

THE FUTURE OF DINING OUT

GENERATION Z'S RESPONSE TO COVID-19

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding on individuals' comfort and safety levels while dining out during a pandemic, specifically focused on Generation Z.

With COVID-19's appearance, there has been little research done on this topic. However, research has shown that dining-out is still a major priority to the public.

This study provides key information to post-pandemic health and safety trends that should be implemented in order to establish a comfortable dining experience.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology of this research included a survey that was distributed to the general public. The survey included questions with a Likert scale, fill in the blank, and multiple-choice options for a total of 28 questions for participants to complete. This survey was opened on November 17 and closed on December 2, 2020.

PARTICIPANTS

The participants of this study include the staff and students at North Dakota State University as well as individuals interested in completing our survey by using a weblink posted on social media platforms. Any individual 18 years old or older were encouraged to participate.

PARTICIPANTS



492 | TOTAL
 151 | MALE
 329 | FEMALE
 12 | OTHER

- 75% OF PARTICIPANTS WERE BETWEEN AGES OF 18 TO 24.
- 68% OF PARTICIPANTS HAVE AN ANNUAL INCOME OF \$25,000 OR LESS.

DESCRIPTION

Results of this survey indicate that 49% of 18- to 24-year-olds dine out once a week during COVID-19 while 32% chose to not dine out. Dining out with 2-3 people was the most popular answer for how many people they typically dine out with. Of this age group, 72% chose window seating to be their most preferred location to dine, with outdoor seating falling in second place.

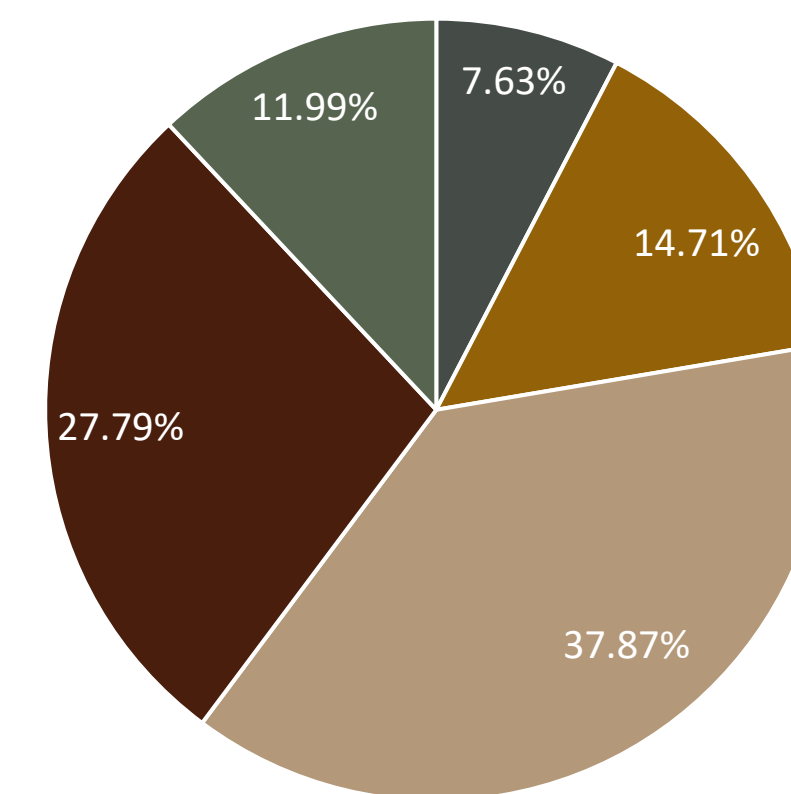
We asked participants to rank factors they consider when deciding on a restaurant to visit; the results indicate that cleanliness is the most important factor with 46% and waiting area size being the lowest with 2%. These results strongly indicate that COVID-19 policies and procedures within restaurants will affect whether a guest dines there or not.



RESULTS

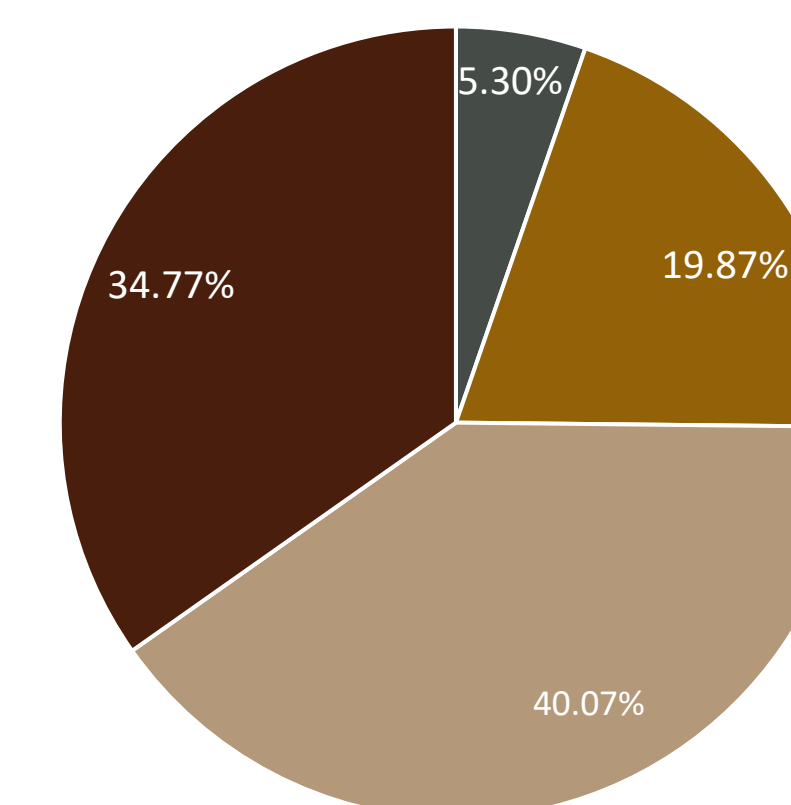
Do You Feel Safe Dining In A Restaurant Today?

- Very Unsafe
- Unsafe
- Somewhat Safe
- Safe
- Very Safe



Would you be interested in eating at a farm-to-table style restaurant?

- Not Interested
- Somewhat Interested
- Interested
- Very Interested



REVIEW OF LITERATURE

COVID-19

"We are clear about the severity of the virus. In the restaurant industry, we get in contact with a lot of people; there is a huge customer flow, so we must be very cautious and raise our risk awareness" (Hu, et al., 2020, p. 9).

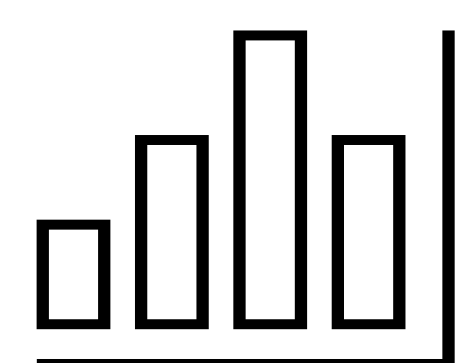
"As staff members adapted their behaviors by complying with new COVID-19 safety measures, it became apparent that such adaptation leads to the final stage of deep compliance – integration with existing work routines" (Hu, et al., 2020, p. 10).

FARM-TO-TABLE

"While some research studies have addressed local purchasing, local farm-to-restaurant relationships and decision making, and various consumer issues, very little work has focused on the hyper-local phenomenon" (Chabert-Rios & Deale, 2016, p. 388).

"Local foods also 'serve as a platform for hospitality operators to create and maintain an authentic blueprint that represents the essence of local cuisines'" (Chabert-Rios & Deale, 2016, p. 388).

TOP CONCERNS WHILE DINING OUT DURING COVID-19



- 1 | CLEANING PROTOCOLS
- 2 | SOCIAL DISTANCING
- 3 | NUMBER OF PEOPLE ALLOWED IN THE SPACE

"Connect the neighborhood to a dining experience in the same way ingredients are connected to food" (edible beats, 2019, para. 1).