



## CUSTOMERS PERCEPTION TOWARDS ONLINE CLOUD KITCHEN AND ITS SATISFACTION

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### Abstract:

Online cloud kitchens, sometimes known as virtual or ghost kitchens, are a form of food delivery service in which consumers have their meals produced in a traditional restaurant kitchen and then have them shipped out to their homes or workplaces. In recent years, particularly during the COVID-19 epidemic, the idea has been increasingly popular as more people have begun ordering meals for delivery rather than dining in at restaurants. This trend has contributed to the popularity of the notion. The attitudes that customers have towards online cloud kitchens can shift depending on a number of aspects, including the convenience of the service overall, the meal's quality, how long it takes to deliver the food, how it is packaged, and how much it costs. While some clients might value the ease and convenience of placing their food orders through an online cloud kitchen, other clients might be more partial to the more conventional dining experience that comes with eating in a restaurant. Researchers used a variety of methodologies, including surveys, consumer feedback, and reviews, in order to evaluate the level of customer satisfaction with regard to online cloud kitchens. It is essential for businesses who operate online cloud kitchens to pay close attention to the feedback provided by customers and to take measures to enhance the quality of their service in order to achieve high levels of customer satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Online Cloud kitchen, customer perception, Virtual Kitchen.

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### Introduction:

#### Cloud Kitchen Meaning:

A cloud kitchen is a form of foodservice business model in which meals are made in a commercial kitchen and then delivered directly to clients. This model is also known as a virtual kitchen, ghost kitchen, or dark kitchen. Other names for this concept are cloud kitchen, dark kitchen, and virtual kitchen. The name "cloud" refers to the concept that the kitchen is located off-site, typically in a central area, and that the meals are produced only for delivery. There is no storefront for consumers to physically visit.

The proliferation of online meal delivery companies like Uber Eats, Grubhub, and DoorDash has contributed to the widespread adoption of cloud kitchens, which are experiencing a surge in popularity as a result. In recent years, there has been a discernible increase in the demand for meal delivery services, and cloud kitchens offer an alternative that is not only more flexible but also more cost-effective than conventional restaurant models.

When compared to traditional restaurants with brick-and-mortar locations, cloud kitchens have the advantage of having lower startup costs. This is one of the most significant benefits of using cloud kitchens. This is due to the fact that cloud kitchens do not call for an investment in a physical storefront, which may be a significant expense for eating establishments. Instead, the kitchen may be situated in a more central area, which would result in lower operating and rental expenses. Since there is no requirement for a dine-in area or customer-facing space, cloud kitchens require significantly less investment in equipment and furniture than traditional kitchens do.

The flexibility offered by cloud kitchens is an additional benefit of using them. In order to adapt their offerings to the shifting preferences of their clientele, cloud kitchens are able to rapidly revise their menus and provide a wide selection of cuisines and foods. Because of this flexibility, cloud kitchens are able to adjust to the tastes and preferences of local customers and experiment with new cuisine concepts without being constrained by the requirements of a traditional dining establishment. In addition, this enables a better control over the management of inventory and the expenses of food.

Additionally, cloud kitchens have lower costs associated with their overhead. Cloud kitchens have the potential to save costs associated with rent, utilities, and other operational expenses because they do not require a storefront. Customers will benefit from cheaper prices, while the company will see increased profit margins as a direct result of this development.

Another benefit of using cloud kitchens is having access to the data. Cloud kitchens are able to collect and analyse client data to better their product offers as well as their marketing methods when online orders and delivery are offered. This contains information on the preferences of customers, the frequency of their orders, and the length of delivery delays. Cloud kitchens have the ability to use this information to better cater their menus and marketing efforts to the requirements and requirements of their patrons.

Last but not least, cloud kitchens present prospects for expansion. Cloud kitchens can easily extend their reach by opening new facilities in different areas or working with delivery companies to reach more clients. Both of these expansion strategies are viable options. Cloud kitchens are able to develop their businesses rapidly and effectively as a result of this, and they do it without having to make substantial financial investments.

#### **Benefits of Cloud Kitchen to customers:**

- Convenience is one of the primary benefits that cloud kitchens offer to their clientele, and it is also one of the most appealing aspects of these establishments. Customers can purchase meals online from the convenience of their homes or workplaces, and it will be delivered right to their doorsteps. This eliminates the need for customers to physically go to a restaurant to pick up their orders. This helps save time and effort, which is especially beneficial for people who are constantly on the go and may not have the opportunity to prepare their own meals or go out to eat.
- Variety: Cloud kitchens are able to provide a vast selection of cuisines and foods, making it possible to accommodate a wide range of preferences and tastes. Customers are able to choose from a variety of options and experiment with new culinary concepts as a result, which is not possible in a conventional dining establishment.

- Since cloud kitchens are able to concentrate solely on the process of preparing and delivering food, they are in a position to place a greater emphasis on the product's quality. The food is produced freshly, without the interruptions that come with operating a real restaurant, and it can be brought piping hot and still fresh to the doorstep of the consumer.
- Cost: Because cloud kitchens have fewer overhead expenses than conventional restaurants, they are able to provide customers with more affordable options. The food is still of the same high quality, but it is now available to customers at a lesser price.
- Accessibility Because cloud kitchens can be located in places that are not normally served by restaurants, patrons in these areas now have access to a larger variety of food selections than they previously did.
- Customers have greater access to information about their orders and greater control when they place them online and have them delivered. They are able to connect directly with the restaurant, monitor the progress of their orders in real time, and submit comments regarding their overall experience.

#### **Customers Perception towards Cloud Kitchen:**

The impressions that customers form of cloud kitchens are often heavily influenced by the actual use they make of the service. The ability to buy food online and have it delivered right to the customer's doorstep is a big selling point for many consumers because it saves time and is convenient. Cloud kitchens have the potential for a speedy and uncomplicated method to eat restaurant-quality food without leaving the comfort of one's own home. Customers may have differing perspectives about the taste, freshness, and appearance of the meals; but, the quality of the food itself is a crucial consideration for them. Customers' perspectives on cloud kitchens may also be affected by aspects such as the length of time it takes for their orders to be delivered, the type of packaging they receive, and the cost. While there are customers who would value the personalised and customizable options that cloud kitchens provide, there are also customers who would rather have the traditional dining experience that a restaurant provides. In general, the perspectives of customers regarding cloud kitchens can be convoluted and multidimensional, depending on a range of elements as well as individual tastes.

#### **The following factors are the major influencers for Customers towards cloud kitchen:**

- Customers may appreciate cloud kitchens that use technology to enhance the ordering and delivery process, such as by providing mobile apps for easy ordering, real-time delivery tracking, and digital payment options.
- Customers are becoming increasingly health-conscious, and cloud kitchens that provide nutritious and healthy options may be regarded more favourably. In addition, cloud kitchens that offer gluten-free or vegan options may be able to attract a larger consumer base.
- Customers' perceptions of cloud kitchens may vary based on their branding and marketing. Cloud kitchens with a strong and consistent brand image may be perceived as more reputable and trustworthy, whereas those with indistinct or inconsistent branding may raise red flags.
- Social media presence can play a significant role in influencing customers' perceptions of cloud kitchens. Cloud kitchens with active and engaging social media accounts may be

perceived as more accessible and responsive than those with limited or no social media presence.

### Objectives of the study:

1. To identify the key factors that influence customer satisfaction with online cloud kitchens, including the quality of food, delivery time, packaging, cost, and convenience.
2. To explore the differences in customer perceptions and attitudes towards online cloud kitchens versus traditional dining experiences, and to investigate the potential reasons behind these differences.

### Literature Review:

1. The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact that online brand communities have on the level of customer loyalty in the cloud kitchen business. According to the findings, an active online community representing a brand can have a beneficial effect on the degree to which consumers are loyal to cloud kitchens. This suggests that firms operating cloud kitchens should make investments in the development of powerful online brand communities in order to boost customer happiness and brand loyalty.
2. This study examined the levels of customer satisfaction experienced by customers of traditional restaurants versus online cloud kitchens operating within the meal delivery service industry. Although it was discovered that restaurants and cloud kitchens both provide high levels of customer satisfaction, cloud kitchens were found to have a greater impact on pricing and convenience, while restaurants were found to have a greater impact on the quality of the food prepared.
3. Within the context of the cloud kitchen industry, this study investigated how the packaging design influences the level of contentment experienced by customers. The findings indicated that the design of packaging can have a substantial impact on the degree to which customers are satisfied, with utility, aesthetics, and environmental friendliness all playing important roles. This suggests that enterprises who operate cloud kitchens should give great attention to the design of their packaging in order to maximise the level of satisfaction experienced by their clientele.
4. Within the context of the cloud kitchen industry, this study investigated how factors such as service quality, convenience, and perceived value influence customer loyalty and satisfaction levels. According to the findings, each of the three variables has a significant bearing on the degree to which customers are satisfied with their purchases and how loyal they remain to a brand, with convenience having the most impact. Convenience should be put at the forefront of cloud kitchen businesses' operational priorities if such businesses hope to boost the level of client happiness and loyalty they enjoy.

### Data analysis and Interpretation:

**Table 1 showing the demographic profile of the respondents**

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>Age</b>	Below 20	7	14	<b>14</b>
	21-30	22	44	<b>58</b>
	31-40	12	24	<b>82</b>
	41-50	5	10	<b>92</b>

	50 Above	4	8	<b>100</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	
<b>Gender</b>	Male	26	52	52
	Female	24	48	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents. The sample consists of 50 participants, with 44% falling in the age range of 21-30, followed by 24% in the age range of 31-40, 14% below 20 years old, 10% in the age range of 41-50, and 8% 50 years old and above. In terms of gender, the sample is almost evenly split, with 52% male and 48% female respondents. These demographic variables are important to consider when analyzing the results of the study, as they may impact the respondents' perceptions and attitudes towards online cloud kitchens.

**Table 2 showing interest on purchasing from cloud kitchen of the respondents**

		Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>Interest</b>	Yes	39	78	78
	No	11	22	100
	<b>Total</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	

Table 2 indicates the level of interest of the respondents in purchasing from cloud kitchens. Out of 50 respondents, 39 (78%) expressed their interest in purchasing from cloud kitchens, while the remaining 11 (22%) respondents stated that they are not interested. This suggests that there is a relatively high level of interest in cloud kitchen services among the respondents. This information can be useful for businesses who operate cloud kitchens to understand the potential market for their services and to tailor their marketing strategies accordingly.

**Table 3 Showing one sample t test of various factors influencing customer satisfaction towards cloud kitchen**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	T value	Sig.	Rank
Trust	50	2	0.535	0.756	26.46	0.000	1
Variety	50	1.82	0.720	0.102	17.88	0.000	3
Cost	50	1.86	0.904	0.128	14.55	0.000	5
Accessibility	50	3.02	0.999	0.141	21.36	0.000	2
Service Quality	50	2.24	1.001	0.141	15.82	0.000	4

Table 3 shows the results of a one sample t-test of various factors influencing customer satisfaction towards cloud kitchen. We can conclude that customers are most satisfied with the factor of cost (mean = 1.86) followed by variety (mean = 1.82), service quality (mean = 2.24), trust (mean = 2), and accessibility (mean = 3.02). This indicates that customers prioritize cost and variety while choosing an online cloud kitchen service. Trust and accessibility are also important factors but are slightly less important than cost and variety. Service quality is also significant, but comparatively less important than other factors. The t-values for all the factors are significantly high, indicating that all the factors have a significant impact on customer satisfaction. Therefore, online cloud kitchen businesses

should focus on improving their cost and variety offerings to attract and retain more customers, while also maintaining high levels of trust, accessibility, and service quality.

**Conclusion:**

It can be concluded that the cloud kitchen industry is a rapidly growing sector of the food industry, with a significant potential for business growth and customer satisfaction. The development of powerful online brand communities, attention to pricing and convenience, as well as packaging design, service quality, and perceived value are all important factors that can impact customer loyalty and satisfaction levels. Businesses operating in the cloud kitchen industry should therefore pay attention to these factors and strive to improve them in order to attract and retain more customers and increase their level of satisfaction and loyalty. Overall, these findings can be helpful for cloud kitchen businesses to develop effective strategies and achieve long-term success in the industry. Researchers conclude that the key factors that influence customer satisfaction with online cloud kitchens are the quality of food, delivery time, packaging, cost, and convenience. Among these factors, cost and variety are the most significant factors that customers prioritize while choosing an online cloud kitchen service. Trust and accessibility are also important factors but slightly less important than cost and variety. Service quality is also significant, but comparatively less important than other factors.

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