

EXPLORING CUSTOMER PREFERENCES IN PERSONALIZED FOOD

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BONAFIDE CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that this dissertation entitled “Exploring Customer preferences in personalized food” has been prepared by MEENAKSHI.P.L(Reg. No. 210021069234) , AYANA PREMKUMAR(Reg. No. 210021069221), and SWALAHUDHEEN AYOABI.P.A (Reg. No. 210021069250) under my supervision and guidance in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the Degree of bachelor of commerce of Mahatma Gandhi University. This is also to certify that this report has not been submitted to any other institute or university for the award of any degree. They are allowed to submit this dissertation.

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We , MEENAKSHI.P.L, AYANA PREMKUMAR and SWALAHUDHEEN AYOABI.P.A B.com final year students, Department of Commerce, Bharata Mata College, Thrikkakara, hereby declare that the dissertation submitted for the award of bachelor's degree is our original work. We further declare that the said work has not previously been submitted to any other university or academic body.

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CHAPTER 01
INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Traditional methods are no longer appropriate for the wide range of needs that today's consumers have in the quickly changing field of culinary tastes. Personalized meal experiences have become increasingly important in today's connected society, changing the way people interact with their eating choices. A move toward interactive customization is seen in the transition from conventional chalkboard menus to smooth the industrial growth of food sector, where customers can create meals that are precisely customized to their tastes.

An increasing dependence on customized meal services has been spurred by the explosion of digital platforms, which has been driven by trends including digitization and changing consumer behaviours. Customized culinary experiences offered through both markets and internet channels are in high demand. These days, customers want unique, customized meals, but they also want to feel really satisfied when they eat there.

The food industry is changing, and mobile applications and online platforms are key players in this. Customers can place orders, customize meals, and leave reviews using the interactive and user-friendly interfaces of customized food apps. This technologically-driven paradigm shift in food consumption calls for research into the dynamics of consumer satisfaction in the context of customized foods.

The purpose of this study is to examine the nuances of customer satisfaction in the customized food industry by examining elements like order accuracy, delivery efficiency, and overall dining experience quality. Understanding the effect of personalized foods on customer satisfaction has become crucial as society comes to value these kinds of services more and more. In a world where food options are as varied as customer tastes, this study aims to identify the subtleties that contribute to a satisfying and customized eating experience in the digital era.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Customers can now customize their meals to fit their tastes thanks to the growing popularity of customized food services. Although this method improves the eating experience, there are drawbacks. One major worry is how well customized orders are delivered. Obstacles include things like order accuracy, timely delivery, and preserving the desired quality. Moreover, technological constraints in customization platforms might reduce customers' overall satisfaction. It's critical to comprehend the subtleties of customer satisfaction in the field of customized foods in order to enhance service quality, resolve issues, and maximize the dining experience as a whole. The purpose of this study is to look into what influences local customers' satisfaction with customized

meal services. Specifically, order accuracy, delivery efficiency, and technological dependability will be examined.

1.3 Objectives of study

- To explore the various factors influencing the demand of the customers.
- To learn about consumers' intentions and their satisfaction to purchase customized food products.
- To identify major challenges faced by customers and food industry for customized food preferences

1.4 Scope of study

The study concentrated on the preferences of consumers for individualized food products. In order to meet consumer demands and examine how consumers' food products are becoming more and more customized, it is important to consider their preferences when designing products for specific market segments. Foods and food products have new flavors added to them in response to consumer trends that emphasize convenience, affordability, and taste over customization.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.5.1 Tool For Data Collection

● PRIMARY DATA

The primary data for this study will be collected through survey based approach. The target respondents will include individuals who have purchased personalized food items either through online or offline mode.

● SECONDARY DATA

Second data will be sourced from various sources such as online database, Industry reports, academic journals and reputable books.

SAMPLE DESIGN

● SAMPLE SIZE

The questionnaire was sent to around 200 respondents from whom 160 responses were received. After removing missing values final responses was reduced to 152.

● SAMPLE TECHNIQUE

The questionnaire was shared among friends and family. Mainly among college students. The researchers used convenience sampling for the study.

1.5.2 Data Collection Method

The primary method of data Collection will involves the distribution of online survey to customers who have previously ordered customized food through various platforms.

- STATISTICAL TOOL

The collection data will be analyzed using statistical tool such as percentage method, visual representation of data will be done through pie chart and bar diagram.

- ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Participant confidentiality will be maintained, and collected data will be anonymized to ensure privacy .This comprehensive approach to research and methodology aims to provide valuable insight into the dynamic of customer satisfaction in the realm of customize food .

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- The data collection is exclusive to a specific group of respondents, mainly students. So ,the results of the study cannot be generalized.
- The study is confined to customers within a particular geographic area,potentially limiting the broader applicability of results. Insights derived from a more extensive geographical range could offer a comprehensive understanding of customer satisfaction.

1.7 CHAPTERISATION

- CHAPTER 01

It deals with introduction to topic , statement of the problem, objectives, scope,methodology, limitations etc...

- CHAPTER 02

The second chapter deals with the review of literature done by other researchers on customized preferences in food.

- CHAPTER 03

Third chapter is the theoretical framework.

- CHAPTER 04

It deals with the analysis and interpretation of data collected from students.

- CHAPTER 05

Fifth chapter deals with the findings and suggestion we made after the analysis and interpretation.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 PREVIOUS STUDIES

Anne Kathrin Klesse(2019)- *the secret ingredient is me: Customization prompts self-image-consistent product perception.* The effect of personalization on consumers' opinions of product qualities, such health, is investigated in this study. The study examined many product categories and qualities and discovered that presenting customisation as a simple option or boosting product positioning can reduce its negative consequences.

Han Li, Fen Liao & Pling Qing (2019)- *How Consumers Expertise Influence in Customized Foods.* Though most of them concentrate on the direct impact of customization on purchase intention, the approach of customizing food has generated a great deal of interest among marketing managers and academics. According to current study, food personalization will encourage people to incorporate their expertise into their perceptions of key product qualities. Findings show that food personalization and consumer expertise have an interactive effect on customers' purchase intent.

Oydis Ueland(2020)-*Perspectives on personalised food.* food personalization provides opportunities to improve people's quality of life. The focus of study in the personalized food approach is food, its components, and the potential for diverse processes throughout the food value chain to effect individuals and their needs.

Rodrigues (2021)- Understanding the impact of personalized recommendations on customer satisfaction, likelihood to recommend and repurchase intention. According to the findings, explanation, fit, and trust have a favourable impact on satisfaction with recommendations. Satisfaction with recommendations increases the likelihood of recommending the retailer and increases the possibility of repurchase. According to the report, merchants should focus on delivering individualized options on digital platforms in order to improve consumer connections and happiness.

Odile Streed, (2008)- "Improving customer satisfaction through personalization: the case of fast-food franchises" This essay's goal is to evaluate how customer satisfaction in fast-food franchising is affected by product and service customization. It was intentional to choose fast-food franchises for the empirical research because business-format franchises are generally structured in a uniform way, discouraging deviation from standards. The crucial inquiry is to determine whether customers still demand a certain amount of personalization and whether customization could.

Julien Boudet, Brian Gregg, Kathryn Rathje, Eli Stein, and Kai Vollhard-(2019)-The future of personalization and how to get ready for it Personalization will be the prime driver of marketing success within five years.

Endang Retno Wedowat (2018)-Design for mass customization in food industry: literature review and research agenda summary on Product diversification is a response to growing consumer demands and wants for food products. The application of mass customization (MC) in the food industry is one way to meet consumer demand for product variety.

World Mass Customization & Personalization Conference (MCPC 2017), Aachen, Germany, ,(2018)-A case study of a food manufacturer is carried out to investigate the opportunities and difficulties of mass customization in the food industry. It becomes clear that the case company is having difficulty developing the skills necessary to accomplish mass customization. The difficulties found in this research were lack of product solution space development, inadequate raw material knowledge, manual equipment adjustment, specialized hardware and software solutions and restricted choice navigation. It is evident from the challenges listed above and the paucity of research in this area that additional study is necessary to enable mass customization in the food industry.

Personalised nutrition and mass customization Mike Boland(2008)-In order to promote overall health, affluent society is increasingly turning to personalized nutrition. This paper explores this trend and the possibility of mass customization to enable Personalised nutrition on many fronts.

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2. **Ki-Joon Back& Choong-Ki Lee (2014)**-Determining the Attributes of Customer Satisfaction
3. **R.Fallaize , A.L Macready, L.T Butler,J.E Allis, and J.A Lovegrove(2013)**the possibility of customizing diets based on genotypic, phenotypic, and dietary data has grown,shift from populationbased advising to "personalised nutrition."
4. **AnerTal,YanviGvil,andMotyAmar(20210**The current study shows that people who are trying to achieve a certain identity think food items connected to that identity are better.
5. **Flaherty,SarahJane(2019)**One of the main risk factors for illness is eating an unhealthy diet.Modifying food purchases is a crucial phase in the food consumption process that can enhance the healthfulness of dietary pattern.
6. **Foods 11 (16). 2459,(2022)**-Scholars and marketing managers alike are becoming more and more interested in the customized food approach.

7. **International Journal of Production Research 48 (6), 1557-1574, (2010)**-Businesses are using mass customization more and more to take advantage of consumer trends toward more individualized and varied products.
8. **International Journal of Production Research 48 (6), 1557-1574, (2010)**-Businesses are using mass customization more and more to take advantage of consumer trends toward more individualized and varied products.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Personalized cuisine has become a standard feature of contemporary dining establishments in today's fast-paced and constantly-changing food scene. Customization goes beyond conventional ideas about how food is prepared, giving customers the ability to adjust meals to suit their unique tastes, nutritional needs, and culinary characteristics. This change in perspective reflects a consumer-driven approach to eating where firms aim to satisfy the wide range of needs of their customers and customisation is paramount.

The consumer behavior, service quality, technology adoption, and value co-creation theories serve as the theoretical foundation for this study on customer satisfaction with customized foods. This framework provides a prism through which to see the intricate processes influencing consumer preferences and satisfaction levels in the context of customized dining experiences.

2.2.1 FEATURES

1. Individual preferences and dietary needs are taken into consideration while choosing ingredients.
2. Portion control and flexibility are made possible by adjustable portion sizes.
3. Customized taste profiles accommodate a wide range of tastes, such as savory, sweet, spicy, and more.
4. Inclusivity is ensured through dietary restriction concessions, such as vegan, gluten-free, or allergen-free options.
5. Customers' comfort and accessibility are increased by the easy access to customization possibilities offered by online platforms and mobile applications.

2.2.2 ADVANTAGES

1. Individual tastes and dietary needs are taken into consideration during personalized dining experiences.
2. Helps in developing customer satisfaction.
3. It's a better way to increase and expand market.

4. Giving clients the power and autonomy to choose food with knowledge.
5. Customers will feel valued and appreciated.
6. Enhance customer interactions and build strong customer base.

2.2.3 DISADVANTAGES

1. Operational complexity in handling requests for customization can result in longer processing times and more mistakes.
2. variations in the taste or quality of the product as a result of personalization.
3. For enterprises, striking a balance between customisation and efficiency may provide logistical issues.
4. Possibility of clients feeling overloaded with options developing decision fatigue
5. Disatisfaction may appear when its not done properly.
6. Increase production cost and pricing.

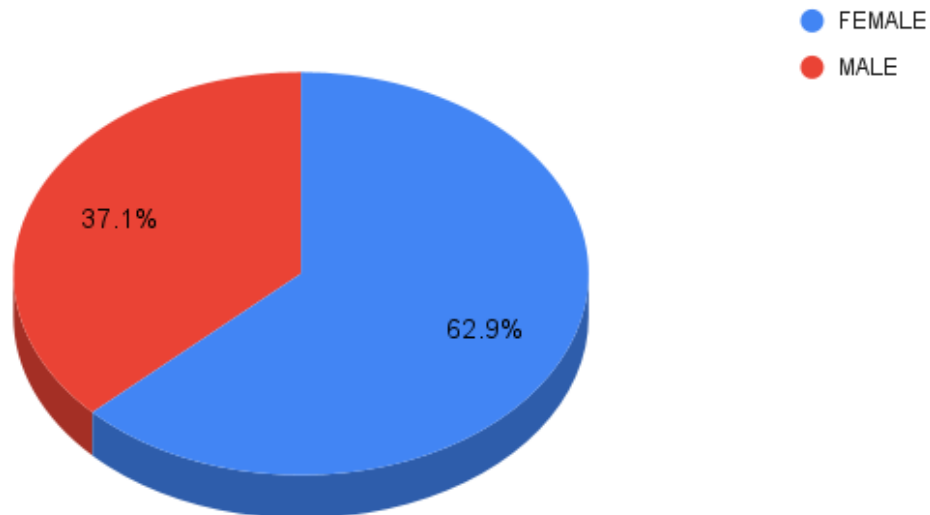
CHAPTER 3

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

3.1 GENDER OF RESPONDENTS

The respondents are classified on the basis of gender as male and female.

GENDER WISE CLASSIFICATION

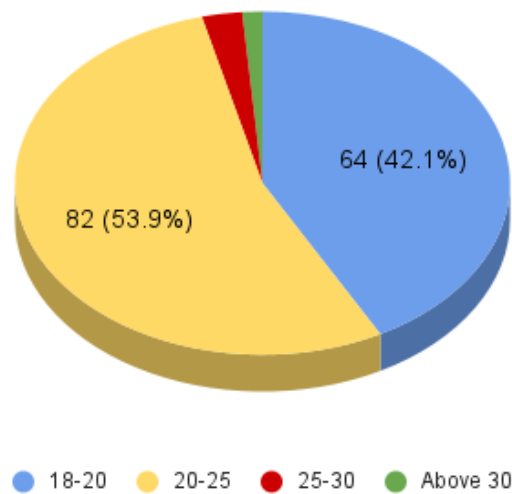


INTERPRETATION:

From the above graph we can see that majority of respondents were of females. They contributed up to 62.4% of total respondents. While male contributed only 37.6% of total respondents.

3.2 AGE WISE CLASSIFICATION

AGE WISE CLASSIFICATION



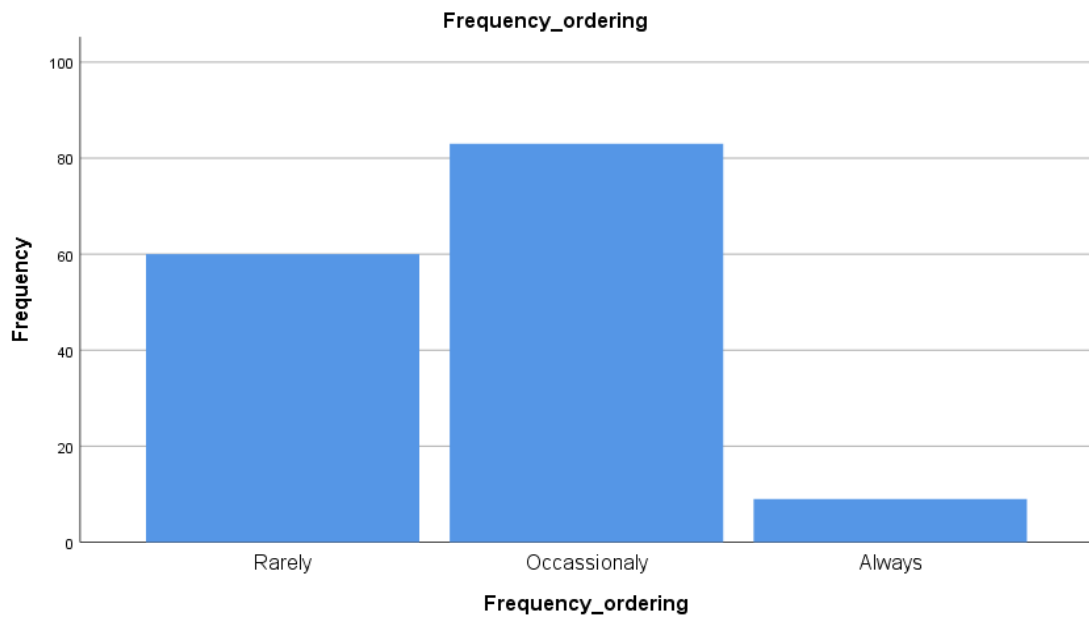
INTERPRETATION:

Out of 153 respondents 53.9% are in age group of 20-25, 42.1% under 18-20, 3% under 25-30, 2% are above 30. Most of the respondents falls under the age group of 20-25.

3.3 RESPONSES FOR FREQUENCY OF CUSTOMIZED FOOD ORDERS

Table 3.1 - Frequency of ordering

	Frequency	Percent
Rarely	60	39.5
Occasionally	83	54.6
Always	9	5.9
Total	152	100.0



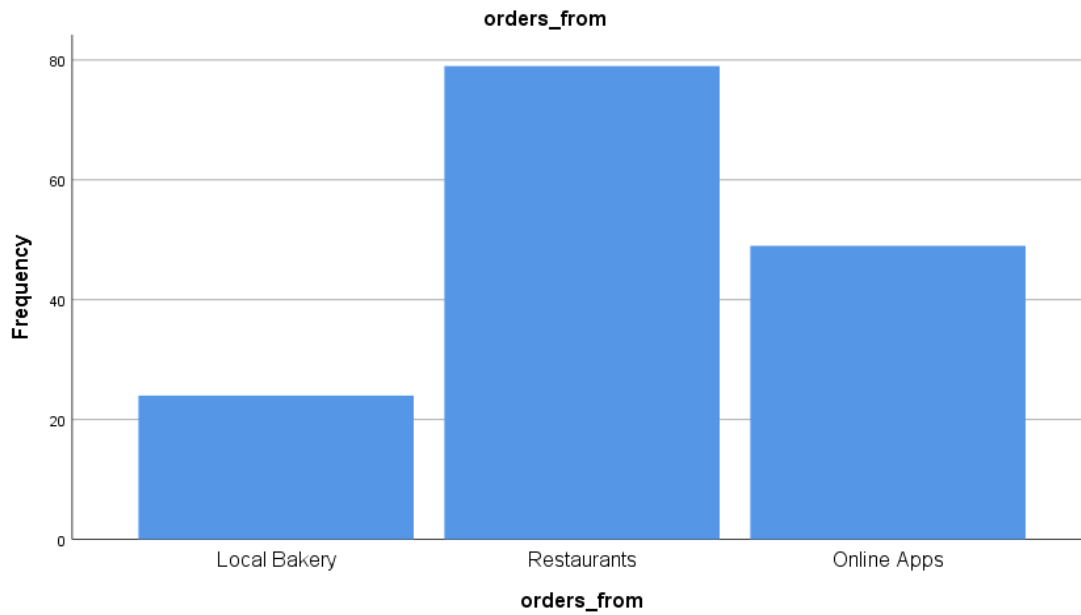
INTERPRETATION:

From the above data we can see that about 54% of customers order or customised food products occasionally. 39% of them rarely order customized food. And only 5.9 %of them always order customized food.

3.4 RESPONSES FOR FROM WHERE CUSTOMIZED FOOD ARE ORDERED

Table 3.2 - frequent orders from

	Frequency	Percent
Local Bakery	24	15.8
Restaurants	79	52.0
Online Apps	49	32.2
Total	152	100.0



INTERPRETATION:

From the collected data 52% customers prefer restaurants for ordering customized food, more than 32.2% opt online apps for ordering customized food options and only 15.8% prefer local bakery. Therefore we can assume that customized options are mostly available in restaurants and customers are satisfied with this.

3.5 LEVEL OF FAMILIARITY OF CUSTOMERS

Table 3.3 familiarity level

	Frequency	Percent
Not familiar at all	13	8.6
Slightly familiar	7	4.6
Somewhat familiar	45	29.6
Moderately familiar	18	11.8
Extremely familiar	69	45.4
Total	152	100.0

INTERPRETATION:

From the collected data above 45.4 % of them are extremely familiar with the available customized options and are frequently consume customized food products. 11.8% of them are moderately

familiar and known with customized options , about 8.6% are not familiar with the customization offers and only 4.6% are slightly familiar with customizations.

3.6 OPINION ON COMPETATIVE ADVANTAGE IN MARKET

Table 3.4 competitive_advantage

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly disagree	3	2.0
Disagree	17	11.2
Neutral	10	6.6
Agree	34	22.4
Strongly agree	88	57.9
Total	152	100.0

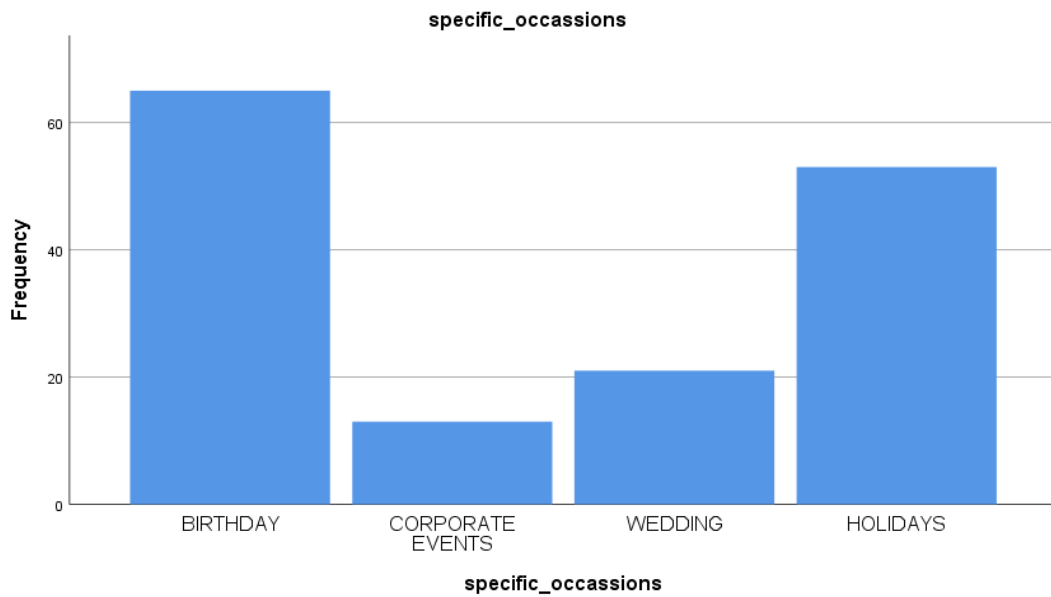
INTERPRETATION:

As per the data collected 57.9% of people strongly agree with the statement of offering customized food products can indeed provide competitive advantage in the market and above 22% agree with this statement, rest 11.2% of them are not agreeing and 2% strongly disagree with the statement.

3.7 OCCASION / EVENTS FREQUENT ORDER ARE PLACED

Table 3.5- specific occasions of order

	Frequency	Percent
BIRTHDAY	65	42.8
CORPORATE EVENTS	13	8.6
WEDDING	21	13.8
HOLIDAYS	53	34.9
Total	152	100.0



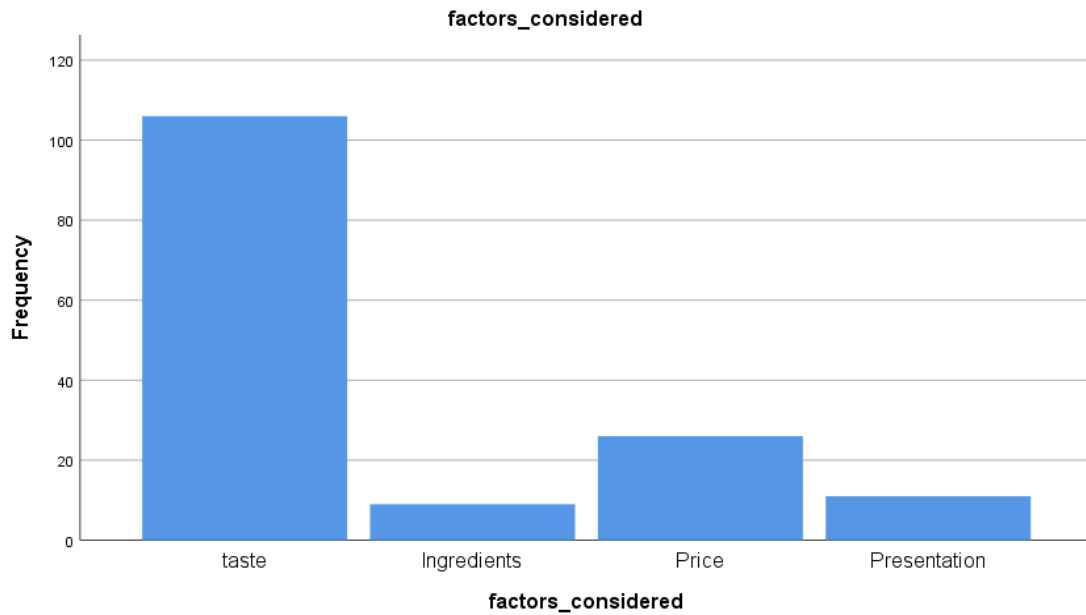
INTERPRETATION:

From the above data we can see that 42% of the respondents order customized foods during Birthday events and 34.9% of them order during holidays and 13.8% during weddings and 8.6% of them during corporate events. We can assume that birthdays are the common occasion where customized food are most frequently ordered.

3.8 FACTORS CONSIDERED WHEN ORDERING

Table 3.6 - factors considered while ordering

	Frequency	Percent
Taste	106	69.7
Ingredients	9	5.9
Price	26	17.1
Presentation	11	7.2
Total	152	100.0



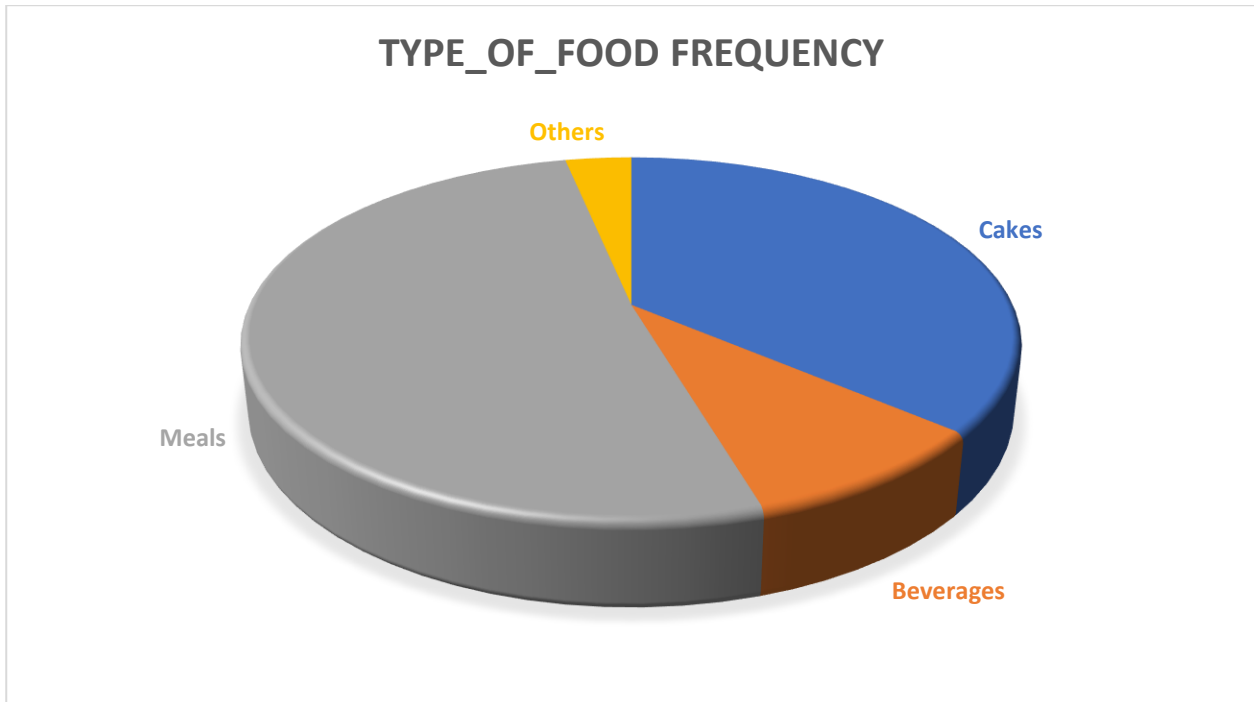
INTERPRETATION:

- From the above data 69.7% of people are considering the taste factor.
- 17.1% of them are considering the price factor as important in ordering each food.
- 7.2% of them respondents repondended that they are considering the presentation factor
- Only few people about 5.9% considered their factor in ordering customized food with ingredients list .

3.9 RESPONSES MOSTLY ORDERED CUSTOMIZED FOODS

Table 3.7 Type_of_food

	Frequency	Percent
Cakes	55	36.2
Beverages	14	9.2
Meals	78	51.3
Others	5	3.3
Total	152	100.0



INTERPRETATION:

Mostly ordered food are customized meals (51.3%) and cakes (36%). Only 9.2% of customers prefer customized beverage options, and 3.35% of customers prefer other customization options. From this we can analyse that people usually prefer to buy more meals.

3.9 RESPONSES FOR RE ORDER LEVEL CUSTOMIZED FOOD FROM SAME PROVIDER

Table 3.8 reorder

	Frequency	Percent
Very unlikely	15	9.9
Unlikely	18	11.8
Neutral	20	13.2
Likely	51	33.6
Very likely	48	31.6
Total	152	100.0

INTERPRETATION:

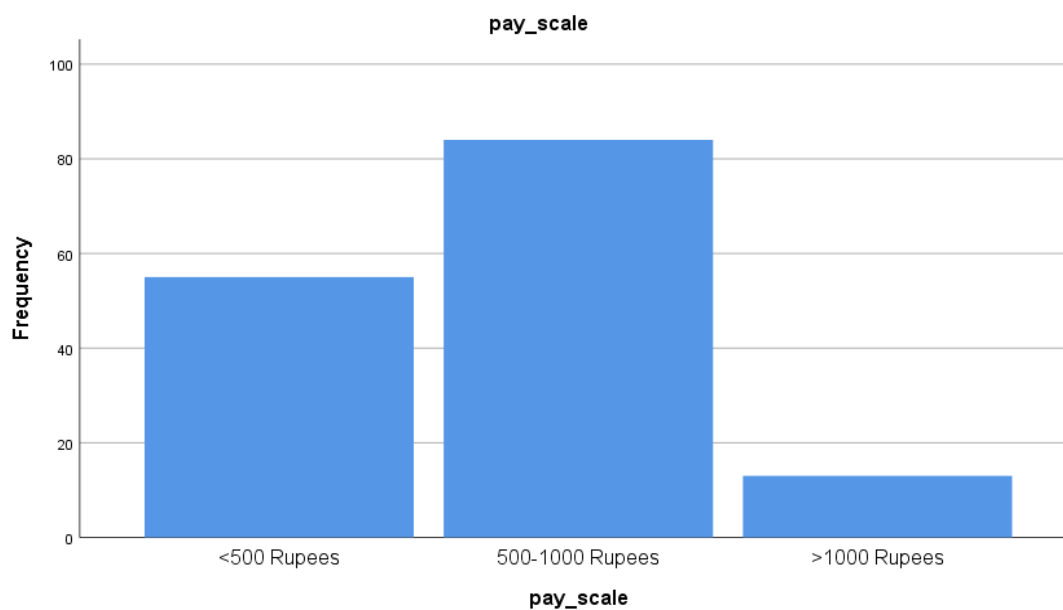
From the above collected data we can conclude that over 33.6% of consumers likely reorder and over 31.6% consumers very likely reorder from same provider. Thus they are satisfied with the

customization options available there, about 13% of them are stating neutral and 11.8% and 9.9% are stating unlikely and very unlikely, this means they are not at all satisfied with the services.

3.10 RESPONSES FOR PAY SCALE OF CUSTOMERS

Table 3.9 pay scale per order

	Frequency	Percent
<500 Rupees	55	36.2
500-1000 Rupees	84	55.3
>1000 Rupees	13	8.6
Total	152	100.0



INTERPRETATION:

The collected data 55.3% of them responded that they spent 500 to 1000 per order of customized food and 36% of them says they are spending less than 500 rupees per order and rest 8.6% of them are spending more than 1000 rupees for a customized order.

3.10 OTHER RECCOMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE

Table 3.10 Recommendations

	Frequency	Percent
Improve quality	17	11.2
Improve online orderings	23	15.1
Affordable price	88	57.9
Enhance customization options	24	15.8
Total	152	100.0

INTERPRETATION:

The data shows that over 57.9% of consumers are stating that affordable pricing can get a huge improvement in customized food options. 15.1% and 15.8% of them state that improvements should be made on online orderings and also increase in customization options in market should be improved. 11.2% of them says quality of products should increase.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

INTRODUCTION

Tailor-made experiences that fit each customer's unique tastes and lifestyle have become increasingly popular with personalized products in today's fast-paced market. Customization is becoming a critical tactic in the food product industry to increase customer engagement and satisfaction. Food producers and marketers who want to innovate and satisfy changing consumer demands must have a thorough understanding of consumer preferences for customized food products. In order to better understand consumer preferences for customized food products, this study will examine a number of important topics, including the importance of customization in consumer food choices, significant influencing factors in purchase decisions, and business implications for providing customized culinary experiences.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Because customized food services are becoming more and more popular, customers can now tailor their meals to suit their preferences. This approach has disadvantages even though it enhances the dining experience. The quality of customized order delivery is one of the main concerns. Order accuracy, prompt delivery, and maintaining the intended quality are a few examples of challenges. Furthermore, a decrease in overall customer satisfaction may result from technological limitations in customization platforms. In order to improve service quality, address problems, and optimize the overall dining experience, it is imperative to understand the nuances of customer satisfaction in the field of customized foods. Investigating the factors influencing local customers' satisfaction with customized meal services is the aim of this study. We'll specifically look at technological dependability, delivery efficiency, and order accuracy.

OBJECTIVES

- To explore the various factors influencing the demand of the customers.
- To learn about consumers' intentions and their satisfaction to purchase customized food products.
- To identify major challenges faced by customers and food industry for customized food preferences

FINDINGS

- The growing demand for personalized food products and emphasizes the significance of implementing innovative methodologies.
- Responses from customers reveal varying opinions about the degree of personalization available; some are pleased with the degree of choice provided, while others bothered about the lack of options or inconsistent product quality.
- It is found that customized food satisfies customers by meeting their specific needs and preferences.
- The demand for customized food items fluctuates based on seasonal trends and special occasions.
- Most of the responses are from youngsters aged between 20- 25
- The majority of the respondents were females.
- Most of the individuals are aware about the requirements of customized food products.
- 60% of the customers are extremely familiar and are frequently consume customized food products.
- Most frequently ordered foods are customized cakes. People usually prefer to buy customized cakes more than any other food products.
- It is found that people purchased customized food products mostly on birthdays and corporate events.
- Most of the customers opt for restaurants to order personalized food items, while also relying on online applications for purchasing customized foods.
- A diverse range of choices for purchasing personalized food items can offer a significant edge in the market, and a large portion of the population strongly supports this idea.
- Compared to other customized products, demand for customized food products has significantly increased over the past decade.
- Most of the people ordering customized food products on the basis of taste, only few of them considering the ingredients.
- Majority of the customers prefer pocket friendly customized food products.
- Customization options in food products will be very much in demand in current market situation.
- Most of the customers are satisfied with the availability of customized food products.
- Out of 153 respondents, majority are in the opinion that customized food products are good for the convenience and it helps to satisfy the needs of the customer.

SUGGESTIONS

- It can be difficult to maintain consistency and quality in products that have been customized, particularly when different ingredients or production techniques are involved.
- The major drawback of customized food products is increasing the price according to their demand.
- Enhancing the visual appeal of the product can raise consumers' perceptions of its worth. Product appearance can be enhanced by attractive labeling, packaging, and presentation to give the impression that it is more expensive and appealing.
- By making customized food products more appealing to consumers who might otherwise be put off by the potentially higher costs associated with customization, offering discounts could in fact increase demand.
- Improving the way customized food products are presented can be a successful way to boost demand
- Personalized food products can be made to stand out from the competition on store shelves or online with improved presentation. Consumers' attention can be drawn to and the product made more memorable by using distinctive package designs or decorative accents.
- Customers can tailor their food products to suit their individual preferences, dietary needs, and tastes by choosing from a variety of options. By allowing for customization, the product appeals to a wider range of consumers and strengthens its value proposition.
- It's critical to balance these disadvantages against the potential advantages and market demand when thinking about customized food products. The availability and demand for customized food products can also be raised by putting into practice efficient methods for cost control, quality assurance, and regulatory compliance.

CONCLUSION

Personalization is also becoming a major trend in the food and beverage industry. Customers want more control over their diets, with recommendations tailored to their goals and health. Because they can be made to fit particular dietary needs, dietary restrictions, and taste preferences, customized food products have a big impact on people. With the availability of customized food products, consumers can better manage their nutrition and match their dietary choices to their tastes and personal health objectives. The growing recognition of the impact of diet on general health and well-being and the growing demand for personalized nutrition serve as further evidence of this importance. Individuals' varied needs and preferences are met by the availability of customized food products, which give them specific options.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE

EXPLORING COUSTOMER IN PERSONALIZED FOOD

1.Name

2.Age

- 18-20
- 20-25
- 25-30
- Above 30

3. Gender

- MALE
- FEMALE
- OTHERS

4.How often do you order customized food?

- RARELY
- OCCASSIONALY
- ALWAYS

5.where do you order customized food from?

- Local bakery
- Restaurants
- Online apps

6.How familiar are you with personalized food available in the market?

- Somewhat familiar
- Slighty familiar
- Moderately familier
- Extremely familier
- Not familiar at all

7.I believe that offering customized food products gives competitive advantage in market

- Strongly agree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

8.How likely you re order customized food from same provider?

- Very likely
- Likely
- Neutral
- Unlikely
- Very Unlikely

9. Are there any specific occasion/events were you often order customized food?

- Birthday
- Corporate events
- Weddings
- Holidays

10.What factor do you consider most when ordering customized food?

- Taste
- Ingredients
- Presentation
- Price

11.What type of customized food do you typically order? *

- Cakes
- Beverages
- Meals
- Other

12. I think the demand for customized food products will increase in the coming years.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

13.How much do you pay for customized food products?

- Below 500
- 500-1000
- above 1000

14. Any recommendation for improving customization in market

- Improve quality
- Improve online orderings
- Affordable price
- Enhance customization options
- All of these

