service, as anything is possible in this situation. However, due to my pain and hearing from others that the treatment here is excellent and adheres to stringent preventative measures, I returned to use the service, but I am still concerned, when*

*to make use of the service. However, based on what I observed, both the staff and the owner genuinely care about the service. However, there is one thing that I believe should be improved: the presence of too many staff in the customer waiting area. I'd prefer the company to plan the size of the workforce at each service point to avoid overcrowding, as this decreases the risk of infection,” Expressed by C3.*

## Location 2

This is the first day spa in Phuket, opened in 1998. Along with offering both health massages and spa treatments, there are numerous areas that help customers relax, since this massage and spa establishment is located directly on the waterfront. Foreign customers represent approximately 60% of the total, while Thai customers make up approximately 40%. Therefore, during the country's shutdown, massage and spa businesses lose more than 50% of their income, and the government's temporary closure measure means no income at all. Although business would resume normally after that and foreign tourists would be able to use the service again, 40% of Thai customers lost more than half of their business due to concerns about the pandemic.

*“I have been running this massage and spa for 22 years, through both the economic bubble and the tsunami, and I've never had such a loss of customers and income. Not only do people not want to spend money, but no one wants to use services that need direct contact with others, which is a condition we never expected. While foreign customers' behavior may not change significantly when they use the service, Thai people are extremely concerned about whether the procedure of providing massage and spa services is strict and safe. We had some time during the shutdown order to figure out*

*how to adapt the service. When it reopens, we hope that Thai customers will believe in our standards of hygiene. We take temperature readings upon entry, disinfect daily after closing and daily before opening, change bed linens daily, and limit the number of foreign customers to help control the pandemic, as the majority of foreign customers who return to Thailand are unaware and concerned about the COVID-19 situation, and we are hopeless to tell them to adjust or change their way of thinking. As a result, the only method to accomplish this is to limit the amount of customers per day,”* Expressed by O2.

*“I have been a massage therapist for 13 years and have never once in my life have I thought that customer service had to be so difficult. Many loyal customers that existed prior to COVID-19 disappeared during the COVID-19 disaster. Additionally, new customers have extremely high expectations for the hygiene of service. Some customers are so cautious that they ask me to clean the seats and massage beds before touching it, while some are careless, refuse to wear masks, and do not maintain a safe distance, which makes worried consumers feel insecure and discourages them from returning to use the service again,”* Expressed by S4.

During the COVID-19 situation, all staff members are required to work additional duties in addition to their regular duties because staff members quit to seek other jobs and it is difficult to find replacements. Everyone must help each other in order for the massage and spa business to survive after resuming service. The fact that owners do not meet with staff as frequently as they should to discuss issues is part of the problem. This results in the organization adapting slowly and unsystematically.

*“Numerous staff have submitted resignation requests in order to seek employment elsewhere. When it reopens, it is critical that I require all staff members, including massage therapists, to perform tasks that are not their responsibility, such as massage therapists welcoming and serving customers at the waiting area, the receptionist helps in cleaning and disinfecting various areas, and I am required to come out more frequently to take care of customers on my own, which clarifies the situation because I have never taken care of customers on my own before. I've never met with staff seriously to inquire about daily service issues and must admit that I missed a lot because, when this occurred, I didn't have time to prepare and develop a service strategy to handle it because I wasn't aware of the true nature of the issue,”* Expressed O2.

*“My main responsibility was massage, but my employer asked me to help with customer service during the reopening period. It was initially confusing because we had not planned for cross-functional service at the time, but we are constantly adapting to the issues we found in order to improve. Although it is not the finest, it convinces customers and encourages them to use the services, therefore we are quite satisfied,”* Expressed by S4

*“My main responsibility is as a receptionist, but I also help in cleaning and disinfecting after customers use the service. To be honest, I wasn't first satisfied with overworking and earning less money in this manner. However, when I consider what our industry is going through, and even if I didn't have a job at the worst of the COVID-19 outbreak, I continued to do my job. However, I feel that the employer should listen to the issues that employees have on a daily basis, both with*

*customer service and with other responsibilities, because if the back-office system is more structured, customer service will be more fluent. Additionally, being speedier can eliminate certain unnecessary stages and provide customers with greater peace of mind,”* Expressed by S5

*“My main responsibility was massage, but my employer asked me to help with customer service during the reopening period. It's tough and extremely nervous at the same time, as I rarely encounter customers outside of the massage parlor. Usually, the massage therapist's primary role is to deliver massage; it is not required to provide additional customer service such as giving water or proposing massage courses,”* Expressed by S6

The most significant service challenge during COVID-19 is adapting service strategies to fit the behavior of both Thai and foreign customers, because Thai customers are extremely cautious and concerned about COVID-19, whereas foreign customers are careless and ignore preventative measures in this situation.

*“The most challenging part is figuring out how to use the service strategy to meet the needs of both Thai and foreign customers, because while most foreigners who come to use the service are careless and unconcerned about Covid-19, such as an overly strict service, Thai people are more cautious and concerned about whether our service will be safe or not. As a result, I'm unsure how to adjust services to varied customer behaviors. For instance, foreign customers may enter without washing their hands with alcohol, and someone refuse to wear masks,”* Expressed by O2.

*“When I serve foreign customers, I feel calm because foreign customers are less concerned with the service than Thai people are,*

*but I also feel worried because they do not adhere to preventive measures such as not wearing a mask while using the service and smoking in a non-smoking environment, which affects other customers. However, not all foreign customers are like this. I've advised on social distancing and wearing masks, but they occasionally disregard me, and I'm at a loss for what to do, as we don't bring up the subject as frequently as we should within the organization,”* Expressed by S5.

There are few service issues; rather, it is a matter of adapting the service strategy to different customer behaviors. The primary issue is persuading customers to trust in clean procedures when using the service. Also, they currently do not have a fixed service strategy in place for the post-COVID-19 period because they believe that implementing disease preventive measures into the service will suffice to provide customers.

*“As I have stated, the service issue is how to adapt the service to the needs of customers that have varying levels of concern about COVID-19. However, my primary concern at the moment is that regardless of how effective our preventive efforts are, they will never be able to convince every customer that they will return to use the service. While some groups are confident and return to use the service, there are others who wish to attend massage and spa activities but are concerned about cleanliness and sterility for fear that the virus may spread to others at home. In fact, I have no plans for post-COVID-19 service since I want to assess the situation on a daily basis because our customers are fairly different and exhibit a wide variety of behaviors, I believe that including disease preventive measures into our services would be the greatest solution for the time being,”* Expressed by O2.

*“I’m not at comfortable serving customers who do not wear masks, such as when advising massage programs and spas that need interaction, which makes me more nervous than when I’m providing them a massage. I want organization to be more stringent with the customers when it comes to aseptic procedures or screening customers prior to allowing them to use our service. This is because employees face direct risks on a daily basis, and I want businesses to do more to protect us,”* Expressed by S6.

*“I am mostly a receptionist, not a massage therapist. All I have to do is welcome customers, take them to waiting areas, advise and give massage and spa programs, bring snacks and refreshments, and clean and disinfect the areas prior to beginning customer use of the service. There are few service issues, but one that some customers dislike is the scent of cleaning alcohol, which we addressed by providing an open seating area,”* Expressed by S5.

*“I’ve been working here for around 13 years. Now that I’ve been infected with COVID-19 and am required to wear a mask while giving massage and spa treatments for customers, my issue in service is that I get tired easily; sometimes, customers complain that the massage isn’t as strong as it used to be. I believe that the organization’s current measures are sufficient for this time period, however personal problems with employees can damage the organization’s reputation. I’d like the organization to have a strategy in place to resolve this issue as well,”* Expressed by S4.

All three customers interviewed had previously used the massage and spa’s services prior to the implementation of COVID-19. Although all three are concerned and

scared of being infected with COVID-19, they have recently returned to use the service in order to relax and relieve pain in their bodies.

*“I've been a customer here for around three years, just prior to COVID-19. I enjoy this place because it is surrounded by a large area of natural beauty. It's an excellent spot for family relaxation. This establishment has been well-known for a long period of time, and I came here to determine whether the service was truly excellent. Before the government ordered the closure of all massage parlors, I couldn't get a massage anywhere. When this establishment reopened, I rushed to make a reservation to return to use the service, but I came alone because the others at home were still hesitant. Even though I came to use the service, I'm still fearful and unsure of the prevention measures in place, and I'm afraid that I'll infect COVID-19 and spread it to people at home, whether intentionally or not, but when I was finished, I returned immediately, without snacking or sitting as I had done previously. As disinfection and the use of alcohol are not unique to this place, I would like to urge that massage and spa services expand their services for screening customers prior to their visit, because today, you can just call to reserve and then go in to use the service. The benefits of service during COVID-19 also include the fact that everyone is more cautious, both staff and other customers, and that services that were not available before during COVID-19 are now available, such as alcohol at each spot, but it would also increase the cost of massage and spa,” Expressed by C4*

*“I attend the most of spa services, including facials and body scrubs. I'm truly afraid and concerned, especially when doing a facial spa because I'm unable to wear a mask and even if the organization*

*has disinfected the bed and various points prior to and after using the service, what I need to be as close to as possible and cannot disinfect constantly is the spa staff. I would be more satisfied if the organization had a process in place for disinfecting staff more frequently before serving customers, as everyone has a potential to be infected during the day. I don't see the benefit of service during COVID-19 because, prior to COVID-19, massages and spas provided a greater variety of snacks, I felt more relaxed due to the aroma of the aroma rather than the occasional smell of alcohol, and having to wear a mask in such a relaxing environment is very inconvenient, but I understand that it is necessary due to my own fear of COVID-19," Expressed by C5*

*"I like this place because of the beautiful nature. Prior to COVID-19, I visited frequently, maybe 2-3 times a month. However, during the COVID-19 pandemic, I came just once a month out of concern for being in close proximity to other people and infecting COVID-19. For me, there is no social distancing issue here because it is both enclosed and outdoors, and thus I am not forced to sit with others. However, because this omicron strain is easy to catch and much faster than other species, I am concerned about coming to use a service with a large number of people, both customers and employees. The service is quite good here, from the welcome through the foot washing and massage. The staff is constantly wearing masks, and witnessing the staff disinfect the beds before to the service adds to my appreciation. I believe the service and preventative efforts are sufficient, however the issue is that each customer's concern is different. If I were to recommend it, I would prefer to preserve service standards similar to those observed during the COVID-19 period in the*

*future, as customers gain significantly more from cleanliness than they did prior to COVID-19,” Expressed by C6.*

### Location 3

This massage and spa establishment is two commercial buildings located on the roadside. It began operations two years prior to the COVID-19 and has already lasted about four years. This massage and spa has never been struck by a natural disaster. During the government shutdown, owners helped their employees in finding temporary part-time job and avoiding job loss. The majority of customers are teenagers or working adults, both Thai and foreign. The service area is fairly constrained. The reception desk and the waiting area are located in the same section. There is no distinct massage and spa area like there was in the prior two. After reopening for service during the COVID-19 time, the same customers still come back to use the service, but what is missing a lot is new customers and existing customers who come to use that service occasionally, not often as before, consequently, the income is considerably reduced.

*“I have never encountered or faced any complications as a result of disasters in the four years that the service has been open. However, because we are a small business, we frequently exchange ideas with employees after the shop closes. As a result, we are quite adaptable to changing circumstances, as existing customers who began using the service prior to COVID-19 continue to do so, even if the service is not digested as it was prior to COVID-19. However, what was missing was a new customer. I believe that existing customers who have been here know the measures in place, but new customers who have never been may be afraid to try anything new during the COVID-19 outbreak. I lost only one source of income during the*

*government shutdown, but with staff, the only way to earn money was to find part-time jobs for staff to work throughout the closure, which I was able to accomplish until the business could reopen. However, as I previously stated, the situation has altered and revenue has diminished,”* Expressed by O3.

The challenge here is that, in addition to preventive measures, they seek new service strategy to reduce the spread of COVID-19 in such confined spaces and to increase customer confidence.

*“I believe the most challenging part will be implementing a new service that will instill confidence in our consumers regarding access to this massage and spa facility with restricted area. At the moment, our massage and spa facility adhere to stringent safety standards. All staff have had three vaccinations and, prior to serving customers, will undergo a Covid-19 test using an ATK test kit. We have alcohol at the entry and massage and spa rooms, as well as a mask service for customers. We also offer pre-booking services. This reopening following the government shutdown was expected to cover all aspects of security in order to rebuild customer confidence, but it did not appear to be very effective due to a lack of new customers,”* Expressed by O3.

*“The challenge for me is when providing facial spa services, since customers who visit the spa during COVID-19 are already concerned about touch, particularly on the face, which I am afraid will grow to the point that customers will feel uncomfortable when serving,”* Expressed by S7.

*“Actually, there is nothing more challenging for me than the pre-Covid-19 service. Simply be more cautious during the service, whether it's distance or picking things up. However, if the most obvious obstacle is the speed with which something can be provided or the elimination of some services that require proximity to the consumer, such as washing their feet, urge the customer to serve themselves, which they understand,”* Expressed by S8.

*“Providing customer service prior to receiving a massage and then having to massage customers is a very challenging day-to-day job, but most customers understand, even if there are occasional misfires,”* Expressed by S9.

This massage and spa rarely has service issues. If there are any problems, there will be a few since the owner will talk with every staff after closing time each day to discover the context of the problem and they will collaborate to develop a solution to implement the following day.

*“I'm actually extremely fortunate to have a cooperative workforce, which means there is not much of a problem with the service except for a small amount each day. I will discuss and inquire about problems with all staff after closing time to discover what issues they have on a regular basis or what customers have complained about, in order to help one another in identifying and implementing solutions throughout the day. For example, the customer stated that a barrier should exist between the customer's seat for added comfort when using the service, which we immediately discovered and installed the following day. Speaking with the staff revealed that I had*

*overlooked some details, but that the customers who use the service and the daily service staff will notice more,” Expressed by O3.*

*“I encountered into the few minor issues. Some issues can be resolved by myself, and I will do so. For example, if a customer requests that I change their bedding and spray disinfectant on the area in front of them, I will do so immediately to avoid the inconvenience of employing the service of others. I believe the most difficult part of delivering services during COVID-19 is dealing with customers who have varying COVID-19 worries, as opposed to the pre-COVID-19 period when no one was concerned,” Expressed by S7.*

The massage and spa will continue to incorporate disease prevention measures into their services in the future because they believe that customer behavior will not return to how it was prior to COVID-19 or when customers are less concerned, if the service standard remains high, it will increase the confidence of existing and new customers to use the service more frequently.

*“I believe that customer behavior, whether in massage and spas or other businesses, will never return to pre-COVID-19 levels, as the environment has shifted significantly. Even if COVID-19 is repealed and customers become less concerned, we will maintain the same high levels of service as we do now. We shall maintain sterility and cleanliness to provide customer confidence and peace of mind when returning to use the service. We want to retain existing customers and attract new ones. However, as I previously stated, I speak with the staff daily, and I believe that the rise or decrease in service will be determined by the issues we meet on a daily basis, and we will gradually adjust,” Expressed by O3.*

*“I believe that scheduling a wait to find a less crowded time, following to disease prevention measures, and sanitizing various areas are all appropriate for the service during this time period. I don't have anything else to say because we discuss and resolve our daily conflicts promptly,”* Expressed by S7.

*“Our existing service is fine, but if a new service is added to instill confidence in customers who have never used our service, it will be much better. I'd prefer to retain the current level of service throughout the COVID-19 period because it not only provides piece of mind for customers, but also relieves employee concerns about infection,”* Expressed by S8.

*“I think that we have maintained a high standard of cleanliness in serving our customers, but would like to add unique services to boost customer confidence and further limit the danger of infection. It will be really advantageous for the organization. Additionally, I would want to emphasize that staff should receive service to alleviate concerns regarding COVID-19 when providing massage services, as many staff have families and come to work every day with risks,”* Expressed by S9.

Three customers were interviewed. All three were repeat customers at this massage and spa. They came to use the service during both the pre-COVID-19 and post-COVID-19 periods because they have experienced continuous improvements in this massage and spa's service and are confident that they will return throughout the COVID-19 outbreak.

*“Actually, my house is close to this massage and spa place, making it convenient to use the service. When I first came to use the*

*service, I was impressed with the quality of the service, and the owner has always been polite to customers. It has increased my awe. I am confident that I will use the service during COVID-19 as a result of the excellent service and constant changes based on customer feedback, and I requested that the staff phone and inform me when there was no reservation available and staff always phone to tell me, which gives me the confidence to continue using the service here. I would recommend that this approach be maintained in terms of customer service and preventive measures. However, because I'm unsure whether there will be any issues at peak hours, I can't make any recommendations,” Expressed by C7.*

*“Both the staff and the owner were very impressed. I feel there is always a good standard of service here both before and during COVID-19. There's one thing that I really like, even if it's the smallest detail, because it shows the care in the service. That's the use of good-grade alcohol, because according to the other public I've been to, it's not. The alcohol is very sticky. All other services are in compliance with the disease prevention measures. Personally, I'm pretty satisfied with service during the COVID-19 here. But what I would like to suggest to improve is that some unnecessary service procedures, such as washing feet, should be cut off for the safety of the staff themselves, and the hands that wash the feet must also be massaged on the face. Even though the staff will wash their hands, but they shouldn't have to wash the customers' feet before the massage,” Expressed by C8.*

*“Personally, I think COVID-19 is inevitable. It's a risk wherever you go, plus the massages and spas here have clean and attentive service, so I'm not worried about that. I will come back to use the service. I actually go to massages and spas elsewhere too, but I rarely*

*find a place where the owner cares about service as much as here. Hand washing with alcohol, temperature measurement, emergency masks service, and disinfecting areas, these are enough to provide services during the COVID-19 period, and these are useful for customers who use services during COVID-19 compared to pre-COVID-19. In fact, if I suggest additional services, the organization may have a customer screening measure before accepting reservations. It's a good service, such as checking ATK from home," Expressed by C9.*

