

Chapter 11

Supply Chain Resiliency, Efficiency, and Visibility in the Post–Pandemic Era in China: Case Studies of MeiTuan Waimai, and Ele.me

Poshan Yu

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1069-3675>

Soochow University, China & Krirk University, Thailand

Ziqi Liu

Independent Researcher, Suzhou, China

Emanuela Hanes

Independent Researcher, Austria

ABSTRACT

The sudden COVID-19 pandemic had a serious impact on the catering industry, and lockdown policies put a strain on the food supply chain. However, online food delivery (OFD) services have played an important role in the fight against the epidemic in the catering industry. In this chapter, the authors analyzed the development of keywords attributed to supply chains in the academic view by investigating the core selection of Web of Science and China National Knowledge Infrastructure, respectively, and drew keywords cluster graphs of Chinese catering supply chain by using CiteSpace. The contrastive analysis shows that more attention has been turned to supply chain resiliency, efficiency, and visibility in the post-pandemic era. Moreover, this chapter discusses whether and how Chinese OFD platforms contribute to the food supply chain. The results show that these OFD platforms, with domestic policy support, internet technologies, and the ecosystem advantages, have effectively enhanced supply chain resiliency, efficiency, and visibility.

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INTRODUCTION

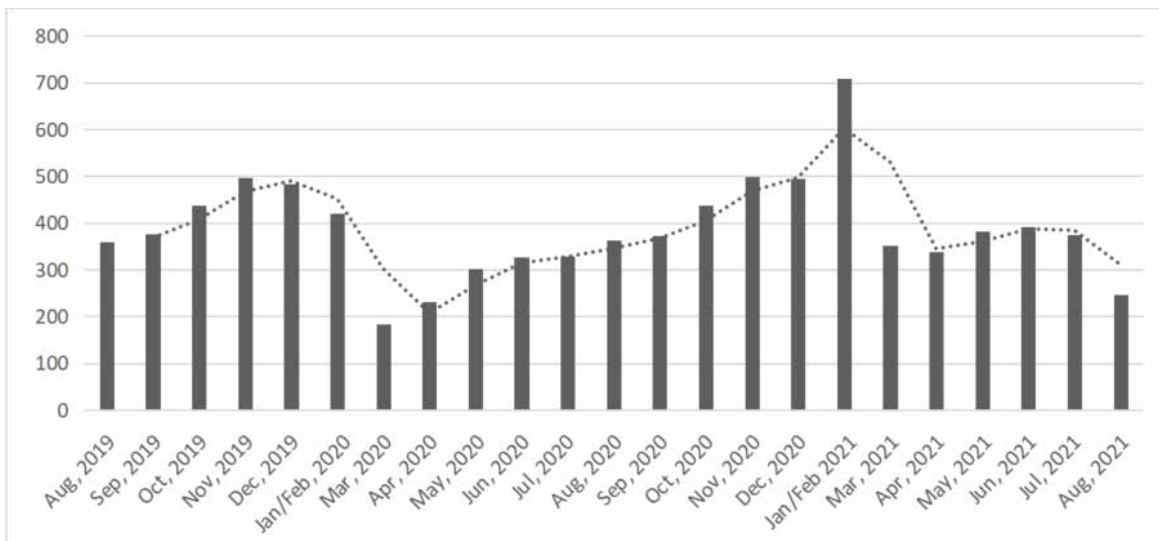
The pandemic caused disruptions in our everyday life, especially in the supply chain of the catering industry for daily-essential products (Abhijit et al., 2021), from the perspective of logistics (Abhijit, 2021) and supply network (Maximo et al., 2020), thus drawing wide attention in the public and business perception (Diana, 2021). According to the definition of European and American “Standard Industry Classification”, the catering industry refers to the catering service organizations for the purpose of commercial profit, which mainly provides supply of food to either events or hotels. However, in China, according to the definition of “Notes on The Classification of National Economy Industries”, the catering industry refers to the service activities of on-site cooking and preparation of food in a certain place and selling it to customers for on-site consumption, which is specifically divided into three types, namely mass consumption market, high-grade catering market and atmosphere catering market.

In this chapter, the authors analyze the supply chain of catering industry, mainly focusing on mass consumption market, namely the online food delivery (OFD) industry, which provides food delivery services and related services primarily for household consumption. As shown in Figure 1, monthly sales revenue and growth rate of the catering industry fluctuated a lot in China from August 2019 to August 2021. It can be summarized that since the outbreak, China’s catering industry has experienced four stages of development: precipitous decline, sluggish consumption, recovery, and relatively stable period (MeiTuan Research Institute, 2020).

However, it is worth noting that, at the beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak, the revenue of the Chinese catering industry suffered a significant drop from ¥419.43 billion to ¥183.2 billion (National Bureau of Statistics of China, 2021), which indicates that the pandemic has hit supply chains hard. Until October 2020, China, as one of the few countries in the world to show early signs of economic recovery (Yue et al., 2021), saw a recovery and positive growth in the catering industry as the epidemic prevention gained momentum, the general situation stabilized and OFD industry continued to penetrate (China Hospitality Association, 2021).

Figure 1. Monthly sales revenue and growth rate of the catering industry in China from August 2019 to August 2021 (in billion yuan)

Source(s): National Bureau of Statistics of China;



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