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Open Kitchen Concept: A Human Resources Perspective Through Chefs

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Dedication and Acknowledgments

During the last 5 years I profoundly gained knowledge around areas that were of deep interest for my personal self and what I intend to pursue in my professional future. First, with my bachelor in Human Resources Management and secondly in the master of Hospitality and Tourism Management, both at ISCTE Business School, the institution I rationally chose to foster this expertise. This university was the definition of home during this period of my life. Home through a new vision of Lisbon city, before quite unknown to me, home in the amazing friends I made and that remain in my life, the plans that were frequent and fulfilled my days, the supporting teachers and all the initiatives organized by the faculty. Holistically, these enriched my years in a sense that is almost inexplicable.

But this master thesis unfolds in a different type of growth. Represents, for now (since my necessity for learning is quite constant), the closure of my academic studies and the passage to a new part of my life, with different challenges and responsibilities.

Even though it is a solo work, I wouldn't have made it alone. First and foremost, I want to express my gratitude to my parents, Sandra and Pedro, for the opportunities that they have provided me. I know I wouldn't be in the same place if it weren't for their support, love and understanding. My gratitude extends to the rest of my family. To my little dog, Samba, who was always ready to uplift me and play whenever I felt frustrated. To some of my close friends, near or far, thank you for the patience, comprehension, advice and companionship throughout this process. Last but not least, I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Maria João Velez, for accompanying me on this journey, for her guidance, honesty and valuable advice, that made possible the completion of this dissertation.

Finally, I want to particularly show my honest gratitude to the 26 chefs that took part in this study. It was an amazing journey to get to know more about your work, challenges, what motivates your experiences and, on a personal note, know more about each one of you. The way you showed interest and helped me accomplish my set of interviews in just 15 days was really a humanitarian experience. Thank you to this community so giving and passionate about their work, themselves as chefs and their colleagues, spread around many places. This acknowledgement is to each and every one of you.

This journey has been challenging but incredibly rewarding, and I am deeply proud of me and grateful to everyone who has played a part in its success.

What's next?

Abstract

Open kitchens make work visible to diners, joining spatial design with social evaluation and potentially reshaping employees' behavior and experience. Addressing a documented gap on chefs' first-person accounts in visibility intensive settings, this dissertation investigates how chefs perceive open kitchens and how this context influences on-the-job behavior, team dynamics, professional identity, and stress management. Therefore, a qualitative, exploratory design study was employed: 26 semi-structured interviews with chefs from restaurants operating the concept and data was analyzed through Reflexive Thematic Analysis.

Findings produced 13 themes where Team Dynamics & Communication emerged as the most salient. Results show that guest visibility tightens front-of-house and back-of-house coupling, compresses coordination under public gaze, and elevates emotion-display regulation. Chefs report dual pathways where visibility can be both a stressor and resource, shaping identity work, resilience practices and retention considerations. Spatial affordances condition flow, error correction and creative performance. Additionally, the results made it possible to identify practical suggestions as it informs HR selection/development (communication under pressure, emotion regulation), scheduling, sightlines and briefings to turn visibility into engagement rather than exhaustion.

Key-words: Open kitchen; Chefs; Human Resources; Team dynamics; Emotional labor; Hospitality operations.

JEL Classification System: L83 Sports; Gambling; Restaurants; Recreation; Tourism

J24 Human Capital; Skills; Occupational Choice; Labor Productivity.

Resumo

As cozinhas abertas tornam visível aos clientes o trabalho habitualmente realizado nos “bastidores”, articulando o espaço com a avaliação social e reconfigurando potencialmente o comportamento e a experiência dos colaboradores. Respondendo a uma lacuna documentada de relatos em primeira pessoa de chefs em contextos de elevada visibilidade, esta dissertação investiga como os chefs percebem as cozinhas abertas e de que modo esse contexto influencia o comportamento no serviço, a dinâmica de equipa, a identidade profissional e a gestão do stress. Assim, adotou-se uma abordagem qualitativa e exploratória: realizaram-se 26 entrevistas semiestruturadas a chefs de restaurantes que operam no conceito, e os dados foram analisados através da Análise Temática Reflexiva.

Os resultados produziram 13 temas, destacando-se Dinâmica de Equipa & Comunicação como o mais saliente. Verifica-se que a visibilidade ao cliente estreita o acoplamento entre sala e cozinha, comprime a coordenação sob escrutínio público e intensifica a regulação da exibição emocional. Os chefs relatam vias duplas em que a visibilidade funciona simultaneamente como stressor e como recurso, moldando o trabalho identitário, as práticas de resiliência e as considerações de retenção. As características espaciais condicionam o fluxo, a correção de erros e o desempenho criativo. Adicionalmente, os resultados permitiram identificar sugestões práticas, informando a seleção e o desenvolvimento em RH (comunicação sob pressão, regulação emocional), o planeamento de escalas, as linhas de visão e os briefings, no sentido de converter a visibilidade em envolvimento e não em exaustão.

Palavras-chave: Cozinha aberta; Chefs; Recursos Humanos; Dinâmica de equipa; Trabalho emocional; Operações em hotelaria.

Sistema de Classificação JEL: L83 Desporto; Jogos de azar; Restaurantes; Recreação;
Turismo
J24 Capital Humano; Competências; Escolha Ocupacional;
Produtividade do Trabalho.

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Acronyms Glossary

BOH: Back-of-House

F&B: Food and Beverage

FOH: Front-of-House

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

HR: Human Resources

I: Interview

Q: Question

RO: Research Objective

RTA: Reflexive Thematic Analysis

Symbols Glossary

%: Percentage

N: Frequency

1. Introduction

1.1. Context and Relevance of the Study

Open kitchens have placed the private production workspace of the chef into the public domain for the customer to view, where culinary craft unfolds under constant guest observation (Graham et al., 2020). This new performing way of cooking shed light not only on trendy kitchen concepts, but also on employee psychology, since this visibility reshapes performance requirements by joining technical execution with continuous behavioral display and emotion regulation toward guests, which can, for some chefs, alter both perceived effort and operational efficiency. In concrete terms, chefs report adapting tone, posture, and communicative cues when working in open kitchens, blending hard with soft skills under customer gaze (Graham et al., 2020).

Despite this new influx of themes refreshing life in the hospitality sector, very little is known about areas related to open kitchen restaurants from an academic perspective. This gap of knowledge is particularly noticeable regarding the chefs' visions, motivations, or negative insights (Alonso & O'Neill, 2010). Subsequent research continues to flag the limited theorizing and employee-side evidence in open kitchen contexts, explicitly noting that prior literature had not reported on workers moving from invisibility to visibility, and calling for further work (Graham et al., 2020; Sırıklı & Seçim, 2024). Against this background of so much potential but little information, the present study investigates the open kitchen concept, exploring chefs' perceptions under gaze.

Recent studies characterize open kitchens as a setting in which customer presence and surveillance reshape how chefs organize their performance space, regulate emotion, and interpret feedback in real time (Graham et al., 2020). According to Özdemir Kaya and Fotaki (2022), this visibility introduces a dual performance, technical execution and behavioral display, reconfiguring expectations of professional conduct and the meaning of doing the job correctly. Within this public view, diners' responses become instantaneous evaluations that can both elevate standards and heighten pressure.

From the market side, the concept has diffused from upscale venues to casual formats, placing executive chefs at counters. For Portugal, the broader salience is underscored by the size and growth of food and beverage (F&B) consumption in the national economy, highlighting the practical importance of understanding how spatial design decisions intersect with employee experience and service outcomes. Households allocate a sizeable share of their

budgets to eating out and hospitality: in the latest Household Budget Survey (2022/2023) “Restaurants and hotels” accounted for 8.6% of mean annual household expenditure and “Food and non-alcoholic beverages” for 12.9%, roughly one-fifth of household spending combined. These figures come from Statistics Portugal’s release on the survey and are corroborated in national media summaries of the INE tables. Complementing this micro view, industry-level revenue data indicate expansion: restaurant sector takings reached approximately €5.4 billion in 2023 (Informa D&B). At the macro level, tourism linked consumption, of which F&B services are a core component, represented about 16.5% of Portugal’s GDP (Gross Domestic Product) in 2023, according to the national Tourism Satellite Account (INE/TravelBI and Portugal’s GEE synthesis), revealing the weight of out-of-home F&B within the economy. In Portugal, the relevance is also macro-economic: the Services Turnover Index rose 4.4% in 2024, signaling dynamism in market services in which restaurant activity is structurally embedded (INE/GEE).. Tourism linked demand also remained robust: official statistics report 31.6 million guests and over 80 million overnight stays in 2024, with tourism receipts reaching €27.7 billion, further amplifying the sector’s strategic weight (INE). This strengthens the importance for examining people management in open kitchens, as workforce practices in these settings directly affect service quality and productivity, necessary to keep up with the demand and the context presented.

From a human resources (HR) perspective, the open kitchen is not merely an architectural choice but a socio-technical arrangement with implications for motivation, well-being, team coordination, and retention (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, 2014; Hülshager et al., 2021). Within this lens, visibility is not just architectural since it alters the motivational and health pathways described by the Job Demands-Resources theory, whereby resources foster engagement and motivation, while heightened demands increase exhaustion and, in turn, turnover intentions (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Empirically, studies of open kitchens document that customer presence reshapes chefs’ practices and behavioral regulation (Graham et al., 2020) and that the format is leveraged to signal cleanliness and transparency to guests, raising the reputational stakes of frontline execution for those on display (Alonso & O’Neill, 2010; Chow et al., 2009).

Against this backdrop, the present dissertation centers the chef’s perspective to unpack how open kitchens shape day-to-day behavior, emotional regulation, coordination with front-of-house, and longer-term professional meanings. It contributes by integrating a people-focused lens with spatial and operational considerations, clarifying when and how visibility

serves as a resource rather than a liability for performance and well-being, identifying factors that may positively affect employee experience. In turn, such developments could lead to more and better consumer engagement, influencing positive word-of-mouth, with potential benefits for restaurants' bottom lines. In addition, information gathered could assist professionals such as restaurant designers in identifying new directions for kitchen and restaurant design, thus further contributing to customers' dining experience. Finally, new information on the open kitchen motivations could be of much use to other agencies or small hospitality businesses who are looking for development in terms of retention and engagement, making their efforts to improve the hospitality industry's standards. In summary, this venture into research brings addition on consumers, employers, employees and the hospitality industry.

1.2. Research Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this dissertation is to investigate the perception and opinions of chefs that work in an open kitchen concept and how this context can interact with their work behaviors, operationalized into a set of focused lines of inquiry that mirror the gaps identified in prior work. Currently, literature lacks a comprehensive exploration analysis of what the actual perceptions and impacts brought by working in an exposed kitchen environment are, particularly through the chef's lens. Examples of recent authors explicitly highlight this gap: Graham et al. (2020) argue that the literature had not reported on employees who transition from invisibility to visibility in open kitchens, and a 2024 narrative review reiterates the need for further empirical work on chefs' experiences in such settings (Sırıklı & Seçim, 2024). Therefore, this dissertation aims to fill this gap by examining how chefs manage the physical and sensory environment of open kitchens and how these conditions transform workplace behavior, addressing limited first-person accounts of sensory rituals and emotional responses noted in existing literature. It further explores how exposure to customers shapes behavioral regulation and interactional style, building on but moving beyond broad claims about visibility to document emotions and identity shifts during guest encounters. The study then considers how open kitchens alter team dynamics and communication by compressing coordination under public gaze, a topic where fine-grained, exploratory detail remains sparse. Finally, it investigates how this setting influences chefs' professional identity, stress navigation, and appraisals of challenges and opportunities that are distinctive to visibility-intensive service.

With this background and purpose, there is one lead question: *“How do chefs working in Open Kitchen settings perceive this concept, and in what ways does that context influence their on-the-job behavior?”* and six research objectives to properly answer it, bringing new insights to literature:

RO1 - Explore how chefs experience the physical and sensory environment of Open Kitchens and how these can transform their workplace behavior.

RO2 - Examine the perceived opinions of Open Kitchen exposure on work behaviors.

RO3 - Investigate how an Open Kitchen concept alters team dynamics and communication in-house.

RO4 - Understand how the experience of working inside an Open Kitchen restaurant influences chefs' identity.

RO5 - Get in touch with how chefs navigate through stress in Open Kitchens and how they perceive it in a different context of dining.

RO6 - Identify challenges and opportunities chefs associate with Open Kitchens work environment.

1.3. Dissertation Structure

To accomplish the aim and objectives, the present Master Thesis is developed in the form of a dissertation and is structured into five comprehensive chapters: 1. Introduction, 2. Literature Review, 3. Methodology, 4. Results, 5. Discussion and 6. Conclusion. The opening chapter introduces the research topic, outlines the context, and emphasizes its relevance. Chapter 2 reviews the literature across five strands central to the open-kitchen context: the physical and sensory environment; customer interaction and emotional labor; team dynamics and communication; chef identity and professional meaning; and stress, burnout, and coping. Chapter 3 presents the methodology, including participant characterization, data-collection procedures, the analytic strategy (Reflexive Thematic Analysis), and quality/ethics safeguards. Chapter 4 reports the results through an empirically derived thematic map, integrating analytic definitions and illustrative extracts. Chapter 5 discusses contributions and implications by linking the findings to visibility related behavior, FOH–BOH coupling, spatial design and stress pathways, and identity and retention acknowledges the study's limitations, and suggests directions for future research. Finally, chapter 6 ends the dissertation with the main conclusions.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Physical and Sensory Environment

Open kitchens are restaurant layouts in which food preparation is physically and visually exposed to diners, making back-of-house processes observable and part of the service environment (Graham et al., 2020). This visibility links spatial design (servicescape) with social evaluation, because kitchen activities and interactions are continuously witnessed by guests, according to Graham et al. (2020). The attributes of the physical and perceived environment in professional kitchens are a significant component of chefs' work experiences, behaviors, and performance outcomes, especially in the open kitchen concept (Graham et al., 2020). Open kitchens offer customers the opportunity to observe the cooking process, thus creating a unique relationship between the physical environment, what they perceive about task and role structure, the temporal rhythms of service, and the display rules that govern behavior under observation, and the social environment (Graham et al., 2020). This author suggests that the act of being observed creates a dual function of visibility, both as a symbolic form of public accountability since diners' constant gaze provides real-time evaluation, and as an operational concept of professionalism standardizing comportment, hygiene, and communication while performing tasks in view. Furthermore, while Graham et al. (2020) discuss this position of professionals as purity, Yeh et al. (2022) affirm limited alternatives for kitchen spatial configuration and whether chefs felt ownership of their space, which could foster creativity. Therefore, to contextualize chefs' work, more in-depth discussions are needed about visibility, perception, and workspace, as well as their implications for the relationship and emotion of performing culinary work.

Chefs work in a sensory environment of continuous and simultaneous negotiations with auditory, visual, and olfactory sensory markers that contextualize and actively interfere with the work at hand. The sound of clattering spoons, steam rising from the stove, and the smells of food being prepared are all continuous sensory feedback that influence attention, prioritization, and coordination (Filimonau et al., 2024). While some researchers propose that sensory overload can induce stress and exhaustion and compromise overall effectiveness (Ozbasar et al., 2024), other studies suggest that voluntary forms of sensory exposure cultivated attention and situational awareness in ways that improved response times and cooperative behaviors (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022). Considering all this, the study emphasizes that, in open kitchens, technical execution and social display occur simultaneously. Due to this, chefs therefore develop routines that stabilize attention,

communication, and error-recovery while performing under public view (Graham et al., 2020). Space and design dictate social connection in teams and collective creativity. Yeh et al. (2022) illustrate how spatial design, line of sight, and equipment placement promote information encoding and narratives that establish the sequencing of actions that aid team communication. Based on their findings, Yeh et al. (2022) offer the concept of collaborative ergonomics, a potentially appealing term to represent a kitchen environment and situation that optimizes workflow. This idea, coupled with the consideration of knowledge management offered by Bressan et al. (2023), who define knowledge management as the careful use of the arrangement and accessibility of resources to catalyze the chef's thinking, creativity, and invention, offers new ways, for example, micro-briefs at the pass, standard hand signals for hot/behind, and plating rhythms that allow quick visual checks without verbal interruption to conceptualize the arrangement of all things. Together they indicate that space and design are not just about function and adaptability, but also the emergence of creativity through collaboration, with concessions and tolerances for emergent processes and the tacit exchange of information, and ultimately, to the coordination embodied in actions that change based on resource/capacity constraints, such as narrow station width, single-point equipment bottlenecks (for example, one salamander), insufficient extraction/ventilation, or short-staffed sections during peak coversand and public pressure (Bressan et al., 2023).

Eren et al. (2021) argue that through a personal sense of empowerment in the kitchen, individuals feel free to explore techniques and presentation within their environment. Their study collected data via interviews and observations with 45 professional chefs in a variety of culinary settings, allowing for insights into how personal agency operates alongside the affordances of the environment. This study is complementary with Vu et al. (2024), focused on the design of new cooktops to facilitate culinary innovation, as well as the merits of open innovation for encouraging the development of adaptive culinary practice. Vu et al. (2024) surveyed and conducted focus groups with 60 participants which included chefs and designers to analyze how group knowledge and functional innovation could be co-constructed in the professional kitchen. Both Eren et al. (2021) and Vu et al. (2024) note that empowerment is an important aspect of engaging with the affordances and capabilities of the environment. However, the studies differ in their focus - Eren et al. (2021) engaged individual agency within structural limitations, whereas Vu et al. (2024) focus on open innovation and collective engagement with knowledge. Together, the orientations of these studies posit that the open

kitchen space must cultivate personal and group engagement, to fully engage with the affordances of the sensory and spatial dimensions for food creation.

In gastronomy, sustainability and environmental stewardship extend beyond ingredient sourcing. In open kitchen settings they are enacted through the interactional, social, physical, and sensory dynamics of the space that shape how chefs present their practices to diners. Gössling and Hall (2021) describe how operational skills integrated with aspects of energy-efficient kitchen layouts and waste minimization during food organizing and preparation not only become technical but are also ethical matters which relate to larger and expansive sustainable purposes. Building on the above mentioned, Filimonau et al. (2024) provide insights into how chefs may develop cognitions which support routine overtime management of food waste in the kitchen, whereby sustainability resides in cognitive decision-making and routines of organizing practice in space. In a similar vein, Vu et al. (2024) compares chefs' understandings and perceptions of sustainability across different contexts and stressed the significance of how the physical kitchen environment may enable or inhibit sustainable actions performed. In sum, the physical environment in open kitchens shapes work in three consistent ways across studies: line-of-sight, station adjacency and equipment reach reduce unnecessary movement and support quicker cue-taking and coordination; sensory load (heat, noise, visual stimuli) can raise strain and errors if unmanaged, yet calibrated exposure sharpens attention and situational awareness; and layout and affordances (space ownership, visibility, collaborative ergonomics) enable creativity by easing information flow and shared problem-solving (Yeh et al., 2022; Filimonau et al., 2024; Ozbasar et al., 2024; Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022).

This knowledge closely relates to understandings of environmental affordances, or the ways in which the environment can enable creativity, collaborative problem-solving, and normative behaviors (Yeh et al., 2022). Within the open kitchen predicament, it even offers an additional discussion for its evocative sensory element, as chefs are required to adjust their routines and practices within the greater visibility and possibility of the human presence of customers. Graham et al. (2020) emphasizes another innovative internal space that is influenced by observation as it alters expectations for obligations of professional performance. That is, chefs' performance not only concerns their technical performance, but also how they organize their performance space, in a mutually shaping symbiotic dynamic - guest reactions influence kitchen tempo and tone, while kitchen cues shape guest expectations - and in a symbolic sense, where visible conduct signals standards of craft and care to the

audience (Graham et al., 2020) due to diner customers observing their actions and developing interpretations of them. Sırıklı and Seçim (2024) assert that open kitchen environments also inform chefs' motivation, and emotional regulation resulting from the multi-sensory complexities of sound and sight, since each of these senses either constrain or offer opportunities for innovation or creative emergence, and amongst practices because sensory conditions alter action possibilities: heat and cramped space reduce motor capacity, high noise masks verbal cues and increases reliance on hand signals/line-of-sight, while visual and olfactory cues (doneness, smoke) shorten feedback loops for coordination.

Moreover, intersections with cognitive and career dimensions further complicate and extend understanding. Knowledge management and innovation practices emerged from the previous studies of Bressan et al. (2023) and Vu et al. (2024) have demonstrated that sustainability, creativity, and open-organizational performance is not a construct, but rather a higher-order abstraction of a framework potential and importantly, that this framework influenced future action for chefs. Rather than treating the open kitchen as a vague idea, it is treated as an operational configuration, a stable spatial-social arrangement, that shapes coordination, feedback, and on-the-job socialization for chefs. Through several studies, kitchen chefs suggest that the open kitchen can be a context where culinary professionals can create multiple layered environments to institute sustainability, socialize, and perform practice, with sensory-aware prompts that support real-time anticipation, clarifying 'what is happening now' and 'what comes next' in service.

2.2. Customer Interaction and Emotional Labor

Emotional labor is the regulation of feelings and expressions to meet display rules required by the role and context (Grandey, 2000). The open kitchen model reshaped relations between restaurants and their customers by enabling the public to observe the chef's labor while the public was in the vicinity of the chef, for the potential to strengthen the interaction between the chef and customer (Graham, 2020; Graham et al., 2020). The idea of an open kitchen presents chefs with forms of professional pressure because their skills are openly visible performance for the customers. In this situation, chefs are asked for double duty - they must complete difficult technical tasks while also managing the associated emotional and behavioral expressions that customers can see (Graham, 2020; Graham et al., 2020). Chefs are

visible which means they are expected to not only develop culinary quality but also manage emotional displays, or in Graham et al. (2020), emotional labor.

Clarifying the idea of emotional labor in this specific case is important. Emotional labor inside the open kitchen concept is the process of managing feelings in the service of creating an emotion expression that is observable to the public (Graham, 2020). For chefs in an open kitchen, this emotional labor demands they manage a balance of authenticity with performance, managing their composure, professionalism, and making sure the customer can see the restaurant experience as a positive one, even when the chef's job is under pressure. From another perspective, this visibility changes the relationship between the chef and the customer. Chefs are in the service environment itself, where the customer's responses to the interaction, both verbal and nonverbal, are a form of immediate feedback on their work or performance (Graham et al., 2020). This feedback turns into real-time evaluations of the chef, which can stimulate the chefs towards higher standards but at the same time increases pressure felt.

In addition, Yeh et al. (2022) note that visibility can limit others or the displays of freedom in each form, and shape gestures and emotions. The tension between customers' expectations about visible demeanor (warmth, composure), responsiveness to queries, and hygiene (as clean-as-you-go in public view) (Grandey, 2000; Graham et al., 2020) creates emotional labor for chefs as they are negotiating their operational needs and affective displays of emotions. Erarnine et al. (2019) states that chefs will always have to negotiate the conflicting experience of providing a real response and to also demonstrate the personal visibility expected of the professional role for the patron. Sırıklı and Seçim (2024) support this line of reasoning in the literature, arguing that visibility already impacts motivation and impacts self-display. According to the authors, this occurs because public visibility enforces display rules that require surface or deep acting and when these align with role identity and are supported by resources, motivation and prosocial display increase, whereas misalignment heightens emotional dissonance and strain, creating a layer of self-regulation, especially when the service moment is a high arousal situation.

The implications of both the physical and social environment of an open kitchen also include emotional labor. Yeh et al. (2022) defines spatial organization, arrangement and auditory and visual cues, for example, guest remarks, applause, camera phones and line-of-sight to diners' stimuli as factors in both processes of work and the emotional state of the

worker. Chefs must train to work together with their colleagues to send key emotional cues to their customers. This process thereby increasing chef stress and ultimately further developing and enabling the social skills to set required for a relational dining experience.

Guests in open kitchens elicit micro-emotional responses that are often overlooked by conventional performance parameters. Mac Con Iomaire et al. (2021) noted that errors or delays in service create a feedback loop of immediate reactive interactions from both chefs and customers, which affect their subsequent interaction. Too Graham et al. (2020) note that through customer presence, it can also elicit adaptive work, like heightened attentiveness, time estimations, or tilt to their presentation in accordance with customer inflection. Not all the examples illustrate the removal of one area of overlap, operational labor to emotional labor - operational labor flows seamlessly from one task to the next, emotional labor attends to the need for staff to be confident, approachable and positively engaged with their business.

References to sustainable practices are retained in this section only insofar as they shape customer interactions, for instance, chefs' visible explanations of sourcing or waste-minimization to eco-conscious diners, which require composed, informative displays in view. Vu et al. (2024) argue that chefs' understanding of sustainable practices in professional practice had little to do with technically understanding the practice about the socialized expectation to tell their public beliefs about being environmentally conscious in professional practice. Indirectly, Gössling and Hall (2021) question how the issues of environmental sensitivities and chefs' communication are all ultimately linked together with their professional style and identity characteristics. While these all share a remaining theme around the dimensions of culinary work, Vu et al. (2024) prioritizes the cognitive-emotional (internalized), while Gössling and Hall (2021) emphasize the external, performative (operating) perspective, which can be complementary, working as one.

Magrizos, et al. (2023) illustrate that chefs on rotating contracts rely on emotional regulation more often to sustain diners' happiness while maintaining team quality and service outcomes. Meanwhile, Marinakou and Giousmposoglou (2022) point out that secure contingent competency frameworks plus stakeholder expectations and standards shape the emotional labor that occurs within chefs, between drawing on their own technical competency skills and their conduct as apprentices applying work standards to the organization. This complementary view also emphasizes the contexts of broader frameworks of recognition mechanisms, for example, customer compliments or visible tips, positive online mentions, and

internal acknowledgements at the pass, that reinforce skill development and team norms while validating the team's public-facing emotional labor (Barger & Grandey, 2006).

Finally, post-COVID operational expectations have added to the operational realities of emotional labor in open kitchens. Ozbasar et al. (2024) illustrate that as health protocol increases, with public knowledge, across aligned teams add complexity to the chef's trademark emotional and cognitive processing. In a previous view of emotional labor, the focus of the social context was entirely about the interactions chef had with their customers. Now it has been modified to also encompass the awareness of the safety protocol being accepted and discussed knowledgeably.

2.3. Team Dynamics and Communication

This section is focused on team processes and communication routines that enable coordination in open kitchens, examining how roles, routines, and interaction patterns support reliability, adaptability, and error management under public visibility (Marks et al., 2001; Okhuysen & Bechky, 2009). Graham et al. (2020) say that visibility pervades functional and symbolic roles. Illustrative routines include closed-loop calls at the pass (order in - yes, chef'), standardized warnings (behind', 'hot'), micro-briefs before peak periods, and visual check-backs that minimize verbal interruption (Okhuysen & Bechky, 2009). These roles influence chef's behaviors and reinforce professionalism. Yeh et al. (2022) state the physical environment can refine or limit communication. These perspectives of the context of the open kitchen indicate how social and spatial variables influence team interactions - overall, open kitchen teams that institutionalize clear role boundaries and simple, reliable communication loops exhibit fewer coordination failures and recover faster from disruptions (Marks et al., 2001) - and subsequently necessitate evaluating dynamics that extend beyond tasks and task management, such as examining social dimensions and how they operate to influence teamwork in spaces.

Cohesion in culinary contexts is central to performance and effectiveness when teams are consistently inundated with high time pressure. In other words, it can represent a type of psychological resiliency through team cohesion. Open kitchens compared to classic closed kitchens create a heightened experience of pressure on teams, because not only are they evaluated internally by chefs, but the analysis of the team is also being made externally by patrons in real time. As Sırıklı and Seçim (2024) state, exposure to the observation of guests

during the dining experience amplifies the urgency of being cohesive in the moment, where team miscommunications play out on a different stage with an audience, where small misunderstandings can develop into major errors. Mac Con Iomaire et al. (2021) elucidates the consequences for performance when errors in food production occur from violations of coordination, drawing on team cohesion as a buffer from operational and reputation effects. While Graham et al. (2020) mention a "professional" cohesion, or "symbolic" gain to teams that are cohesive, Giousmpasoglou et al. (2022) highlight how open kitchens physically structure incidences of feedback and tasking, whilst addressing a functional role. Both these studies imply that cohesion occurs in open kitchens where social solidarity and functional necessity intersect.

The traditional brigade structure emphasizes specific role differentiation, and top-down authority, to ensure efficiency in the back-of-house (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022). An open kitchen demands a less hierarchical style of efficiency because leaders and task assignments are open to public view. Graham (2020) postulates that head chefs engage in grammar of authority behaviors to make open kitchens favorable towards collaboration. However, Bressan et al. (2023) argue that the brigade clarifies task ownership and escalation paths. In open kitchens, these boundaries remain useful, but teams often add short cross-checks at station interfaces to prevent gaps at peak tempo. Communication constitutes a central aspect of open kitchens, both in terms of work-related tasks and social interaction in teams. Eren et al. (2021) explains that allowing employees to exercise choice not only means they will get tasks done but that they will also increase culinary creativity, pointing to the fact that communication is not only distributing instructions, but it also enables innovation. Graham (2020) and Graham et al. (2020) note that the fast-paced and high-pressure atmosphere of the open kitchen provides the opportunity for situated communication, manifested via speaking, gestures, and other non-verbal cues that are invaluable for coordinating work and managing workflow in the public eye. Ozbasar et al. (2024) also point to the fact that a constant spectator role for chefs may undermine important moments of social interaction, leading to the absence of informal communication to bond and trust that contributes to team cohesion. In this sense, communication in the open kitchen is a double-edged sword. On one side it enables operational control and creative collaboration, and on the other it limits emotional connection among artistic professionals. Giousmpasoglou et al. (2022) argue that the challenge is to balance these two qualities of communication so that team building is enhanced.

The transparent practice of open kitchens has implications for resilience and stress management of team members, in addition to creativity and operational work. Yeh et al. (2022) suggest visible tasks can either inspire motivation or instigate unwarranted anxiety depending on whether competencies of team members are congruent with the task demands of the environment. Magrizos et al. (2019) also recount experiences of a high turnover, seasonal team of chefs working together in an open kitchen context and describe how they develop adaptive strategies to repair team cohesion and the morale of team members when faced with varying pressure. They conclude that visibility heightens self-monitoring and standardizes professional conduct, while teams with higher psychological safety convert public feedback into rapid adjustments rather than defensive behavior.

Obtaining collaboration in the kitchen should infer not just collaboration within the limits of a team but also in a pragmatic sense, collaboration that is directed towards achieving larger organizational and sustainable goals. Vu et al. (2024) identified communication related to learning and experimenting is what constitutes creative self-efficacy - an individual's belief that they can generate creative ideas and perform creatively in their work role, a domain-specific efficacy judgment that predicts creative performance (Tierney & Farmer, 2002; Tierney & Farmer, 2011). This aligns with Gössling and Hall (2021) when considering collaborative techniques in discussing the environmental implications of kitchen operations. Communication in the professional kitchen is central to coordinating task execution, developing collective identity, and aligning common goals. Establishing clear and consistent communication is fundamental in developing a sense of trust among chefs and kitchen employees, particularly in fast-paced settings where exactness and timing are critical (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022). Effective communication promotes the distribution of responsibility while also promoting accountability among co-workers, and the collective prioritization of common goals (Magrizos et al., 2023).

In addition to task orientation, communication can also support social aspects of teamwork. Graham (2020) observes that professional kitchens that are open facilitate interaction, transparency, and collaboration, which may provide motivation and support the development of collective identity. Similarly, Yeh et al. (2022) states that the work environment that an individual is in, will affect the observations made when working with other team members, which ultimately affects creativity and innovation. Together, these authors claimed that communication is not a straightforward process, but a complex practice which involves task efficiency, teamwork, and long-time strategic decision-making.

Practically, according to the authors mentioned, pre-service briefs and post-service debriefs aggregate small signals from the shift (bottlenecks, guest questions) into incremental menu tweaks, station layout adjustments, or service scripts.

Research has proposed that an open kitchen represents an opportunity to promote team cohesion and identity based on a shared understanding of workflow and visibility-based accountability. Clarity around the delineation of competencies and expectations, combined with trusting stakeholder capabilities, leads to trustworthiness, while clarity around the how of task execution leads to collaboration (Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2022). Graham et al. (2020) argue that there is empirical supporting evidence to suggest that when customers are present to observe a team, what was once empirical collaboration – learning by doing together during service through micro-corrections and co-adaptation (Weick & Roberts, 1993) - emerges into a performative practice in support - the public enactment of team norms (tone, discipline, hygiene) that signals craft standards to diners and to the team itself (Weick & Roberts, 1993) - and simultaneously cultivates precision, creativity and interpersonal proximity.

The internal team dynamics and communication that occur in an open kitchen occurs within aspects of visibility and hierarchy, and thus a relational negotiation. Theoretical constructions surrounding brigade systems and task structure reveal that teamwork in a professional kitchen is influenced by the coordination of a hierarchy, communication paths, and adaptive responses to various pressures that arise during operations (Graham, 2020). In an open kitchen, these dynamics become more observable since the exposure of the audience can pressure chefs to balance efficiency with relational performance and improvisation (Graham et al., 2020). Consistently, Giousmpasoglou et al. (2022) argue that contemporary management in kitchens is less focused on rigid hierarchies and relies on collaborative competencies where leadership is shared horizontally among team members to maintain workflow and engagement of creativity.

Research on the chefs' creative practices also highlights experimentation in open kitchen environments. However, testing ideas occurs only when teammates can effectively coordinate and support each other (Vu et al.2024). Collectively, teamwork in an open kitchen depends on the integration of discipline and structure in operations with adaptive, people-centered practices to ensure organizational outcomes without compromising mutual cohesions. Notably

this synthesis pointed towards the realization that team dynamics witnessed in the open kitchen environment were not mainly technical, but socially and organizationally embedded.

2.4. Chef's Identity and Professional Meaning

The concept of identity for chefs is in flux along with the structural organization and contextual environment of the food system. The traditional view of chef identity was based strictly on the technical skill a chef possessed, the hierarchy of position in the kitchen, and the team system (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022). Researchers are beginning to show that chef identity is developed from a complex interplay between chef's technical skills, visibility to others, chef's creativity and agency, and social acknowledgement (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022; Graham 2020).

One of the key themes evident in literature is the role that visibility contributes to the construction of chef identity. Graham (2020) argues that the open kitchen concept is a format of diner-visible food preparation that serves to transform the kitchen as a locus of work into a performance arena. When cooks are working in open kitchens, visibility becomes a feature that alters not only the spatial location and arrangement of the work, but the status of their professional identity. Among recalibrated and derived chefs, audience visibility and social interaction operate as identity-regulating mechanisms: they heighten accountability to diners and peers, confer legitimacy through public evaluation, and attach prestige to mastery displayed under observation, while preserving the profession's service-oriented core (Graham et al., 2020). Visibility in open kitchens operates in a dual reality, as chefs are performing technical and social interaction processes but also navigating a cooking process in an authentic evaluation of work tasks and a social negotiation within both realms.

This notion of relationality suggests that chef identity is formed in relation to social legitimacy and awareness of self. In Bressan et al. (2023) study, authors assert that professional identity is inevitably tied to career trajectory as well as to knowledgeable transfer taking place. For chefs, knowledge transfer is not a linear trajectory of positionality, it becomes a negotiated understanding of apprenticeships, new flavor combinations, and learning to work under the field situation on the technical and interactional activity of practice. Scaffolding learning alliances (structured mentor–apprentice and peer-pairing arrangements that provide support, modelling, and feedback until independent performance is achieved (Fine, 1996)), working through possibilities of ingredient use, and being able to

adapt overtime to an unlimited set of evolving situations, occurs robustly in open kitchens, according to Bressan et al. (2023).

Beyond exposure, agency and creativity are tied to the chef's identity. Eren et al. (2021) found that empowered team members contribute to culinary, and this afforded chefs with the ability to become an agent in individual development. Open kitchens enforce public agency, where creativity becomes the mode of both chefs' technical and identity process. Yeh et al. (2022) further the notion of interaction in kitchens as being contingent on environmental elements, such as openness mediating practices of creativity in chefs' work. As a cluster, these studies support the focus on constructing chefs' professional identity intertwined with the ways that chefs support professional cultures and their agency.

Another dimension of identity in chefs' is persistence. Mac Con Iomaire et al. (2021) argues that failure is an inevitable site of identity. When chefs utilize failure as an opportunity to learn they reinforce positive behaviors of their professional identity. If chefs discursively internalize their failure behaviors in a negative way, manifestations of job satisfaction overtime or career progression will likely be absent. These manifestations of identity tend to become heightened in open kitchens since what chefs may covet to know as a failure becomes a public deviation of the perceived self-esteem or chef identity, potentially inciting a dysfunctional sense of professionalism (Mac Con Iomaire et al., 2021). The fusion of visibility, creativity, agency, and persistence through the context professionals engage as chefs' identities in an open kitchen more prominently lay the foundation for chefs' identity. Open kitchens produce identity through recognition, with both relational and performative modes of professionalism in kitchens. Consequently, open kitchens foster professional identities from negotiation to experiences of knowledgeable, technical skills, spatial adaptation, engagement with the audience, and reflections of occupational pathway (Bressan et al., 2023; Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022; Graham, 2020; Mac Con Iomaire et al., 2021).

As noted by Gössling and Hall (2021), chefs are now more likely to describe themselves using environmentally responsible measures that impact on their self-construction and legitimacy as professionals. Vu et al. (2024) showed that answers to the question of sustainability may reveal functions of self-identity, but not all chefs define ecological practices as boundaries of practice in their work process. Some integrate those behaviors into their work as compulsions, while others perform ethical or ecological practice as add-ons to their everyday activity.

That these studies can be viewed as complementary demonstrates that professional identity and meaning is multifaceted, specifically encompassing craft mastery and aesthetic expression, customer-facing service demeanor, ethical–sustainability commitments, and team leadership within the team (Fine, 1996; Cooper et al., 2017; Gössling & Hall, 2021). Technical skills, ethical dimension to chefs' works and a social dimension to legitimacy all contribute to constructing identity, which is always constructed through the relationship formed in everyday functioning, along with relationship to peers, managers and clients.

Identity is relational, because it is continually negotiated through interactions with diners, FOH staff and the team, and performative, because evaluation hinges on impression management in a front-stage setting, knowing that open kitchens relocate previously back-stage culinary work into a customer-facing performance (Sluss & Ashforth, 2007; Graham et al., 2020). Filimonau et al. (2024) show that standard operating practices for inventory planning, portioning, and waste measurement generate competence cues and moral efficacy for chefs. When enacted in open kitchens (as visible portion control, waste sorting, transparent sourcing communication), these practices reinforce a professional identity anchored in stewardship and responsible service (Filimonau et al., 2024; Gössling & Hall, 2021; Bhaskara et al., 2024).

2.5. Stress, Burnout, and Coping in Open Kitchens

The process of coping in open kitchens refers to an often adoptive and socially mediated form of workplace resilience. Coping is generally described as a process where individuals and groups draw on some form of pathway in navigating job stressors and the emotions they elicit due to the overall pressure of the occupational context (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022; Sırıklı & Seçim, 2024). Coping strategies typically cluster into engagement (as problem-focused planning, instrumental and emotional support-seeking) versus disengagement/avoidance (as withdrawal and denial). In open kitchen work, engagement strategies such as pre-shift briefing, in-service micro coordination and peer coaching are consistently associated with lower burnout and better in-role performance, whereas disengagement is linked to strain and service lapses. Burnout is understood as a state of exhaustion, cynicism and reduced professional efficacy that emerges when job demands chronically exceed available job resources (Holm et al., 2023; Graham et al., 2020). Engagement pathways generally communicate active problem solving but exhibit a form of proactivity where workers actively

solicit instrumental support from peers, facing and reframing stressful moments into positive talk in and towards teammates (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022).

There are multiple job-stressors in the professional kitchen, for example, the pressures of performative tasks within a short timeline and sequencing of uncertain orders from customers in coordination with level of hierarchy (Mac Con Iomaire et al., 2021). The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory (Demerouti et al., 2001) explains why stress and burnout arise in working environments, which can be applicable to open kitchens, and how they can be prevented. Job demands are aspects of work that require sustained physical or psychological effort (as tempo pressure during service, heat/noise and other sensory load, continuous visibility to diners, exposure to customer incivility, split attention between execution and display). Job resources are aspects that help achieve work goals, reduce demands, or stimulate growth (giving cohesive team coordination, clear role boundaries, autonomy over station set-up and pacing, timely feedback, staffing and equipment adequacy). In JD-R, demand chiefly predicts burnout, resources chiefly predict work engagement, and resources buffer the impact of demands. These mechanisms have been repeatedly validated and translated directly to the open kitchen context (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Bakker et al., 2014; Cheng et al., 2020; Boukis et al., 2023). In an open kitchen situation, then, the job-stressors are transmuted by the customer ordering the meal, which lays out the antecedent and consequences of coping. Antecedents are contextual factors such as layout of kitchen, ambiguity of role and intra-staff relationships (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022; Yeh et al., 2022). The consequences may play out on the individual level with aspects such as fatigue, low job satisfaction, or transfer of skill, or may have collective-level consequences that extend beyond everyone, such as enhancing team cohesion, improving service interaction and improving resilience as a team (Bressan et al., 2023; Filimonau et al., 2024).

Literature supports that relational coping practice is especially pertinent to the cooking context. For example, and within the nature of the open kitchen, chefs will actively use informal coping practices such as humor and peer support or tacit awareness while in a time-constrained context (Sırıklı & Seçim, 2024). These informal coping practices not only regulate/alleviate stress but also contribute in ways that functionality enhances efficiency without delaying the productivity (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022). Informal coping practices link what the kitchen's socio-material environment makes possible (its layout, tools, pace, and routines) with how people work together. In practice, they are carried out through ongoing role negotiation, navigation of hierarchy, and shared accountability among cooks and chefs

(Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022; Graham et al., 2020). Coping in the open kitchen is connected to an adaptive process that feeds social and organizational processes and provides the ability to maintain professionalism while accommodating the engagement of other chefs' performance (Bressan et al., 2023; Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022).

The connection of links between stress, burnout and motivation is contingent as it is on both individual and organizational factors. Stress can be exacerbated with high visibility, yet is also a feature of autonomy and empowerment, factors perceived by Eren et al. (2021) as drivers of job satisfaction and creative outcomes. For example, they noted that empowered employees had a positive relationship to culinary creativity, suggesting that work-related contexts characterized by stress are no lower than professional engagement if the person thinks that is in control of what they are doing or what they contribute. Vu et al. (2024) believe that open innovation and functional views of self-efficacy can mediate the relationship with stress, because chefs are in a stage of operational challenge that involves the additional element of creative experimentation. They echo the view of the open kitchen being stressful in that at the same time it can be a place of flow and stimulation, which requires more management at both the employee and workplace levels. However, recognizing and responding to stress and burnout in open kitchens is still a significant challenge. The visible kitchen has its own set of tensions, not least of which is the tension to appear more professional, engaged and authentic, while managing multiple kinds of performance in the public eye. Chefs must maintain a calm and composed attitude in front of an audience that is co-workers and customers. Continually down-regulating intents to feign normal stress, leads to intensified internal stress over time potentially reducing their capacity to be resilient (Magrizos, Roumpi & Rizomyliotis, 2023). In addition, in environments characterized by high staff turnover and seasonal work contexts, new teams have little opportunity to develop ways of sustaining unity and managing coping strategies (Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2022). Consequently, for stress to be handled in a manner that will sustain engagement and prevent burnout, effective strategies that include both structural strategies, workflow, training, together with relational strategies, peer mentoring and predictable communication norms will need to be put in place (Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2022).

In contrast to the hospitality work that is less visible, and often performed in private spaces, open kitchens allow for ongoing interaction with the customer, increased visibility and surveillance, and expectation of constancy and consistency in kitchen labor (Graham et al., 2020; Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022). There are, however, possibilities for scenarios of

resiliency and adaptive work, and behavior that exist for the chef within these circumstances. Evidence suggests that when forms of the organizations provide the right level of organizational support communities relate to their kitchen work and generate mutual ways of working leverages the levels of resiliency in the hands of the kitchen team, and reduces to an extent the perception of stress (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022; Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2022). The chefs, by being both empowered and encouraged to think creatively, develop new ways of being, and although the work conditions are stressful and do not change, enhance individual wellbeing, and organizational performance (Eren et al., 2021; Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2022).

Open kitchens are unique workplace conditions where the necessary contexts of work in relation to stress/empowerment and creativity exist, and the relationships are dynamic, collaborative, and where experimentation and adaptive learning are core to practice. This relational view considers the importance of the negotiated stages of working such as stress management (Graham et al., 2020). In this type of work environment, the adaptability of the chef is core to their work and positions its development as being influenced by organizational culture and leadership behaviors (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022).

3. Methodology

To pursue the objectives initially outlined for the present dissertation, a qualitative study with an exploratory inductive design was undertaken. As Yin (2015) argues, such an approach is particularly effective for examining deep and complex thematics and for eliciting rich, extensive information. Accordingly, semi-structured interviews were employed. The interview guide was designed to address the study's specific objectives while remaining flexible so that questions could be added or removed as the conversation unfolded, thereby enabling the deepening of predefined themes or the exploration of other relevant topics directly related to the inquiry that had not been anticipated at the outset.

In this chapter, the methodological stages of the study are presented. First, participants are characterized, specifying key sociodemographic and professional attributes. Next, the procedures used for data collection and further analysis underpinning the inquiry are described. In it, the analytic strategy is detailed - *Reflexive Thematic Analysis* (Braun & Clarke, 2021) - including the phases followed and the procedures adopted to ensure quality, reflexivity, and ethical compliance throughout the study.

3.1. Participants Characterization

The study draws on a sample of 26 individual semi-structured interviews with professional chefs working in restaurants that operate with an open kitchen format. The sampling process adopted was non-probability, combining convenience sampling, as a portion of interviewees were accessed through personal contacts, and snowball sampling, whereby additional participants were recruited via referrals from those initial contacts.

Table 3.1 summarizes systematically the sample's sociodemographic and experiential profile used for the qualitative analysis. From the 26 interviewees, 21 are male (80.8%) and 5 are female (19.2%), showcasing less presence in the sample. Ages are concentrated between 30 to 40 years, equally present in [30;35[and [35;40[(N=9; 34.6%), with smaller groups at [25;30[(N=4;15.4%), [20;25[(N=2; 7.7%), and [40;45[(N=2; 7.7%). Regarding education, bachelor's degree (N=11; 42.3%) and Professional Education/EQF-5 (N=9; 34.6%) predominate, with Secondary Education and Post-graduation (N=3; 11.5%) also represented. When it comes to further professional formation in the area, most participants report having it (N= 20; 76.9%). Tenure in the sector spans [0;5[(N=2; 7.7%), [5;10[(N=9; 34.6%), [10;15[(N=8; 0.8%), [15;20[(N=5; 19.2%), and [20;25[(N=2; 7.7%), noticing that most chefs from the sample work in the area from 5 to 10 years. Exposure to open kitchens ranges across [0;3[

(N=5; 19.2%), [3;6[(N=7; 26.9%), [6;10[(N=5; 19.2%), [10;20[(N=7; 26.9%), with two cases not specified (N=2; 7.7%). All accountants and percentages were computed from the dataset provided and use N = 26 as the denominator.

Table 3.1 - Participants' Sociodemographic and Experiential Profile (N = 26)

Participants Sociodemographic Data		N° of Participants
Sex	Female	5
	Male	21
Age	[20;25[	2
	[25;30[	4
	[30;35[	9
	[35;40[	9
	[40;45[	2
Academic Habilitations (Last Completed Level)	Secondary Education	3
	Professional Education (EQF Level 5)	9
	Bachelor Degree	11
	Post-graduation	3
Further Formation in the Area	Yes	20
	No	6
Years in the Sector	[0;5[	2
	[5;10[	9
	[10;15[	8
	[15;20[	5
	[20;25[	2
Years in Open Kitchen	[0;3[	5
	[3;6[	7
	[6;10[	5
	[10;20[	7
	Not specified	2

Source: Own elaboration according to participants responses

3.2. Procedures for Data Collection and Analysis

3.2.1. Interviews

Semi-structured, individual interviews were employed to address the study aim - understanding how working in Open Kitchen settings shapes chefs' workplace behaviors - knowing this would be the format that best balances comparability across participants with the flexibility needed to probe situated experiences in depth. The protocol was designed

deductively from the project's research question and the six specific objectives, already mentioned in the beginning of the research, and from an understanding of the existent literature and reflected gaps, being the interview theoretically informed.

All interviews followed one single script, with 21 questions across 5 different blocks (A-E) (Annex A). At the start of each interview, the interviewer briefly contextualized the study, clarified the interview procedure (number and type of questions as well as the estimated duration), and explained any technical terms when needed. The informed consent form (Annex B) was then screen-shared and read aloud, and verbal permission to audio-record was obtained before proceeding. These steps ensured transparency, comprehension, and an auditable record of consent. The informed consent document was also sent to each participant's email, then returning it signed back to the interviewer.

Interviews followed a two-part structure. First, a short set of sociodemographic questions situated each participant's profile within the Lisbon restaurant scene (for example, age, education, years as chef, years in Open Kitchen contexts, cuisine type). Secondly, thematically organized prompts elicited first-person accounts aligned with the study objectives. The guide contained blocks on: (A) physical and sensory features of Open Kitchens and their behavioral implications; (B) guest exposure and micro-emotions during service; (C) team dynamics and communication in open layouts; (D) professional identity work; and (E) stressors, coping, and turnover intentions. At the end, there were also questions that made it possible for participants to give their opinions and input of what they consider that could change in this type of work context, as a form of closing the interview with visibility. Sample questions are provided in the Interview Guide (Annex A) which informed but did not rigidly constrain the conversation, allowing the interviewer to adapt sequencing and depth to each chef's experience.

Interviews concluded with an invitation for participants to contact the researcher afterwards if they wished to add or clarify any information that they recalled post-interview, thereby strengthening completeness and credibility of the narratives.

3.2.2. Data Collection

The data collection process began with desk research across hospitality platforms and social media, complemented by industry contacts, to compile a list of eligible restaurants, subsequently directly outreached, via cellphone. In total, 67 restaurants were contacted and 26 took part in the study. Consistently with the sampling approach described earlier, a substantial share of participants was recruited via existing contacts and the snowball method.

Initial contact with participants was made by email, phone call, or direct message, depending on the prior relationship and preferred channel of the addressee. In this first approach, the study was briefly introduced, outlined what participation entailed, and participants were asked about availability. Prospective interviewees were also, already by that moment, assured that any information shared would be treated confidentially and reported anonymously.

The 26 interviews happened virtually, via *Microsoft Teams*, and were fully booked and realized during the timeline of 15 days, with the help of *Outlook Calendar*. Each interview lasted averagely 45 minutes, was audio-recorded (also via *Teams*) with the participant's permission for accuracy and subsequently transcribed for analysis, so that none of the information would be lost. After the first contact, interview meetings were scheduled at least disruptive moments to restaurant operations, typically outside peak service hours or rest days.

All participants were provided with informed consent prior to the interview. They were reminded that participation was voluntary and that they could decline to answer any question or withdraw at any time without consequence. The confidentiality and anonymity commitments reiterated at recruitment were upheld throughout data handling and reporting, in line with the good practice standards that guided the reference study.

3.2.3. Data Analysis

To analyze the data gathered from the 26 interviews, the study employed *Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA)*, a form of thematic analysis that facilitates the identification, analysis, and interpretation of recurring patterns of meaning within qualitative datasets (Braun & Clarke, 2006), which falls into the aims of the present study. Following Braun and Clarke's (2006) procedural guidance, the first phase involved familiarization with the data. To this, the audio recordings of interviews were transcribed into text using *Transkriptor*, after which all transcripts were manually reviewed against the corresponding audio to correct any possible transcription errors. During close reading, analytic notes were taken on features deemed pertinent for subsequent coding (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

After this, initial codes (subthemes) were then generated from keywords and recurrent concepts evident in participants' responses (Annex D). In line with a semantic approach, coding and subsequent theme development were grounded in participants' own language rather than in the application of a priori theoretical lens (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This process initially produced a large pool of categories with different labels but overlapping meanings. All coding and consolidation were conducted manually and iteratively, with multiple rounds

of refinement. Thereafter, codes were reorganized into broader categories - candidate themes and subthemes (annex D) - based on their analytic relevance to the research objectives rather than their frequency across interviews. Furthermore, secondary themes were also created and associated every time a response would reflect more than one fix idea, which is natural giving the thematic and the qualitative nature that characterizes the study (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Given this, each response is associated with, sometimes, more than one subtheme. The primary theme is decided according to the concept that is most emphasized and the idea that was mostly expressed in that response. But Braun & Clarke (2006) suggest that the rest of the context of the answer should not be undertaken - given the importance of creating secondary themes. This process also makes it possible for, later, to make bigger, smaller and micro associations between categories and to understand nuance patterns. These candidate themes were treated as provisional and were repeatedly revised until a final thematic map was established (Braun & Clarke, 2006) (annex E).

In the Results chapter, interview excerpts are presented consistently to enhance transparency and allow readers to appraise the credibility and applicability of the findings. Citations follow the convention of indicating the interview number (I01–I26) and the question number, formatted as (Ixx, Qyy), for example (I12, Q1).

3.2.4. Quality of the Study

Quality was ensured in line with *Reflexive Thematic Analysis* (Braun & Clarke, 2021), privileging methodological coherence, reflexivity, and transparency. The analytic workflow followed the method's recursive six phases, with iterative movement between familiarization, coding, theme development, and reporting, and with explicit documentation of decisions (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2019). An audit trail comprising dated memos, evolving code definitions, theme maps, and decision logs supports dependability and confirmability (Nowell et al., 2017). Given this, the Results chapter includes thick, well-contextualized verbatim extracts so readers can appraise the warrant for interpretations (Tracy, 2010). Accordingly, to strengthen the validity of the findings (Flick et al., 2004), investigator triangulation was employed, the results being additionally reviewed and validated by the academic supervisor to minimize errors and interpretive bias. With respect to reflexivity, an additional round of supervisory review was likewise undertaken.

Informed consent, confidentiality safeguards, and careful removal of potentially identifying details were applied throughout, as part of the study's quality and ethics commitments (Tracy, 2010).

The final corpus of 26 chef interviews was deemed adequate based on information power, considering the specificity of the sample, the clarity of aims, quality of dialogue, theoretical anchoring, and the analytic strategy (Malterud et al., 2016). Closure was also assessed with reference to meaning saturation (the point at which further interviews were unlikely to add new nuance to existing categories), not merely code saturation (Hennink et al., 2017).

4 Results

This chapter examines how chefs working in Open Kitchen restaurants perceive the concept and how the open setting, encompassing guest visibility, the physical and sensory environment, and operational design, shapes on-the-job behavior, team dynamics and communication, professional identity, and stress management, as well as the challenges and opportunities they associate with this work context. From a reflexive analysis of the 26 interviews, results in the elaboration of the *Thematic Analysis Codes and Themes* (Annex E), identifying in each response, for each interview, the key words/concepts associated with that response, from which the initial codes (sub-themes) mentioned in the core of each question, and consequent final themes unfolded. From this deep analysis, emerged 13 main themes that aim to reflect the major impacts felt by chefs on working in an open setting, originating an organized thematic map (Figure 4.1).

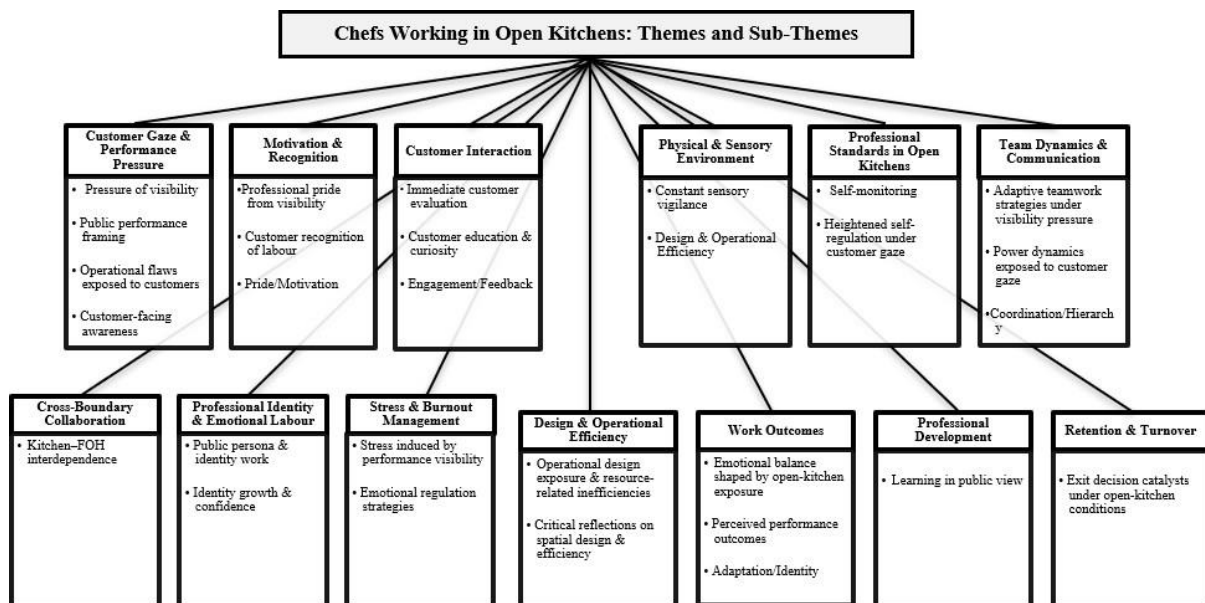


Figure 4.1 - Map of Themes and Sub-themes on Chefs perspectives of Open Kitchen

Source: Own elaboration according to participants responses

It is also relevant to specify the meaning of each theme and sub-theme inside the core of the study to a better understanding of the results presented in each following chapter. With that purpose, Table 4.1 was produced. The concepts described below serve to help the reader navigate through the results, fully aware of the concepts, that can, sometimes, seem rather subjective. The themes reported in this chapter were developed inductively through *Reflexive Thematic Analysis* (Braun & Clarke, 2021). The brief analytic definitions below are data-derived clarifications, fully elaborated according to the responses and the messages

participants expressed during each interview. To situate these concepts in the broader literature, but without implying deductive category use, it is also provided a theoretical anchor for each theme/sub-theme, every time it is possible. The full engagement of these sections with literature appears in the Discussion chapter, further.

Table 4.1 - Clarification of Themes and Sub-themes Concepts, with Theoretical Anchors

Theme and Sub-theme	Analytic Definition (Data-Derived)	Theoretical Anchor
1. Team Dynamics & Communication	Referring to the ways chefs coordinate with front-of-house staff, managers, and other stakeholders, highlighting the need for fluid communication and joint problem-solving.	Kitchen brigades rely on hierarchy and scripted communication; open visibility tightens coupling and real-time coordination (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022; Graham et al., 2020).
1.1 Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team-level tactics (role swaps, micro-coordination, shielding) used to preserve flow and standards while under public scrutiny.	Audience visibility amplifies nonverbal cues, rapid role-switching and pacing to keep flow under scrutiny (Graham et al., 2020; Sırlıklı & Seçim, 2024).
1.2 Coordination/Hierarchy	How lines of authority and coordination protocols operate and are enforced during open-kitchen service.	Brigade structures formalize roles and authority gradients that streamline task coordination during service (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022; Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2022).
1.3 Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze	Authority or conflict patterns that become more visible or are altered by public scrutiny.	Public externalizes authority negotiations and status displays, making power relations accountable to outsiders (Graham, 2020; Graham et al., 2020).
2. Stress & Burnout Management	Stressors, coping tactics and longer-term strain associated with performing in public view.	Visibility heightens emotional labor demands; chefs regulate affect to meet display rules while mitigating strain (Sırlıklı & Seçim, 2024; Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022).
2.1 Emotional regulation strategies	Deliberate tactics (breathing, micro-pauses, pre-service alignment) to manage arousal and maintain composure.	Surface/deep acting, humor, and peer buffering help sustain composure during service (Sırlıklı & Seçim, 2024; Graham, 2020).
2.2 Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress arousal specifically attributed to being watched and the public nature of errors.	Being watched increases arousal and error-cost salience, intensifying time pressure and vigilance (Graham et al., 2020; Ozbasar et al., 2024).
3. Design & Operational Efficiency	Referring to how the physical layout, equipment, and workflow organization in open kitchens affect productivity, stress, and service quality.	Line-of-sight, station adjacency and reachability reduce motion waste and enable smoother flow (Yeh et al., 2022; Gössling & Hall, 2021).
3.1 Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Participants' evaluations of how layout and equipment choices impact throughput, handoffs and error recovery.	Ergonomic layouts and shared visibility support anticipation, handoffs and creativity under load (Yeh et al., 2022; Gössling & Hall, 2021).
3.2 Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	How the open kitchen reveals or magnifies bottlenecks (staffing, space, equipment) that hinder flow or reliability.	Open layouts render bottlenecks and maintenance gaps legible, pushing process discipline and resource stewardship (Filimonau et al., 2024; Bressan et al., 2023).
4. Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Reflects the psychological demands of being constantly observed by customers, which heightens self-awareness, error avoidance, and perceived accountability.	Open kitchens recast cooking as public performance, with guests acting as real-time evaluators (Graham, 2020; Graham et al., 2020).
4.1 Customer-facing awareness	Moment-to-moment awareness of guest proximity and sightlines that shape tone and conduct at the pass.	Chefs calibrate demeanor and presentation as audience awareness becomes part of the task (Graham, 2020; Graham et al., 2020).
4.2 Operational flaws exposed to customers	Errors or process hiccups becoming visible to guests, prompting risk-averse checks and recovery behaviors.	Errors and delays become visible cues that shape reputation and service narratives (Mac Con Iomaire et al., 2021; Graham, 2020).
4.3 Pressure of visibility	Perceived social evaluation pressure created by being watched, raising perceived stakes and vigilance during service.	External gaze elevates standards and accountability, increasing self-monitoring demands (Sırlıklı & Seçim, 2024; Graham, 2020).
4.4 Public performance framing	Conceiving kitchen work as a public performance or "stage," which guides showmanship and front-stage behaviors.	Work is staged as a performance with front-stage norms and symbolic accountability (Graham, 2020).
5. Customer Interaction	Encompasses direct exchanges between chefs and guests, ranging from casual conversation to educational engagement, shaping customer experience and chefs' roles.	Open formats create micro-interactions and boundary work that can motivate or distract during service (Graham et al., 2020; Sırlıklı & Seçim, 2024).
5.1 Customer education & curiosity	Explaining techniques, sourcing or rationale to guests and responding to their curiosity.	Open kitchens framework as public performance with real-time evaluation (Graham, 2020; Graham et al., 2020).
5.2 Engagement/Feedback	Two-way conversational exchanges with guests that inform fine-tuning of dishes or service.	N/A – descriptive/separator row (no theoretical construct)
5.3 Immediate customer evaluation	Real-time praise, questions or criticism that directly assess dishes or service as it unfolds.	Open kitchens framework as public performance with real-time evaluation (Graham, 2020; Graham et al., 2020).
6. Work Outcomes	Encompasses the broader results of working in open kitchens, including job satisfaction, performance outcomes, and organizational implications.	Visibility and workflow design shape satisfaction, standards and turnover intentions via motivation and strain pathways (Magrizos et al., 2023; Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022).
6.1 Adaptation/Identity	Identity or practice adjustments; code here only when explicitly linked to a work result—otherwise, code under Professional Identity & Emotional Labor.	Audience exposure fuels identity work and skill signaling (Graham, 2020; Bressan et al., 2023).
6.2 Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Reported steadiness or dysregulation attributable to visibility; when referring to coping processes, code under Stress & Burnout.	Visibility elevates emotional labor demands and self-monitoring (Sırlıklı & Seçim, 2024; Graham, 2020).
6.3 Perceived performance outcomes	Self-reported effects on speed, quality, error rates or consistency that chefs attribute to the open-kitchen context.	Open kitchens framework as public performance with real-time evaluation (Graham, 2020; Graham et al., 2020).
7. Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	Reflects the reinforcement of hygiene, discipline, and performance norms required when culinary practices are carried out in public view.	N/A – descriptive/separator row (no theoretical construct)
7.1 Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Stricter control of emotional display and demeanor when performing in direct view of guests.	Open kitchens framework as public performance with real-time evaluation (Graham, 2020; Graham et al., 2020).
7.2 Self-monitoring	Conscious tracking of language, gestures and micro-behaviors to meet public-facing professional standards.	N/A – descriptive/separator row (no theoretical construct)
8. Physical & Sensory Environment	Captures the impact of noise, heat, and other sensory factors in open kitchens, which influence stress levels, communication, and overall working conditions.	N/A – descriptive/separator row (no theoretical construct)
8.1 Constant sensory vigilance	Heightened attention to heat, noise, odors, lighting and crowding that affects comfort and precision.	N/A – descriptive/separator row (no theoretical construct)
8.2 Design & Operational Efficiency	Mentions of layout, equipment and workflow as a sub-component when referenced at a more granular level within another theme.	Spatial cognition and shared visibility support anticipation and waste-wise routines (Yeh et al., 2022; Filimonau et al., 2024).
9. Cross-Boundary Collaboration	Referring to the ways chefs coordinate with front-of-house staff, managers, and other stakeholders, highlighting the need for fluid communication and joint problem-solving.	FOH-BOH coupling strengthens through shared cues and mutual monitoring (Graham et al., 2020; Yeh et al., 2022).

9.1 Kitchen–FOH interdependence	Mutual reliance between kitchen and front-of-house for pacing, ticket flow and guest experience outcomes.	Visual contact and proxemics enable faster alignment and recovery from disruptions (Graham et al., 2020; Yeh et al., 2022).
10. Motivation & Recognition	Highlights how visibility and customer acknowledgment contribute to chefs' intrinsic motivation, sense of value, and professional pride.	External acknowledgment and audience effects can heighten pride or pressure depending on context (Sirıklı & Seçim, 2024; Graham et al., 2020).
10.1 Customer recognition of labour	Perceived acknowledgment from guests of the effort, skill and detail in chefs' work.	Visible effort attracts appreciation that reinforces prosocial motivation (Graham et al., 2020).
10.2 Pride/Motivation	Affective uplifts and drive are linked to showcasing craft and receiving audience responses.	Observed competence can reinforce mastery orientation and identity affirmation (Sirıklı & Seçim, 2024).
10.3 Professional pride from visibility	Pride derived from having one's craftsmanship observed and appreciated by guests.	Public validation supports status claims and belongs to a professional community (Graham, 2020).
11. Professional Identity & Emotional Labour	Refers to how chefs negotiate their sense of self and manage emotions under customer visibility, balancing authenticity with professional presentation.	Chefs construct a public persona while regulating emotion to fit front-stage norms (Graham, 2020; Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022).
11.1 Identity growth & confidence	Narratives of professional maturation and increased self-assurance fostered by visible service.	Feedback loops and exposure accelerate skill signaling and confidence building (Graham, 2020; Bressan et al., 2023).
11.2 Public persona & identity work	Construction and maintenance of a public-facing chef persona to fit the open-kitchen "front stage."	Performance scripts and stylistic choices project a recognizable professional self (Graham, 2020).
12. Retention & Turnover	Captures factors influencing chefs' decisions to remain in or leave open-kitchen workplaces, including stress, recognition, and career fit.	Talent practices, seasonality and work design shape stay/leave intentions via strain–reward tradeoffs (Magrizos et al., 2023; Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022).
12.1 Exit decision catalysts under open-kitchen conditions	Specific aspects of open-kitchen work (e.g., constant scrutiny, noise) cited as reasons to leave or stay.	Sustained pressure, misfit layouts or weak support can push exit decisions (Magrizos et al., 2023).
13. Professional Development	Describes how open-kitchen experiences contribute to learning, skill enhancement, and long-term career growth for chefs.	Knowledge sharing and innovation practices build human capital over time (Bressan et al., 2023; Vu et al., 2024).
13.1 Learning in public view	Skill acquisition and reflective learning accelerated by performing and receiving feedback in front of guests.	Controlled exposure to error and feedback aids learning and reflective practice (Mac Con Iomaire et al., 2021; Bressan et al., 2023).
Contextual/Descriptive	Captures background and descriptive details that set the scene for chefs' experiences but do not directly convey deeper interpretive meaning.	N/A – descriptive/separator row (no theoretical construct)
Na data	Category used for instances where interviews provided no relevant information or responses to specific questions.	N/A – descriptive/separator row (no theoretical construct)

Source: Own elaboration according to participants responses and existing literature

From the analysis of the interviews, the Theme Distribution (Annex F) was made, where it is possible to see the clear relevance of each theme in every interview (I01-I26). The structure of the chapter follows this distribution, from the most to least present themes across interviews.

4.1. Overview of Results

According to Table 4.2, *Team Dynamics & Communication* was the most prominent theme, accounting for 153 coded segments and appearing in every interview. *Stress & Burnout Management* also featured in all interviews and had 88 references. A second cluster of highly salient topics comprised *Design & Operational Efficiency* (79 references; 25 interviews), *Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure* (76 references; 24 interviews), *Customer Interaction* (73 references; 25 interviews), *Work Outcomes* (67 references; 24 interviews), *Professional Standards in Open Kitchens* (63 references; 24 interviews), and *Physical & Sensory Environment* (56 references; 24 interviews). Lower-salience but still meaningful themes included *Cross-Boundary Collaboration* (39 references; 22 interviews), *Motivation & Recognition* (33 references; 18 interviews), *Professional Identity & Emotional Labor* (29 references; 20 interviews), *Retention & Turnover* (16 references; 14 interviews) and *Professional Development* (6 references; 6 interviews), being the theme with least appearance throughout data.

Follows a more detailed reflection on each of these themes, as well as associated sub-

themes, illustrated by excerpts of the interviews. The analysis was approached with reflexivity, keeping analytic memos during familiarization, actively searching for disconfirming cases, and treating themes as interpretative patterns rather than counts. The narrative below reflects this stance.

Table 4.2 - Distribution according to number of References and Interviews

Theme/Sub-Theme	References	Coverage (Interviews)
1. Team Dynamics & Communication	153	26
1.1 Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	123	26
1.2 Coordination/Hierarchy	7	7
1.3 Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze	23	20
2. Stress & Burnout Management	88	26
2.1 Emotional regulation strategies	11	7
2.2 Stress induced by performance visibility	77	24
3. Design & Operational Efficiency	79	25
3.1 Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	30	21
3.2 Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	49	25
4. Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	76	24
4.1 Customer-facing awareness	20	13
4.2 Operational flaws exposed to customers	8	6
4.3 Pressure of visibility	47	22
4.4 Public performance framing	1	1
5. Customer Interaction	73	25
5.1 Customer education & curiosity	12	11
5.2 Engagement/Feedback	43	18
5.3 Immediate customer evaluation	18	13
6. Work Outcomes	67	24
6.1 Adaptation/Identity	16	11
6.2 Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	32	19
6.3 Perceived performance outcomes	19	13
7. Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	63	24
7.1 Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	60	24
7.2 Self-monitoring	3	3
8. Physical & Sensory Environment	56	24
8.1 Constant sensory vigilance	54	24
8.2 Design & Operational Efficiency	2	2
9. Cross-Boundary Collaboration	39	22
9.1 Kitchen–FOH interdependence	39	22
10. Motivation & Recognition	33	18
10.1 Customer recognition of labour	5	4

10.2 Pride/Motivation	8	8
10.3 Professional pride from visibility	20	14
11. Professional Identity & Emotional Labour	29	20
11.1 Identity growth & confidence	3	3
11.2 Public persona & identity work	26	19
12. Retention & Turnover	16	14
12.1 Exit decision catalysts under open-kitchen conditions	16	14
13. Professional Development	6	6
13.1 Learning in public view	6	6

Source: Own elaboration according data analysis of participants responses

4.2. Team Dynamics & Communication

The present theme was the most salient in the dataset (153 references; 26 interviews). Across accounts, chefs framed teamwork in open kitchens as a live, co-present performance where coordination, pacing, and meaning making are negotiated under audience visibility. Three subthemes organize the patterning observed here: *Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure*; *Coordination/hierarchy*; and *Power dynamics exposed to the customer gaze*. When relevant, signal links to other themes are mentioned (as *Cross-Boundary Collaboration*, *Design & Operational Efficiency* and *Stress & Burnout Management*) but main outcomes are reflected on intra-team processes within the kitchen.

The dominant subtheme – *Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure* (123 references; 26 interviews) - captures how communication and task coordination are deliberately sharpened when work is performed in public. Respondents described concise calls, non-verbal cues, and pre-agreed routines that allow stations to “read” each other without noise or theatrics, maintaining pace and composure despite fluctuating demand. For some, these practices were emergent rather than rule-bound - “*No specific codes or rules; communication is natural and efficient due to team experience*” (I01, Q13), while others emphasized intentional discipline: “*This disciplined communication ensures consistent service... It keeps the team focused and coordinated*” (I02, Q11). In several accounts, chefs also reported proactive micro-preparation (mise-en-place tightness, pre-service alignment, quick resets) to reduce the likelihood that small errors must become publicly visible cascades. At the edges of the theme, participants linked these adaptive routines to collaboration with Front-of-House (FOH) to prevent bottlenecks (like earlier hand-offs or shared timing checks). Those cross-boundary moments are analyzed in detail in upfront. In this section, they illustrate how intra-team adaptation often anticipates inter-team coordination.

Coordination/Hierarchy (7 references; 7 interviews), a smaller but coherent pattern concerned day-to-day intra-team choreography and role clarity. Chefs described briefings, crisp allocation of responsibilities, and punctual re-centering of authority when service drifted. One chef put it plainly: “*It didn’t limit teamwork. Daily briefings clarified roles and priorities*” (I10, Q11). Others stressed stability that “*Roles and responsibilities remain the same as in a closed kitchen*” (I08, Q12), suggesting that hierarchy functions as a scaffold, activated more visibly only when the line needs re-ordering. In short, visibility does not erase hierarchy; rather, it encourages lean, legible coordination that keeps flow intact without resorting to spectacle. Where the subtheme was less present, teams relied on tacit knowledge and long-standing familiarity to achieve similar effects.

The open format makes authority relations observable (23 references; 20 interviews). Some chefs argued that formal structures remain largely unchanged: “*Open kitchen doesn’t change how hierarchy is coordinated*” (I04, Q12); “*Hierarchy and role coordination don’t depend on being open or closed*” (I06, Q12). Yet, many described subtle recalibrations in how hierarchy is performed, particularly during high-pressure moments. Instead of audible reprimands or extreme command-and-control tactics, authority is exercised through contained gestures, eye contact, and low-key prompts to preserve dignity and avoid audience discomfort. A few accounts also pointed to impression management: maintaining composure “*in front of guests*” (I10, Q12) not only protects the team’s face but reinforces the restaurant’s professional image. This interpretive tension - hierarchy as unchanged in structure but moderated in performance -is central to how power becomes publicly legible without being theatrically displayed.

Although the focus is intra-team interactions, participants repeatedly connected these dynamics to the dining room and to spatial/operational conditions. Line-of-sight, equipment layout, and noise shaped the feasibility of low-volume communication and the need for clearer turn-taking (*Design & Operational Efficiency*). When coordination frayed, chefs reported faster “leakage” of strain across stations, with potential spillovers into well-being and motivation (*Stress & Burnout Management; Work Outcomes*). Conversely, when adaptive teamwork was well handled, teams described a calmer service tempo and fewer visible errors, with FOH interactions feeling more seamless.

Team Dynamics & Communication in open kitchens are distinguished less by the existence of hierarchy than by its public performance and by the disciplined, often tacit, communicative practices that sustain flow under visibility. The weight of the evidence sits with adaptive teamwork, complemented by a lean choreography of roles and a moderated

enactment of authority. Together, these patterns explain why, in an open setting, how chefs coordinate becomes indistinguishable from how they appear, representing consequences for guest experience, team climate, and the perceived professionalism of the operation.

4.3. Stress & Burnout Management

Stress and burnout surfaced as a pervasive concern across the dataset, with 88 coded instances present through all interviews. The theme cohered around how performance visibility in open-kitchen settings intensifies self-regulation demands and accumulative strain, while also revealing variation: some chefs normalized the exposure over time, and a minority framed stress as largely independent of the kitchen's openness.

A dominant pattern involved heightened performance visibility. Chefs described the impossibility of shutting off the audience or masking emotional leakage during service. As said, *"you can't hide frustration or mistakes, so there's extra pressure to keep everything running perfectly"* (I07, Q17). Others emphasized the self-presentation demand under the customer gaze as *"Yes, more prone because of the extra concern about not showing stress to customers"* (I01, Q17). This translates into continuous emotional regulation, strategic control of tone, facial expression, and gesture, summed up as *"an added variable - being watched by guests - which requires greater emotional control"* (I20, Q17).

While visibility was central, chefs also located stressors in operational peaks and sequencing pressures (for example, reservation overlaps), which the open format can amplify by making workflow hiccups publicly legible. One chef recalled: *"Reservation overlaps cause stress - late arrivals colliding with on-time bookings overwhelm staff, leading to occasional mistakes"* (I08, Q16). These moments increased the cost of error as slips were not only operationally disruptive but reputationally exposed, reinforcing a feedback loop of vigilance and tension.

For several interviewees, stress represents cumulative, career-shaping consequences. One chef linked sustained pressure and toxic dynamics to the exit decision: *"I left my last job due to a combination of health issues, a toxic environment, and constant pressure... the open kitchen wasn't the main cause, but it added pressure in already difficult conditions"* (I03, Q19). Similarly, another chef noted that while burnout drivers are multifactorial, open kitchens can be a multiplier when other conditions are already negative. When responding to a possible reason to quit the present job, asked *"A toxic work environment or loss of passion... would be the reason, but in a negative context it could amplify the stress"* (I07, Q19),

referring to open kitchens. These accounts connect stress to both burnout trajectories (erosion of joy, exhaustion) and turnover intentions, showing how the theme interlocks with *Retention & Turnover* and *Work Outcomes* in coding.

Important divergences qualify this picture. A subset minimized the specific role of openness, attributing stress primarily to generic service factors (volume, complexity, staffing): *“For me, stress is similar in open or closed kitchens... the difference is the responsibility to keep the station pristine with guests nearby”* (I15, Q17). Others described habituation and competence-based confidence that dampened the salience of being watched and stress associated to that, mentioning *“At first, there was pressure, but after three years I feel super comfortable - almost like being at home. Sometimes the chef even says we’re too relaxed”* (I18, Q4). These cases underscore that openness is not uniformly determinative, and its impact can be contingent due to factors like experience, team climate, or operational design.

Across accounts, chefs described two concurrent stress mechanisms. First, front-stage emotional labor under customer gaze, which sustained self-monitoring and suppression of visible frustration: *“During service, stress must be suppressed - “poker face” - and resolved before/after. Issues should be handled discreetly away from guests”* (I14, Q3); similarly, *“I may feel stressed internally but project calmness to keep the service flowing and prevent a snowball effect”* (I19, Q18). Second, tempo-intensity stress tied to service rhythms and resource constraints: *“Worst service: short-staffed back-of-house and a sudden batch release of tickets, resulting in chaos”* (I05, Q16), compounded when *“the long service format and physical demands added to the stress”* (I12, Q16). In open settings, these pressures carry heightened consequences because delays or mistakes are publicly legible - *“if there’s a mistake, it happens in front of an audience, which adds pressure”* (I18, Q3). The first mechanism maps to the cluster of initial codes around stress induced by performance visibility and emotional regulation strategies; the second aligns with references to operational exposure. Together, they help explain why stress was not only frequent but qualitatively distinctive in open kitchens: it is not simply more stressful but represents stress with greater image-risk and costs.

Finally, chefs articulated adaptive responses that coexist with strain, such as tacit team choreography, micro-pauses to reset, stricter *mise-en-place* discipline, and pre-service alignment, to minimize the public nature of error. Yet even with these buffers, chefs emphasized that stress often spilled over into well-being and motivation. Fatigue was a recurring theme: *“When you get home, you are mentally drained... it’s not just physical tiredness, it’s the pressure of having to smile and perform all night”* (I06, Q17). For others,

enjoyment diminished over time: *“At the beginning it’s exciting, but after years it becomes exhausting to always be on show”* (I14, Q19). In the most severe accounts, stress tipped into exit considerations when combined with toxic dynamics: *“I quit because it was too much - bad environment, constant pressure, no space to breathe. The open kitchen made it worse because every mistake felt public”* (I03, Q19).

4.4. Design & Operational Efficiency

Through interviews, chefs consistently framed the open kitchen as a spatial-organizational system that both enables and constrains performance. This theme was highly prevalent (79 references; 25 interviews), surrounding itself around two subthemes: *operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies* (49 references; 25 interviews), and *critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency* (30 references; 21 interviews). Together, they foreground how visibility-driven design choices redistribute to time, movement, and capacity - sometimes accelerating flow, other times amplifying frictions.

The first subtheme captures how the open layout exposes bottlenecks and magnifies resource mismatches (capacity, equipment, staffing). Chefs described compact lines and tighter *mise-en-place* as efficiency levers when intelligently planned (*“compact and optimized equipment within immediate reach to reduce movement in a limited space,”* I10, Q1). Yet the same exposure penalized overreach: *“Overbooking beyond our service capacity... management insisted on more guests despite limited resources, reducing job satisfaction”* (I20, Q16). Several narratives located the performance loss in non-layout resources - maintenance and staffing - rather than the open concept: *“general industry issues... lack of qualified staff and slow equipment maintenance”* (I23, Q19). This nuance matters as it is possible to notice that inefficiency is not inherent to openness, as it is a consequence when spatial visibility meets under-resourced systems. Chefs also tied consistency to calibrated capacity, mentioning that *“Smaller overall capacity (around 30 seats) to raise consistency, control, and personalization”* (I06, Q21). Open design makes the cost of inappropriate fit or pushing volume beyond system limits immediately legible and publicly consequential.

Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency reads as a set of grounded design critiques and micro-proposals aimed at re-balancing function, flow, and guest interaction. Many suggestions were low-cost adjustments with outsized operational dividends: more proximate storage or a slightly enlarged hot line to smooth handoffs (I07, Q21), or rethinking seating geometry to enable purposeful chef-guest contact without obstructing production

(“Swap nearby tables for high counter seating to promote chef-guest engagement” I05, Q21). Others targeted the classic aesthetic–function trade-off: “Add a service counter to interact directly with guests; improve ventilation, sound insulation, and balance functionality with aesthetics” (I24, Q21). A minority voiced contentment with the current setup, as one chef said: “I would not change anything in the design or management of the current open kitchen” (I02, Q21), a useful contrary case suggesting that when design, capacity, and staffing are aligned, openness can run seamlessly in the background of competent service. Still, most reflections pointed to concrete, feasible nudges, most of them ventilation, equipment upgrades, pass height/length, or dishwashing footprint that would reclaim seconds and help to stabilize pacing.

Efficiency gains were most often narrated where line-of-sight, station adjacency, and equipment reach minimized unnecessary movement. Open kitchens that were “compact and optimized with equipment within immediate reach to reduce movement in a limited space” (I10, Q1), and layouts that “ensure a view of the dining room from all areas for control and responsiveness” (I15, Q20). By contrast, inefficiencies clustered around mismatched capacity, deferred maintenance, and stretching the system: “Smaller overall capacity (around 30 seats) would raise consistency, control, and personalization” (I06, Q21); sector-wide pressures such as “lack of qualified staff and slow equipment maintenance” (I23, Q19) and “overbooking beyond our service capacity - management insisted on more guests despite limited resources” (I20, Q16). These dynamics also intersect with other themes in the corpus: design misfits increased stress and reduced perceived control (linking to *Stress & Burnout Management*), while well-tuned layouts supported smoother pass communication and FOH-BOH pacing (aligning with *Team Dynamics & Communication* and *Cross-Boundary Collaboration*). Finally, the fact that many chefs proposed pragmatic reconfigurations rather than wholesale redesigns signals a practice-based orientation: operational efficiency in open kitchens is continuously made through small, situated design moves that reconcile guest-facing visibility with back-of-house (BOH) throughput.

4.5. Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure

Through interviews, chefs consistently described the open kitchen as a space of visibility that reshapes how work is enacted and felt. This theme aggregates 76 coded references and coverage across most interviews, accounting 24, concentrated in *pressure of visibility* (47 references), with further strands on *customer-facing awareness* (20 references), *operational*

flaws exposed to customers (8 references), and a smaller vein framing the work explicitly as *public performance* (1 reference). In reflexive terms, participants patterned a shared account of living and working under the gaze, where being seen by diners intensifies professional self-regulation, affects moment-to-moment conduct, and amplifies both the costs and the satisfactions of service.

Chefs repeatedly emphasized the need to modulate behavior because everything is visible, narrating an ongoing, anticipatory vigilance toward posture, gestures and micro-expressions. As one chef expressed it, *“The open kitchen does not necessarily make me more prone to errors... it does require extra care in my behavior, as everything is visible”* (I02, Q17). Managing impressions was bound up with professional identity. Several described strategic composites as part of doing the job right, for example: *“Mask the stress: breathe, keep posture and a friendly expression - first impressions are visible to everyone”* (I06, Q18). This customer-facing awareness often co-occurs when mentioning standards and discipline, indicating that visibility pulls professional norms to the foreground during service.

At the same time, visibility raised the stakes when the system faltered. A notable strand concern was how the open kitchen makes operational flaws legible to guests, collapsing the boundary between back and front stage. Chefs explained that delays, misfires and breakdowns in coordination cannot be concealed: *“If a service starts to go wrong... you can’t hide those moments, so I try to resolve them quickly”* (I03, Q4). In rarer but telling cases, disorganization spilled into conflict: *“Disorganization became visible, and everything slipped at once... led to the only time I argued in front of guests”* (I25, Q16). These negative cases underscore that the same transparency capable of showcasing professionalism can also magnify the social cost of error, tightening the coupling between process quality and perceived performance.

The dominant affective tone was present through performance pressure, yet participants also narrated adaptive responses that reframed this pressure as a productive constraint. For some, constant observation sharpened focus and calm: *“When stressed, I become calmer and more focused to maintain control, avoiding visible reactions”* (I01, Q18). Others embraced the dramaturgical aspect explicitly, voicing comfort with being on display: *“It’s a constant reminder that you are part of the guest’s experience... you must enjoy the spotlight to truly thrive in it”* (I07, Q20). These accounts were not uniformly celebratory. Several chefs highlighted fatigue and the effort of sustaining persona, noting that the requirement to *“perform”* can be *“tiring”* over long services (I07, Q4), and that critical comments, even when professionally absorbed at the time, *“stayed on my mind afterwards”* (I03, Q7).

Analytically, this theme is tightly entangled with stress regulation and professional

standards. Co-coding was frequent with *Stress & Burnout Management* and *Professional Standards in Open Kitchens*, reflecting how chefs link visibility to emotional labor and codified conduct during service. A small counter-current complicates any simple equation of visibility with harm: a few participants argued that open kitchens do not increase error-proneness by itself but rather heighten mindfulness and civility (“*hierarchy communication more polite and controlled*” when guests can see/hear it [I05, Q12]). Finally, isolated but revealing references framed open-kitchen service as a kind of “*front-of-house performance*” where chefs juggle simultaneous guest interactions alongside production tasks (I09, Q2). Together, these patterned accounts show that customer gaze functions reveal both amplifier and disciplining force: it augments exposure to risk while mobilizing professionalism, impression management, and adaptive calmness as everyday strategies to work.

4.6. Customer Interaction

Customer interaction emerged as a pervasive feature of the open-kitchen experience. In the dataset it accumulated 73 coded references and appeared in 25 out of the 26 interviews. Across accounts, interaction was not an add-on to food production, it was a core condition that shaped how chefs monitored the room, paced service, and framed their craft in the moment. The theme intersects with *Professional Standards* (heightened self-regulation under customer gaze), *Team Dynamics* (who engages, when, and how without breaking rhythm), and *Work Outcomes* (how praise/complaint feedback into motivation and self-efficacy).

A first pattern positions the open kitchen as a pedagogical stage that naturally elicits curiosity. Chefs described guests leaning in to understand techniques, ingredients, and sourcing, often initiating friendly contact: “*the kitchen is part of the action; they often wave or ask to visit the kitchen*” (I04, Q6). The visibility, in turn, invites micro-explanations that personalize the meal and humanize the team, as “*It also sparks curiosity from customers*” (I02, Q15). While generally welcomed, participants emphasized that conversational bandwidth must be actively managed so that explanation does not erode flow at peak times.

A second pattern concerns engagement as a live feedback loop that chefs strategically use to steer service. Several cooks foregrounded the value of reading the room: “*Real-time view of guests helps me adjust if needed*” (I04, Q4). Others framed interaction as performance relevant calibration - “*I can read guests’ reactions and adjust, offer alternatives if needed*” (I04, Q14). This immediacy can be motivating, as explained “*In open kitchens, chefs present dishes directly, answer questions, and get instant feedback, unlike closed kitchens with*

minimal contact” (I09, Q6) - and it also socializes composure and tact: exposure *“improved my ability to handle criticism politely in real time”* (I01, Q6). Still, the emotional demand of over exposure, for some types of personality, can be seen as a negative conquest, as one chef noted that sustained visibility *“can be tiring over long stretches”* (I06, Q3).

A third pattern highlights the compression of evaluation: the distance between doing and being judged collapses in open settings. On high-pressure nights, the transparency is unforgiving - *“the open setting meant guests could see every delay or hiccup”* (I07, Q16). Chefs described coping by tightening self-presentation, or by modulating their interpersonal style: *“I try to channel it into precision and calmness”* one explained, while admitting that on intense days *“it can make me more serious and less talkative with guests”* (I07, Q18). Importantly, not all narratives valorize interaction as identity-shaping: one participant was explicit that *“Real-time interaction did not significantly shape my chef identity”* (I10, Q15). These counter cases temper any assumption that open kitchens universally transform craft or the persona as a chef. This enjoyment and efficacy depend more on being comfortable with visibility, service style, and team capacity to absorb conversational demands without compromising standards, just as reviewed in other sections.

Customer interaction in open kitchens functions as a double-edged condition of work. It widens hospitality opportunities (education, personalization, recognition) and offers real time sensory data to correct courses, yet it also heightens the premium on self-regulation and situational awareness. In other words, interaction is best understood not as a discrete task but as a cross-cutting competency in open-kitchen environments.

4.7. Work Outcomes

This following theme captures how working in an open kitchen recalibrates chefs’ day-to-day performance, well-being, and sense of self at work. It was highly salient across the dataset (67 references; 24 interviews) and unfolded into three interrelated subthemes: *Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure* (32 references; 19 interviews), *Perceived performance outcomes* (19 references; 13 interviews), and *Adaptation/Identity* (16 references; 11 interviews).

Chefs frequently linked the visibility intrinsic to open kitchens with shifts in affect and motivation. Direct, in-the-moment recognition from guests was repeatedly described as energizing: *“Speaking with guests about the food and seeing their reactions reinforces my motivation and sense of purpose as a chef”* (I21, Q15). Several participants framed visibility

as a corrective to the profession's historic invisibility - *"Being seen and appreciate boosts morale, as this profession can often feel unappreciated"* (I02, Q5), and as a source of pride when service goes well. Others reported steadier states of calm generated by orderly, well-kept spaces: *"I value clean, organized spaces; that orderliness lifts my well-being at work"* (I05, Q5). As this goes, the data nuances a uniformly positive picture. Some chefs emphasized that the emotional impact *"depends on the day and the customers...but I've always tried to take it positively, as motivation"* (I11, Q8). Overall, visibility tends to amplify affect, often upwards through appreciation and connection, but the direction of that amplification is contingent on service conditions, such as organization and service fluidity.

Participants described a learning curve in which the open setting initially disrupted performance but, with adaptation, came to support consistency and focus. As one chef concluded, *"Initially, it influenced me a lot, but now procedures are automatic, and it no longer affects my performance significantly"* (I01, Q4). Visibility sharpened attentional control *"These factors make me more focused during service...encourage high standards and consistency"* (I02, Q4) and, for some, re-framed cooking as a dual craft: technical execution plus audience management. One chef captured this duality: *"It constantly challenges me to balance cooking with performance, which has made me more disciplined and attentive"* (I22, Q20), also connecting to responsibility. A few acknowledged a slight performance drag *"if you're not used to it"* (I11, Q6), but this tended to recede with routine, briefing, and service managing. Importantly, several chefs connected stable performance to the social climate they cultivate: *"I prioritize creating a family-like environment. This improves service quality and staff satisfaction"* (I16, Q11), being a work outcome. Open kitchens appear to heighten self-monitoring and procedural discipline, giving that any early interference attenuates as practices routinise.

Open kitchens also prompted shifts in work identity and self-presentation. Some chefs explicitly described adapting personal styles to the public nature of service: *"I identify more with a closed kitchen due to my introverted personality, but I have adapted to open kitchens"* (I01, Q14), while others articulated the micro-discipline it entails, as *"It pushes me to work more methodically and keep a spotless station. Whenever I have a spare moment, I reset and tidy"* (I05, Q4). For a subset, open kitchens became part of professional identity, an authentic, not theatrical, front stage, for example, *"I don't adopt a fake persona, what people see is truly me"* (I26, Q8). Taken together, the data suggests that open kitchens tend to express work outcomes in a positive direction once chefs have time and organizational support to adapt.

4.8. Professional Standards in Open Kitchens

This theme captures how the open kitchen pushes chefs to enact higher professional standards in full public view. It was present in 24 of the 26 interviews (63 references), organized around two subthemes: *Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze* (60 references, 24 interviews) and *Self-monitoring* (3 references, 3 interviews). Together, they describe a continuous, situated arrangement of language, affect, movement, and material order to project a professional front stage during service.

Under heightened self-regulation, chefs repeatedly describe moderating speech, tone, and visible emotion because guests can hear and see them. One succinctly noted that interaction is “*similar to a closed kitchen, except for avoiding inappropriate language due to customer proximity*” (I01, Q10). Others emphasized composure as a learned posture, “*Becomes natural to work calmly in front of guests, behavior stabilizes with habit*” (I13, Q11), and linked visibility to more deliberate choices about how and when tasks are performed (as sequencing loud or messy operations to reduce spillover to the dining room), even when “*technical method doesn’t change*” (I06, Q4). Several accounts also tied visibility to more exacting expectations in colleague communication because “*customers could watch the whole process*” raising the bar for presentation and how one speaks on the line (I10, Q2). In this theme, similarly as others mentioned before, visibility acts as a persistent nudge toward linguistic restraint, affective control, and polished execution.

The second subtheme, self-monitoring, surfaces as micro-practices that keep behavior aligned with professional expectations in the present of the daily. Chefs highlighted meticulous station order, clean uniforms, and conspicuous *mise-en-place* discipline: “*It pushed me to be more methodical and organized – mise-en-place tight, stations clean, and flows clear before and during service*” (I10, Q4). Furthermore, some linked this orderliness to well-being, mentioning that “*I value clean, organized spaces; that orderliness lifts my well-being at work*” (I05, Q5). Although fewer in count (3 references), these excerpts show how standards are not only displayed but actively maintained through ongoing self-checks embedded in the flow of service.

Importantly, the data also contain counter-patterns that temper a uniform reading. A minority reported little behavioral change beyond language filtering (I01, Q10), and some framed adjustments as contingent on service breakdowns rather than constant demands (I06, Q4). Others stressed that habit normalizes the front-stage posture over time, reducing perceived strain (I13, Q11), just like exposed in *Work Outcomes*. These negative cases suggest that heightened standards are not an automatic rule of open kitchens. Evidence

indicates that professional standards in an open setting are actively produced, not merely prescribed: chefs continually regulate what they say, how they move, and how their stations look to sustain an appropriate professional image under customer gaze. While this often elevates discipline and polish (I10, Q4), the pattern is heterogeneous, as it is possible to notice that some chefs only report minimal change beyond language (I01, Q10).

4.9. Physical & Sensory Environment

This section captures how the material setting and sensory load of open kitchens (light, heat, noise, smells, sightlines) shape everyday experience at the bench. It appears broadly across the dataset (56 coded references; 24 interviews), dominated by the subtheme *Constant sensory vigilance* (54 references, 24 interviews) and, to a much lesser extent, *Design & Operational Efficiency* (2 references, 2 interviews). Together, these patterns show chefs continuously tuning attention and routines to manage the leakage of kitchen stimuli into the dining room.

Under *Constant sensory vigilance*, chefs describe an ever-present attune to what guests can hear, see, and smell. Several narratives emphasized that noise, smoke, and odors are more salient in open layouts, prompting extra care in how work is sequenced and presented as “*Noise and smoke are more noticeable, which requires extra care and respect because guests are watching*” (I05, Q2). Chefs framed this as a background demand rather than an occasional event - an ambient coexistence that requires ongoing regulation of volume, pace, and gestures. The stakes of minor disturbances were vivid in accounts of “*additional stimuli*” from the scrape of a child’s chair to proximity to diners, which can amplify reactivity and stress (I06, Q17). Others noted the synesthetic blend of kitchen sounds with guest conversation and music, experienced as energizing at times and “*sometimes challenging*” when service intensity rises (I07, Q2).

This vigilance is not only defensive, but it also carries an aesthetic and relational intent. Some chefs intentionally curate the sensory performance at the counter, privileging techniques and moments that read well for guests, for example, sights and aromas that feel inviting rather than intrusive. One example was the deliberate reduction of unpleasant smoke in favor of “*aromatic, pleasant preparations, like torching squid or caramelizing sugar in the open kitchen*” (I08, Q2). In this way, sensory management becomes part of the job: not just producing a dish but orchestrating how its production lands on the guest’s senses.

Those dynamics intersect with *Design & operational efficiency* in subtle but consequential ways. The material layout and equipment placement underpinned how sensory

exposures are created or contained. Chefs described linear corridors, counters, and close guest-facing passes that demand quiet, tidy operations on one side and relegate noisier preparations and utilities to the back (I05, Q1). The outcome is a practical choreography: loud or smoky tasks are shifted in time or space; quick, clean, and visually engaging steps are favored at the front; reinforcing that communication is kept “*clear, precise*” to avoid adding noise to the room (I02, Q10).

Experientially, the physical and sensory qualities of open kitchens cut both ways. For some, natural light, openness, and the ambient buzz were unequivocally positive contributors to enjoyment at work, “*The light, the openness, and customer interaction all contribute positively to my enjoyment of the job*” (I11, Q5). For others, impacts were conditional, varying with service rhythm, guest proximity, or concept. One chef stressed it is “*not necessarily more intense*” noting that once service starts in an open kitchen “*everything must be quiet and as odor-free as possible*” in contrast to the louder, oilier baseline of some closed kitchens (I15, Q2). These counter patterns nuance any claim that open kitchens are inherently more intense: the data point instead to situated sensory worlds that chefs learn to regulate, leverage, or buffer through fine-grained adjustments to timing, technique, and task location. Most of this extra effort shows up as constant, low-level vigilance - listening, looking and anticipating where stimuli will spill over.

4.10. Cross-Boundary Collaboration

Cross-boundary collaboration describes how, in open-kitchen settings, BOH-FOH work becomes tightly linked under customer visibility. This theme appeared across the dataset with 39 coded references and in 22 interviews, with participants depicting the pass, shared sightlines, and small layout choices as the membrane where information, timing, and accountability circulate.

Chefs repeatedly framed service as a joint system: “*I keep a calm approach and coordinate with front-of-house, as both sides depend on each other*” (I02, Q16). Several pointed to simple artefacts and spatial tweaks that amplified coordination - “*introducing service screens reduced verbal confusion and placed FOH closer to the pass so interaction happened naturally*” (I03, Q13), and to design moves they would still improve, such as “*a bigger dishwashing area and a better view of the dining room from the pass*” (I03, Q21). Others emphasized how proximity and constant line-of-sight enable a more responsive cadence, being relevant to “*ensure a nearby water point and a view of the room from all*

stations for control and responsiveness” (I15, Q20).

At the same time, openness also imports FOH volatility into BOH tempo and affect. Stress spiked when release patterns out front collided with kitchen capacity: a *“worst service”* was recalled as *“short-staffed back-of-house and a sudden batch release of tickets, resulting in chaos”* (I05, Q16), and *“seeing front-of-house release many mains at once - batching on tablets - is stressful, especially in tighter spaces”* (I21, Q16). Even before tickets drop, visibility fosters anticipatory load: *“you can see the dining room activity building before tickets arrive”* (I05, Q17).

Open kitchens also stretch roles at the boundary. Where FOH faltered, kitchens sometimes absorbed the shock to preserve service quality (I17, Q16). Direct guest exchanges, normally mediated by servers in closed kitchens, were reported as part of boundary work too: *“interaction was direct; guests frequently asked about ingredients and techniques, unlike closed kitchens where this is filtered by waitstaff”* (I10, Q6). Simultaneously, several interviewees spoke in integrative terms, mentioning that *“we see ourselves as one team, kitchen and dining room, working toward the same goal”* (I18, Q11).

Chefs’ pragmatic fixes blended design and procedure, as many occurrences show importance on reducing non-culinary FOH tasks for cooks and adding a dish drop-off point to decouple bottlenecks (I09, Q21) plus keeping pass-led release protocols and pre-service alignment to dampen batching shocks (I05, Q16; I17, Q13). These supports were interpreted as small socio-technical levers that keep the boundary permeable but controlled. When tools (screens, drop-points), sightlines, and a clear voice-of-service are in place, BOH-FOH coupling becomes a performance asset.

4.11. Motivation & Recognition

This theme captures how open kitchen visibility can energize chefs’ day-to-day work by making labor recognizable and valued in the moment. Rather than treating motivation as an individual concept, the accounts portray it as relational and situational shaped by guests’ immediate reactions, by team acknowledgment in view of the dining room, and by the public framing of culinary craft. Evidence for this theme appears across the dataset (33 references; 18 interviews) with three closely related sub-patterns: recognition of labor by customers, pride-based motivation, and a form of professional pride intensified by being exposed.

First, chefs frequently describe real-time guest feedback as both a diagnostic signal and a motivational spark. Visibility collapses the temporal lag between production and evaluation,

allowing cooks to “read the room” and adjust. *“Immediate customer feedback is motivating and reinforces team recognition”* (I01, Q15). Several chefs noted that, unlike closed kitchens where dishes “disappear” beyond a pass, open settings let them “witness reactions in real time” which in turn “makes the team feel more valued” (I02, Q6). Recognition here is not primarily about compliments after service, it is the tangible, moment-to-moment acknowledgement of effort - eye contact, a nod, a plate empty returned - that validates the craft.

Second, this recognition tends to convert into pride-based motivation and a sustained willingness to invest effort. Chefs spoke of feeling *“happy and engaged”* with visibility *“improving my confidence over time”* (I03, Q6). For some, the public character of the work raises the meaningfulness of performance: *“guests can see how we work”* one chef reflected, likening coordinated movement on the line to *“a dance”* (I04, Q3). That performative dimension of cooking affirms its artistry and creates a feedback loop in which pride fuels careful execution, which elicits further recognition.

Thirdly, several participants framed this as specifically professional pride: a deepened sense of identity tied to standards kept under the customer gaze. Chefs emphasized they *“enjoy engaging with guests and explaining dishes”* (I06, Q14), not as mere hospitality but as an extension of culinary authorship. The open kitchen becomes a venue in which techniques, hygiene, and communication are legible to outsiders; meeting that bar publicly confirms competence to self, enhancing recognition. In this sense, visibility functions as a professional mirror: *“Open kitchens are challenging but rewarding. They push you to be precise, communicate with people, and adapt,”* which *“enriches the profession”* (I19, Q20).

Importantly, this motivational uplift is not uniform. For some cooks, motivation is contingent on comfort with front-stage work: *“It depends on the person. Some feel pressured or anxious with too much attention. I prefer light interaction ...it can be very rewarding”* (I11, Q4). Others emphasized a double edge: direct guest contact is *“satisfying”* yet it also brings *“constant pressure to perform perfectly”* (I26, Q3). These deviant cases delineate that motivation rises with recognition when visibility is appraised as affirming, and it flattens when exposure is experienced as a threat.

4.12. Professional Identity & Emotional Labor

According to the dataset, chefs describe the open kitchen as a context that curates how they present themselves and manage emotions at work, this being felt on the theme *Professional*

Identity & Emotional Labor (29 references; 20 interviews).

Two patterns stand out: First, many chefs' report identity growth through repeated exposure to guests: "*The biggest personal impact has been becoming more communicative and socially confident*" (I01, Q20). With diners in view, several participants said they consciously turn up sociability to sustain a welcoming atmosphere - "*I become more sociable, energetic, and engaging...that persona helps create a welcoming environment in an open kitchen*" (I23, Q8). This is less about inauthentic performance and more about calibrating professional presence to match the visibility of the setting. Second, chefs emphasize emotional labor as an everyday requirement. Participants described masking irritation and regulating tone during service: "*I have to mask irritation and self-regulate, which is sometimes frustrating precisely because I can't outwardly release tension*" (I21, Q18).

Notably, there is variation in how far this performance extends. A minority reject adopting a different persona - "*No, I keep the same persona as in other kitchen contexts*" (I04, Q8) - or attribute changes chiefly to concentration rather than visibility (I06, Q8). The theme indicates that open kitchens tend to amplify identity work, prompting more deliberate self-presentation and emotion regulation, while leaving room for individual styles that range from overt front-stage sociability to authentic constancy.

4.13. Retention & Turnover

Retention & Turnover was comparatively modest in prevalence, accounting for 11 coded segments and appearing in 14 interviews. This places the theme in the lower-salience band of the corpus, yet still analytically relevant for understanding how chefs frame staying versus leaving decisions in open kitchen contexts.

Through interviews, chefs overwhelmingly framed retention and turnover as weakly linked to the open kitchen format, and strongly contingent on broader organizational and career factors. Departures were associated instead with leadership quality, growth ceilings, cultural toxicity, and personal projects. For instance, several chefs anchored their stay/leave calculus in managerial respect and trust: "*Only major disrespect from management would make me leave*" (I01, Q19); "*I would leave my current job only if I lost faith in the leadership...This is unrelated to whether the kitchen is open or closed*" (I02, Q19). Echoing this pattern, others explicitly dissociated exit motives from format: "*Reasons to leave wouldn't relate to the open-kitchen format; they'd be external*" (I04, Q19).

A second, recurrent thread tied turnover intentions to career mobility and entrepreneurial.

Some described hypothetical exits for self-employment or new ventures: *“I would leave to start my own open kitchen food-truck project”* (I05, Q19), or for exceptional opportunities that surpass current trajectories: *“Not likely to leave due to context...Would consider an exceptional offer or building a personal project from scratch”* (I17, Q19). Similarly, stagnant progression and toxic climates were flagged as triggers that could accelerate these decisions: *“A lack of professional growth opportunities or a toxic environment could drive turnover; in open kitchens these issues become more evident, so they might push me to leave sooner”* (I22, Q19). This nuance suggests visibility can amplify perception of already present organizational problems, thereby make exit swifter, but not cause it.

Counter examples, as retention strengthened by open kitchens, also surfaced. Some chefs described the open setting as a source of pride, service control, and craft visibility, which anchors them in role: *“I remain in open kitchens because they give me better service control”* (I15, Q19); *“The open-kitchen context wouldn’t make me leave, it’s actually the best part of my work”* (I25, Q19). In this sense, the format can buffer turnover when it aligns with chefs’ professional identity. Relatedly, open kitchens can reinforce professionalism as *“They keep us more alert, directly impacting our professionalism”* (I20, Q4), which some interpret as intrinsic motivation rather than strain, further supporting retention.

4.14. Professional Development

Professional Development was the least prominent theme extracted from answers, accounting for 6 of all coded segments and appearing in 6 interviews. The low frequency suggests that, relative to other topics, chefs seldom framed their experiences in developmental terms, though they still articulated a few learning moments.

When it did surface, chefs described open kitchens as situated learning environments that catalyze real-time knowledge exchange and soft-skill growth. Illustratively, some linked the format to identity-affirming learning: *“Learning about ingredients and sharing that knowledge in real time strengthens my identity as a chef”* (I04, Q15); *“Learning happens daily...No chef is ever complete, growth is continuous”* (I17, Q15).

Other narratives framed visible teamwork as developmental: early exposure *“boosted my learning and taught me valuable lessons about teamwork in view of the customer”* (I03, Q11). Others emphasized ongoing product and producer literacy fostered by guest interaction (I12, Q20), and interpersonal confidence that had been *“underused in closed kitchens”* (I14, Q3).

5. Discussion

The study aimed to explain how the open kitchen format reshapes chefs' behavior, team interaction, and perceived professionalism, and why these changes matter for HR and operations. For so, this chapter integrates the study's qualitative findings with the extant literature, connecting patterned accounts from 26 interviews to theoretical anchors around visibility, emotional labor, and socio-technical design.

In light of the study's aim and research objectives, the findings indicate that (RO1–RO6): (i) the physical and sensory environment and the constant audience reshape everyday behavioral regulation; (ii) customer exposure elevates impression-management and deep/surface acting demands; (iii) FOH–BOH coordination becomes tighter and more rule-governed under public view; (iv) repeated exposure contributes to identity consolidation for many chefs while remaining heterogeneous across profiles; (v) stress unfolds through two pathways - gaze-related regulation and tempo/fit-related strain, buffered by design and HR resources; and (vi) chefs associate the format with concrete operational levers and opportunities when socio-technical fit is ensured.

Across the dataset, visibility emerges as the central condition that both amplifies performance standards and disciplines conduct, compressing the distance between production and evaluation and foreground impression management as everyday work. This aligns with literature that frames open kitchens as a setting where technical craft and “frontstage” comportment intertwine, rendering emotional labor and customer feedback integral to the job rather than peripheral. (e.g., Graham, 2020; Graham et al., 2020; Yeh et al., 2022).

At the same time, the discussion highlights how spatial design and FOH (front-of-house)-BOH (back-of-house) coupling can either buffer or magnify stress, and how identity work unfolds from repeated exposure to customers, translating in concrete implications for HR and operations.

5.1. Visibility & Behavior in the Open Kitchen Context

5.1.1. Behavioral Self-Regulation under Customer Gaze

The most consistent pattern concerns heightened self-regulation in the sense that participants report moderating speech, controlling visible emotions, and sequencing noisier/messier tasks to protect the dining-room experience, being these practices that stabilize with habit. This everyday discipline is experienced both as pressure and a productive constraint that sharpens

focus and composure during peak load. The RTA (Reflexive Thematic Analysis) evidence shows visibility collapsing the lag between doing and being judged: delays, misfires, or tension become publicly legible, raising stakes for impression management and accelerating corrective action. Chefs often respond by “tightening” posture and tone, masking irritation, and maintaining calm, which protects face for the team and organization. This is squarely in line with the emotional-labor theory applied to open kitchens: workers actively manage affective display to meet organizational expectations in front of an audience (Graham, 2020; Graham et al., 2020).

Consistent with emotional-labor research, heterogeneity in responses is expected: deep acting versus surface acting map onto differences in strain and authenticity (Grandey, 2000; Hülshager & Schewe, 2011), while person–environment/role fit moderates whether visibility is appraised as challenge or threat (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

Crucially, the dataset also shows heterogeneity. A minority report minimal change beyond language filtering, others note that “frontstage” comportment normalizes over time. This pattern aligns with socialization and habit-formation accounts in visible service work, where practice and clear display rules reduce regulation costs over time (Diefendorff et al., 2019). Motivation and well-being effects are contingent on appraisal: recognition and pride rise when visibility is affirming, but exposure can be draining for some profiles. These opposite cases temper universal claims and suggest that selection, socialization, and ongoing support are key HR levers.

5.1.2. Communication & FOH–BOH Coupling

The responses obtained show that visibility does not stop at individual stance, but it reconfigures team communication and the boundary between back and front-of-house. Chefs describe lean, low-volume communication and moderated enactments of hierarchy that keep service flow clean” to outside observers. This coheres with work on collaborative ergonomics and team cognition in open formats, where line-of-sight and scripted cues support rapid coordination under audience gaze (Yeh et al., 2022; Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022; Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2022).

Operationally, open kitchens tighten FOH–BOH coupling which releases patterns in the dining room that directly shape kitchen tempo and affect. When FOH batches mains or overbooks relative to capacity, stress spikes and coordination frays; when pass-led protocols, pre-service alignment, and clear drop-points are in place, coupling turns into an asset that smooths pacing and reduces visible errors. This mechanism is consistent with socio-technical

control via the pass as a coordination artifact that transforms volatility into shared situational awareness (Yeh et al., 2022; Filimonau et al., 2024).

Furthermore, daily interchanges with guests often occur at the boundary (for example, plate hand-offs, brief explanations), positioning some cooks temporarily as FOH actors. Teams that explicitly allocate this interface role and guard kitchen bandwidth (timing, who speaks, how long) report fewer flow disruptions. This fully resonates with the literature's emphasis on collaborative ergonomics and spatial design as enablers of communication quality and shared situational awareness supported by Yeh et al. (2022). In data, the same patterns - low-volume scripts, visual cueing, and role allocation - mirror those design-supported mechanisms.

5.2. Spatial Design, Efficiency & Stress

5.2.1. Design Fit as a Performance Lever

Across the interviews, chefs construed the open kitchen not as a static backdrop but as a spatial-organizational system whose fit with demand, resources, and guest contact either multiplies or absorbs frictions. In the data, efficiency gains clustered where line-of-sight, station adjacency, and equipment reach minimized unnecessary movement and enabled continuous room monitoring. In other words, visibility equals productivity when spatial design underwrites flow, not merely when guests can see it happening. These patterns extend prior propositions that spatial design and sightlines encode task sequences and tacit communication, what Yeh et al. (2022) calls "collaborative ergonomics", linking environment to coordinated action.

From a theoretical standpoint, the interviews nuance the literature by showing that open kitchen's efficiency is conditional, not inherent: when capacity policies, maintenance and staffing are misaligned, openness amplifies bottlenecks because delays become publicly legible; when socio-technical fit is strong, the same visibility shortens feedback loops and supports tacit coordination (Filimonau et al., 2024; Sırıklı & Seçim, 2024; Vu et al., 2024; Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022). Chefs repeatedly located breakdowns in misfit, such as overbooking, deferred maintenance, and staffing gaps, rather than in openness per se. When resource-layout alignment faltered, visibility amplified the consequences because bottlenecks became publicly legible and reputationally costly. Conversely, small, situated design nudges - pass height/length adjustments, proximate storage, counter seating that channels engagement - were narrated as effective levers to stabilize pacing without sacrificing guest connection. This

conditionality is consistent with practice-based views of design as an affordance for team cognition and creativity (Bressan et al., 2023), rather than a fixed property of openness itself. These grounded proposals reinforce a practice-based reading of design: efficiency is made during service through micro-reconfigurations that reconcile guest-facing transparency. This conditionality coheres with research that treats space as an affordance for team cognition and creativity. Yeh et al. (2022) link line-of-sight and equipment placement to information encoding and sequencing, while Bressan et al. (2023) frame knowledge management as arranging access to resources in ways that catalyze invention. Together, they imply that “good design” is simultaneously ergonomic (flow), cognitive (shared attention), and symbolic (professional image under gaze). The findings also echoed that triad: chefs described how compactness and clear viewpoints enabled tacit cues and quicker, quieter hand-offs, while orderliness at stations functioned as both a process control and a professional signal to diners.

A further contribution concerns sustainability and design pairing. Literature argues that layout, ventilation, and waste-minimizing routines are ethical-operational matters (Gössling & Hall, 2021; Filimonau et al., 2024; Vu et al., 2024) onto chefs’ requests for better ventilation, sound insulation, and dishwashing footprints - changes that would improve guest comfort, reduce sensory leakage, and reclaim seconds on the line. Rather than separate ecological improvements from performance, the accounts position them as the same design lever aimed at capacity control and sensory hygiene under observation.

5.2.2. Two Stress Pathways and Moderators

The results suggest two concurrent stress pathways associated with open kitchens, each intensified, or moderated, by spatial fit and organizational practice. The first pathway relates to emotional labor under customer gaze. Chefs described sustained self-monitoring of tone, expression and gesture, composure as well as linguistic restraint as ways of not enabling frustration to guests. These results align with literature that defines emotional labor as the management of felt and displayed emotion to meet public expectations, a demand sharpened by constant observation (Graham, 2020; Graham et al., 2020). The second one resonates with tempo intensity stress tied to service rhythms and resource constraints, such as ticket batch releases, reservation overlaps, and long service formats. Here, stress originates in capacity, maintenance, or staffing rather than in visibility, yet openness increases the cost of delay or disorganization. This resonates with previous literature showing that job stressors in kitchens include compressed timelines and uncertain order flows, with antecedents in layout and role clarity and that in open contexts these are transmuted by customer presence (Mac Con

Iomaire et al., 2021; Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022; Yeh et al., 2022).

The moderators evidenced in the data and literature help explain why stress was not uniform: several chefs minimized the salience of being watched after years in role, reporting that front-stage posture normalizes with practice – experience and habituation. This is consistent with the idea that competencies congruent with task demands buffer anxiety in visible settings (Yeh et al., 2022); Humor, peer support, tacit awareness, and disciplined, low-volume communication were described as in-service regulators that both alleviate strain and preserve tempo, coping as coordination rather than detour (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022; Sırıklı & Seçim, 2024). In results, where teams had predictable routines and mutual monitoring, chefs reported calmer tempo and fewer visible errors; Design misfits (ventilation, acoustics, dishwashing footprint, seat geometry) and overbooking elevated both pathways by increasing sensory leakage, but the same spaces, when tuned, acted as stress dampeners. This directly links the second pathway to the argument: openness raises the stakes of design choices; Studies connecting empowerment and open innovation to creativity indicate that when chefs feel agentic, visible challenge states are more likely to be appraised as stimulating rather than threatening (Eren et al., 2021; Vu et al., 2024). The data mirror this appraisal shift: for some, exposure sharpened calm and focus, and recognition loops boosted motivation; Literature underscores that structural and relational strategies as staffing to capacity, workflow training, peer mentoring, and clear FOH–BOH norms are prerequisites for sustained resilience in visible kitchens; without these, constant down-regulation can erode well-being over time (Magrizos et al., 2023; Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2022). In this line up, interviewees’ exit narratives were associated to persistent toxic work climates.

Finally, the sensory dimension matters for both pathways. Chefs’ continuous tuning to noise, heat, smoke, and smells was experienced as a persistent background demand that can be energizing at moderate levels and exhausting at peaks. This intertwines with studies showing that aural-visual stimuli and spatial organization shape both process and emotional state and that consequently, ventilation, acoustic treatment, and equipment placement are not merely comfort features but stress moderators in an exposed service scape (Yeh et al., 2022).

5.3. Identity, Standards & Retention

5.3.1. Adaptation of Trajectories towards Authentic Professionalism

Across contemporary kitchen work, identity is not a fixed attribute but an ongoing project that is negotiated in relation to audiences, tools, and teams (Graham, 2020; Marinakou &

Giousmpasoglou, 2022). In open kitchens, this negotiation seems to be intensified by continuous guest visibility. The “frontstage” of service and the “backstage” of production partially collapse, requiring chefs to align technical execution with impression management in real time, what dramaturgical perspectives would frame as the disciplined curation of conduct under an observing gaze (Graham et al., 2020). Through data, many chefs described a shift from initial self-monitoring to a steadier, internalized professionalism, where external standards and personal craft values converge. Early stages in open kitchens often feature surface controls to meet display rules under customer proximity. This pattern aligns with sector specific accounts that visibility can, paradoxically, sharpen composure and method, catalyzing a more deliberate, craft-anchored identity (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022; Yeh et al., 2020).

Rather than suggesting a wholesale reinvention of hierarchy or technique, the results portray a moderated performance of power and discipline - authority enacted through calm cues rather than audible reprimands - compatible with findings that open kitchens privilege legible, low-drama coordination (Graham, 2020; Graham et al., 2020). The practical upshot gathered is that many chefs move from compliance to endorsement: they come to view the standards demanded by visibility as congruent with their own aspirations for precision, hygiene, and civility (Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2022).

Importantly, these identity trajectories are heterogeneous. A minority normalize visibility without deeper identity revisions, perceiving the open/closed distinction as largely operational rather than transformational, a stance also noted in recent empirical work that cautions against essentializing the “open kitchen effect” (Sırıklı & Seçim, 2024). Others report that visibility can tip into identity strain in poorly resourced settings (as cramped lines, noise/heat spillover, unmanaged batching), echoing findings that stressors tied to tempo, interruptions, and environmental overload disrupt professional meaning (Bressan et al., 2023; Filimonau et al., 2024). Where design fit and staffing are sufficient, however, visibility is more likely to operate as a disciplining but developmental force, reinforcing an authentic, hospitable identity rather than a brittle performance.

5.3.2. Work Outcomes & Retention Intentions

From a HR perspective, the results show that the open kitchen context recalibrates demands and resources in ways that bear directly on performance, well-being, and intentions to stay. The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model predicts that sustained high demands without

adequate resources foster strain and burnout, whereas resources promote engagement and retention (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, 2014). The evidence base in hospitality aligns with this logic: stressors such as interruptions, peak-load collisions, and sensory overload are associated with fatigue and withdrawal cognitions, while social and design resources buffer strain and sustain performance (Bressan et al., 2023; Filimonau et al., 2024; Vu et al., 2023).

In open kitchens specifically, two mechanisms appear particularly salient for outcomes. First, the recognition channel: real-time guest feedback and visible appreciation can elevate affect, self-efficacy, and motivation - resources repeatedly tied to creativity and persistence in service work (Yeh et al., 2020; Marinakou & Giousmpasoglou, 2022). Unlike closed kitchens, where evaluation is temporally and spatially distant, open layouts collapse that gap, creating frequent positive micro-events that reinforce effort and standards. Over time, these fosters work meaningfulness and professional pride, well-known contributors to discretionary effort and lower turnover intention. Second, the exposure channel: errors, bottlenecks, or interpersonal friction are public, raising the reputational cost of slips and heightening the need for emotional labor, consistent with hospitality studies linking unmanaged demand surges and role stress to attrition (Bressan et al., 2023; Filimonau et al., 2024). Results echo this asymmetry since chefs' exit considerations rarely hinge on visibility. Rather, exposure amplifies existing deficits in the socio-technical system.

Finally, organizational support through visible sponsorship by leadership, timely maintenance, fair scheduling, and recognition systems that make guest praise and peer appreciation salient, activate reciprocity dynamics associated with commitment and staying decisions. Where such resources are in place, open kitchens often report steadier performance and stronger attachment. In terms of literature, retention in open kitchens is less about shielding chefs from visibility and more about orchestrating demands and resources so that visibility becomes a source of meaning, feedback, and professional pride rather than a vector of exhaustion (Graham et al., 2020; Filimonau et al., 2024; Vu et al., 2023).

5.4. Theoretical and Practical Implications for HR & Operations

5.4.1. Theoretical Implications

The gathered data from interviews aligns with literature portraying the open kitchen as more than an architectural choice - a socio-technical arrangement that reshapes regulation of behavior, coordination, and identity - and this alignment translates into explicit theoretical levers. First, the findings specify visibility as an organizing condition that compresses the

delay between performance and evaluation, thereby making emotional display a constitutive element of culinary work rather than a peripheral add-on (Graham, 2020; Graham et al., 2020). Second, they conceptualize FOH–BOH coupling as a boundary mechanism governed by scripts (the pass, release logic, low-volume verbal cues) that transform audience-proximate volatility into shared situational awareness and faster error correction. This extends recent accounts of collaboration and team cognition in hospitality settings (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022; Filimonau et al., 2024). Third, the study integrates service scape and collaborative ergonomics by linking concrete affordances such as sightlines, station adjacency, equipment reaches, acoustic and thermal conditions to communication quality and flow, adding specificity to how spatial design enables or hinders coordination (Bitner, 1992; Bressan et al., 2023). Finally, by articulating two stress pathways: gaze-related emotional regulation and tempo/fit-related strain, moderated by resources (staffing to capacity, clear display rules, supportive leadership, designed micro-breaks), the results extend Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory to visibility-intensive culinary work and clarify when openness yields challenge states (engagement, pride) versus threat appraisals (vigilance fatigue, perceived loss of control) (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, 2017; Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). Taken together, these implications connect dramaturgical visibility, boundary coordination, and design characteristics with motivational processes, showing that openness in the kitchen is conditional rather than inherently beneficial and its effects depend on socio-technical fit and the balance of demands and resources (Graham, 2020; Graham et al., 2020; Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022; Filimonau et al., 2024).

5.4.2. Practical Implications

From an HR perspective, staffing decisions should explicitly account for visible service demands. Selection and development criteria need to include communication under pressure, emotion-regulation strategies, and comfort with brief guest interactions (example: answering a guest’s spontaneous question while plating), alongside classical culinary metrics. Structured auditions and probation shifts in service conditions can be used to observe display rules in practice (low-volume speech, clean body language), while development plans incorporate micro-teaching with guests and cross-training at the pass so that competence in “frontstage-adjacent” moments becomes part of professional growth rather than an informal expectation (Grandey, 2000; Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). To ensure fairness and reduce hidden costs, appraisal systems should balance backstage excellence (consistency, mise-en-place discipline) with visible behaviors (clarity of explanation, composure), making criteria explicit and

coachable.

Operational implications follow directly from the way visibility narrows feedback loops. Pre-service alignment should translate demand forecasts into seat-release rules and dish-drop pacing that the pass can enforce; line-of-sight mapping can be used to position key roles where they read the room without leaving stations; nearby storage and a dish drop-point decouple peaks; and simple, scripted handoffs at the FOH–BOH boundary keep throughput legible to diners while reducing noise and error propagation (Graham et al., 2020; Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022; Filimonau et al., 2024). Small design nudges such as pass height and length, adjacency of hot and cold stations, ventilation that reduces heat-induced irritability, acoustic absorption that lowers vocal effort, are low-cost levers that stabilize pacing and reduce the cognitive load of impression management (Bitner, 1992; Bressan et al., 2023). When capacity and layout are mismatched, the same transparency that delights diners can amplify bottlenecks. In such cases, queueing rules and FOH batching protocols should be adjusted to the kitchen’s demonstrated time rather than idealized assumptions.

Well-being considerations should be organized around two stress pathways and their moderators. Within a JD-R logic, visibility and tempo function as demands; resources include staffing to capacity, clear display rules and supportive leadership. The practical translation is straightforward: rotate exposure-heavy stations (pass, counter-seating interface), schedule micro breaks that are protected even in peak windows and formalize “calm scripts” for error recovery to avoid visible spirals (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007, 2017; Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). Pre-shift briefings should set display expectations, and post-shift debriefs should include short emotion-regulation reflections so that surface acting does not accumulate unchecked; targeted coaching can encourage deep acting when is appropriate, which is associated with better well-being outcomes in customer-facing work (Grandey, 2000; Hülshager & Schewe, 2011). Safety and hygiene procedures should be framed as part of the aesthetic of service (quiet efficiency, clean lines) to reinforce intrinsic motivation rather than mere compliance.

On motivation, identity, and retention, visibility can become an engine of development when HR and operations deliberately convert it into pedagogy. Recognition mechanisms that credit both craft and behavior - rotating who presents a dish, peer acknowledgements for backstage reliability, open kitchen showcase nights where juniors explain a component signal that multiple identities (craftsperson, communicator, teammate) are valued. Clear development pathways should weave in FOH-adjacent competencies (micro-explanations, body-language discipline, guest micro-interactions) and give chefs safe practice arenas (mock

service with staff roleplaying guests) to reduce the cost of learning in public. Team rituals that celebrate calm recovery from errors, rather than only flawless execution, help internalize openness as professional instead of a brittle performance, sustaining pride while protecting well-being (Graham, 2020; Graham et al., 2020). These practical directions underpin the theoretical implications: visibility is shown to be a designable condition, FOH–BOH coupling a governable boundary and stress a dual-pathway process moderated by resources, linking socio-technical design and HR practices in a way that both disciplines and energizes practice (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022; Filimonau et al., 2024; Bressan et al., 2023).

5.5. Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

5.5.1. Limitations of the Study

Despite meeting the study's aims, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the sample (N=26) was obtained through non-probability procedures (convenience and snowball) concentrated in Lisbon. As such, the findings should be interpreted as analytically illuminating rather than statistically generalizable, and their transferability to other geographies, concepts of open kitchens, or ownership/format configurations must be assessed with caution (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Second, although efforts were made to recruit diverse profiles, the sample is gender-imbalanced (21 men; 5 women), which constrains the ability to speak confidently about potentially gendered experiences. Third, the study is mono method: data were generated solely through semi-structured interviews with chefs. Without more in-depth triangulation (in-service observation, for example), some inferences about behavior under gaze remain based on self-report and are therefore vulnerable to recall and social-desirability biases (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Fourth, there were bibliographic-density constraints. While the dissertation integrates core strands (visibility, emotional labor and display rules, team coordination, JD-R mechanisms), certain adjacent literatures (service operations/ergonomics or performance studies) were de-emphasized given the lack of scope and the theme being recent in field. This narrower corpus may have reduced opportunities to cross-validate some interpretations. Finally, the cross-sectional design captures situated perceptions but cannot track adaptation or strain over time (for example habituation to visibility, seasonal demand effects, or cumulative burnout trajectories).

5.5.2. Suggestions for Future Studies

Building on these limitations, several avenues can strengthen external relevance, explanatory

depth, and practical guidance.

First, comparative and multi-site designs, contrasting open versus closed kitchens across cuisines, price points, and countries, would help isolate effects attributable to visibility per se rather than general service intensity or local market features, thereby improving transferability. Second, mixed-method studies that incorporate in-service observation, ethnographic shadowing at the pass, or video elicited recall can triangulate self-report with behavioral evidence, revealing tacit routines (signals, gaze, sequencing) that interviews tend to compress and mitigate social desirability and recall bias. Third, cross-boundary perspectives that include FOH interviews/surveys, brief diner probes, and operational data (as ticket pacing, dwell times, recovery rates) can test the coupling mechanisms proposed and link them to guest experience and performance outcomes, with a better understanding. Fourth, focused inquiry into gendered experiences, with stronger female representation and intersectional lenses-can examine whether visibility, emotional regulation, and recognition operate differently across gender profiles. Fifth, focus on pragmatic design-intervention studies (before/after micro-reconfigurations to pass geometry, sight lines, service-screen protocols, or counter-seating) can quantify effects on flow, FOH-BOH alignment, and guest evaluations, providing actionable guidance for operators and designers inside this niche

6. Conclusion

6.1. Principle Conclusions of the Study

This dissertation offers an integrated vision of how visibility reconfigures day-to-day coordination, standards of conduct, and experienced strain. Across narratives, visibility consistently surfaced as an organizing condition and not only an architectural feature: it sharpens line-of-sight, compresses feedback loops, and places the guest as a constant audience to both coordination and craft ship. Under these conditions, front and back-of-house linkage becomes tighter, with chefs describing a choreography of briefings, eye contact, hand-offs, and verbal economy that sustains service flow in public view. The same visibility, however, makes errors, delays, and bottlenecks more consequential, raising the salience of preparation discipline and moment-to-moment self-regulation.

The findings indicate two concurrent stress pathways. A recognition pathway links guest proximity to positive effects, meaning, and professional pride when teams feel resourced and the service runs to plan. An exposure pathway links public scrutiny to heightened emotional labor, reputational cost of mistakes, and vigilance fatigue when capacity, layout, or maintenance are misaligned. Which pathway dominates depends less on visibility itself than on socio-technical fit: station adjacency, line-of-sight that supports anticipation, equipment reliability, heat and noise control, realistic menu-capacity alignment, staffing, fair scheduling, and room for recovery during lulls. When these conditions are met, chefs often reframe pressure as performance focus; when they are absent, the same transparency amplifies strain and erodes perceived control.

At the individual level, open kitchens draw standards and identity to the foreground. Most chefs reported deliberate adjustments in language, demeanor, sequencing, and *mise-en-place* to maintain a coherent image on their front “stage”. With time, peer support, and clear service scripts, many described a settling process in which performance norms became internalized and authenticity strengthened rather than diminished. Yet effects are heterogeneous: for some, changes were minimal beyond softening language; for others, exposure was energizing only when leadership buffered stressors and recognized good performance promptly. From an HR lens, the implication is practical and actionable: retention intentions hinge on arranging credible resources so that being seen becomes a source of esteem rather than exhaustion. Leadership sponsorship, routine recognition, preventive maintenance, participatory tweaks to layout, and capacity-aware rostering emerged in the data as the levers that convert visibility

into stable performance and sustainable work.

Taken together, the study contributes a practice proximate account of open kitchens as visibility-intensive and socio-technical systems. It clarifies when and how openness improves coordination, standards, and identity consolidation, and when it magnifies stress. By sitting in design fit and HR architecture as moderators, the dissertation advances a balanced explanation for the mixed outcomes reported in industry discourse: open kitchens do not simply expose work, they reshape it, for better or worse, depending on the alignment between people, process, and place.

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Annexes

Annex A: Interview Script to Chefs

Good morning/afternoon,

My name is Jéssica Duarte Carrasqueira, and I am a master's student in Hospitality and Tourism Management at ISCTE-IUL. Thank you in advance for agreeing to participate in this study and for making the time to share your experience.

This interview supports my dissertation titled “Open Kitchen Concept: A Human Resources Perspective Through Chefs”. The study aims to:

1. Understand how chefs working in open-kitchen settings perceive the concept.
2. Examine how guest visibility shapes on-the-job behavior, including emotion display/regulation and performance under public gaze.
3. Analyze effects on team dynamics and front-of-house/back-of-house coordination and communication.
4. Explore how spatial design and the physical–sensory environment relate to workflow efficiency and stress.
5. Identify stressors and resources specific to open kitchens and the coping/resilience practices chefs use.
6. Consider implications for chefs' professional identity, standards of conduct, and retention intentions.
7. Gather chefs' suggestions for the open-kitchen concept and HR practices.

The main purpose of this interview is to collect your first-hand experience on topics related to the open-kitchen concept. The interview is organized into seven blocks: (i) a sociodemographic section with 8 questions; (ii) the study questions grouped into six sections (each with 2-5 questions); and (iii) two closing questions - 21 questions in total. The interview will last up to one hour. Please feel free to ask for clarification at any moment.

I will now display and read the Informed Consent form (also sent by email), which protects your interests, including anonymity and confidentiality. With your permission, I would like to audio-record the interview solely to ensure accuracy during the analysis of your responses.

I kindly ask you to answer as fully and deeply as possible, drawing on concrete examples

from your experience.

Shall we begin?

Demographic Information

Age:

Gender:

Academic degree:

Additional training in the field:

Years as Chef:

Years working in Open Kitchen:

Cuisine type:

Number of covers per service:

Block A - Physical and Sensory Environment

Q1: How would you describe the physical layout of the Open Kitchen you work in?

Q2: Do you consider the sensory environment more intense in an Open Kitchen? How?

Q3: What do you consider to be the main positive and negative aspects associated with the physical and sensory characteristics of the Open Kitchen you just described?

Q4: During the service, how do these aspects influence your performance and/or working method?

Q5: Do you think the physical and sensory factors of your workplace impact your well-being? How?

Block B - Customer Interaction

Q6: How would you describe your interaction with customers in your workplace and what are, for you, the differences in this interaction in an Open Kitchen?

Q7: Do you recall a moment when a customer's opinion made you feel something during the service? How did you react and what impact did that gesture have on the rest of the service?

Q8: Do you feel that you adopt a different persona when cooking in front of customers? How does it differ from your usual version or in another type of kitchen context?

Block C – Team Dynamics and Communication

Q9: What is the size of the kitchen team?

Q10: Do you consider that you interact differently with the team due to the kitchen layout where you work? How would you describe this interaction?

Q11: How does the interaction with your colleagues described above, specifically in this context, impact your behavior and way of being at work?

Q12: How do you think the open kitchen context can change the way hierarchy is coordinated?

Q13: Do you think informal strategies or rules may emerge to keep communication efficient? Could you provide an example?

Block D - Chef's Identity

Q14: What type of kitchen context (open or not) do you identify with the most? Why?

Q15: How does real-time interaction with ingredients, colleagues and customers feed your identity as a chef in this job?

Block E - Stress and Burnout Management

Q16: Do you recall a particularly stressful service? What were the main factors that contributed to that situation?

Q17: Do you consider that working in an Open Kitchen context makes you more prone to stressful situations? How?

Q18: How does stress influence your behavior in the context of an Open Kitchen?

Q19: What would make you leave your current job? Do you think those reasons are more or less likely in the professional context you are in and why?

Closing the Interview

Q20: Would you like to add anything about working in an Open Kitchen and the direct impacts it has on how you see your job and behaviors?

Q21: If you could change something in the design or management of the Open Kitchen you currently work in, what would it be?

Annex B: Informed Consent

This study is part of a research project taking place at **ISCTE - University Institute of Lisbon**.

The study aims to develop the thesis entitled “Open Kitchen Concept: A Human Resources Perspective Through Chefs.” Your participation in the study - greatly appreciated - will contribute to advancing knowledge in this field of science and consists of an interview lasting approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour.

ISCTE is the controller of your personal data, which are collected and processed exclusively for the purposes of the study, on the legal basis of your consent, pursuant to Article 6(1)(a) and Article 9(2)(a) of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

The study is conducted by Jéssica Carrasqueira (jdcae1@iscte-iul.pt), whom you may contact if you wish to clarify a question, share any comment, or exercise your rights regarding the processing of your personal data. You may use this contact to request access, rectification, erasure, or restriction of processing of your personal data.

Participation in this study is **confidential**. Your personal data will always be processed by authorized personnel bound by duties of secrecy and confidentiality. ISCTE ensures the use of appropriate technical, organizational, and security measures to protect personal information. All researchers are required to keep personal data confidential.

In addition to being confidential, participation in the study is strictly voluntary: you may freely choose whether to participate. If you choose to participate, you may stop participating and withdraw consent for the processing of your personal data at any time, without providing any justification. Withdrawal of consent does not affect the lawfulness of processing previously carried out on the basis of the consent given.

Your personal data will be retained for 6 months, after which it will be destroyed or anonymized, and your anonymity will be guaranteed in the study results, which will only be disclosed for statistical, educational, conference communication, or scientific publication purposes.

No significant risks are expected to be associated with participation in the study.

ISCTE does not disclose or share your personal data with third parties.

ISCTE has a Data Protection Officer, who can be contacted at dpo@iscte-iul.pt. You also have the right to lodge a complaint with the competent supervisory authority - the Comissão Nacional de Proteção de Dados (CNPD).

I declare that I have understood the objectives of the study as proposed and explained by the researcher; that I have been given the opportunity to ask all my questions about this study and have received clear answers to them. I agree to participate in the study and I consent to the use of my personal data in accordance with the information provided to me.

Yes No

_____ (location), ____/ ____/ _____ (date)

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Annex C: Interview Responses

Interview ID	R Num	R_Text
I01	1	The kitchen is connected to a bar, with a wood-fired oven for pizzas, a hot section with stove, grill, fryers, ovens, a cold/dessert section, and a small dishwashing area. The layout has remained mostly the same since the beginning, with few changes due to limited space.
I01	2	Yes. Extra care is required with speech, hygiene, and appearance because customers are very close. Open space increases awareness of behavior and presentation.
I01	3	Positive: Direct contact with customers, immediate feedback, curiosity and interaction. Negative: Constant need to control behavior, visible stress, and no way to hide mistakes or disorganization.
I01	4	Initially, it influenced me a lot, but now procedures are automatic and it no longer affects my performance significantly.
I01	5	At first it was challenging due to being introverted, but it helped me become more open and comfortable with interaction, improving my well-being and job satisfaction.
I01	6	Customers often initiate contact. Interaction is usually positive, with questions or compliments. It has improved my ability to handle criticism politely in real time.
I01	7	A customer once compared me negatively to the executive chef, which felt personal. I remained professional during service but felt very affected afterwards.
I01	8	-
I01	9	Four people: myself, the executive chef, and two other colleagues, working together for about three years.
I01	10	Interaction is similar to a closed kitchen, except for avoiding inappropriate language due to customer proximity.
I01	11	Good team integration and established processes make communication smooth and efficient, positively affecting my behavior at work.
I01	12	No difference compared to a closed kitchen.
I01	13	No specific codes or rules; communication is natural and efficient due to team experience.
I01	14	I identify more with a closed kitchen due to my introverted personality, but I have adapted to open kitchens.

I01	15	Immediate customer feedback is motivating and reinforces team recognition.
I01	16	New Year's Eve service is the most stressful due to special menus and high expectations. Stress factors are unrelated to the open kitchen format.
I01	17	Yes, more prone because of the extra concern about not showing stress to customers.
I01	18	When stressed, I become calmer and more focused to maintain control, avoiding visible reactions.
I01	19	Only major disrespect from management would make me leave. This is unlikely given the respectful work environment.
I01	20	The biggest personal impact has been becoming more communicative and socially confident.
I01	21	I would change the kitchen design to make it more functional, especially increasing stove capacity and enlarging the dishwashing area.
I02	1	The kitchen is very well equipped, with all necessary materials, much better prepared than other places I have worked. It is a privilege to have access to such a complete setup.
I02	2	Yes, the sensory environment is more intense. We must always be attentive to everything, as even small gestures can be noticed by customers. This requires extra discipline.
I02	3	Positive aspects: strong interaction with customers, who often want to visit the kitchen and meet the team, especially children. It creates a special connection. Negative aspects: the need for constant discipline and care, such as avoiding touching hair or behaving casually, as everything is visible.
I02	4	These factors make me more focused during service, as customers can see everything. This encourages me to maintain high standards and consistency.
I02	5	It has a positive impact on my well-being. Being seen and appreciated by customers boosts morale, as this profession can often feel unappreciated.
I02	6	Interaction with customers is positive. In an open kitchen, we greet them, exchange a few words, and they can see our work directly. Unlike a closed kitchen, where we just send food out, here we can witness their reactions in real time.
I02	7	Positive feedback is always rewarding. When customers praise the meal, I redirect the compliments to the entire team, making sure they feel valued. Negative feedback, I filter and address with the team only after finding a solution.
I02	8	I do not adopt a different persona, but working in front of customers demands a higher professional standard. It feels like a more selective and special way of working.
I02	9	The kitchen team size was not specified directly.
I02	10	Communication is essential. We keep noise to a minimum, avoid unnecessary chatter during service, and focus on clear, precise exchanges.
I02	11	This disciplined communication ensures consistent quality, whether serving 10 or 80 customers. It keeps the team focused and coordinated.
I02	12	I don't believe the open kitchen changes the way hierarchy is coordinated.

I02	13	Yes, we have informal rules such as avoiding unrelated conversation during service, and confirming every instruction with a ‘Yes, Chef’ to ensure understanding.
I02	14	I cannot say I have a defined preference yet. I enjoy various styles of cuisine and focus more on managing and leading my team than on a specific kitchen layout.
I02	15	Real-time interaction with ingredients, colleagues, and customers makes the work more dynamic and engaging. It also sparks curiosity from customers.
I02	16	Every service has its challenges, but I keep a calm approach. I work to maintain a strong relationship between kitchen and front-of-house, as both sides depend on each other.
I02	17	The open kitchen does not necessarily make me more prone to stress, but it does require extra care in my behavior, as everything is visible.
I02	18	I stay focused on solutions and keep calm during stressful moments, addressing issues with the team after service if needed.
I02	19	I would leave my current job only if I lost faith in the company’s purpose or leadership. This is unrelated to whether the kitchen is open or closed.
I02	20	I believe open kitchens have a positive impact, allowing customers to understand our work better and making the team feel more valued.
I02	21	I would not change anything in the design or management of the current open kitchen.
I03	1	When the hotel first opened, the kitchen layout evolved gradually as we identified what worked and what didn’t. We introduced specific setups for breakfast and lunch services, added hot stations for sauces and broths, and replaced paper tickets with service screens, which improved communication and timing. The dishwashing area was expanded and reorganized so everything needed was close at hand. Overall, it has become far more functional and efficient, though there is always room for improvement.
I03	2	Yes. For example, before we had a production kitchen, heavy equipment like large blenders would run while guests were having breakfast. That level of noise isn’t ideal for them or for us. There’s also the regular background noise of plates, glasses, and kitchen work — the kind you notice when passing a busy restaurant. If not managed well, it can affect the guest experience.
I03	3	Negatives: Noise pollution and the risk of guests seeing a messy or disorganized kitchen, which can instantly change their perception. Positives: When the kitchen is organized and clean, guests enjoy the process of watching the food being prepared. The atmosphere feels good, and people leave happier. I’ve seen guests more engaged simply because they could watch the cooking process, especially in the evening when the lighting made the environment even more inviting.
I03	4	They do influence the work. If a service starts to go wrong — for example, a dish being sent back or visible tension among the team — guests notice immediately. In an open kitchen, you can’t hide those moments, so I try to resolve them quickly.
I03	5	Yes. At one-point, constant pressure and certain workplace dynamics made me feel like I was working in “machine mode” — just going through the motions. While it wasn’t solely because of the open kitchen, the exposure sometimes amplified that feeling and contributed to losing some of the joy I initially had for the job.

I03	6	Interaction is important, even if it's just through eye contact or a smile to acknowledge the customer. I'm naturally a bit shy, so it wasn't something I loved at first, especially in other languages. But I learned that customers appreciate seeing the team happy and engaged, and it improved my confidence over time.
I03	7	One incident stands out: a guest complained twice about a dish cooked to the correct temperature but not to their preference. They insisted it was just reheated, which wasn't true. I remade the dish, but the situation escalated. I stayed away from the table to avoid losing my temper, but it affected me for the rest of the day and stayed on my mind afterwards.
I03	8	Not really a different persona, but in leadership roles I adopted a more serious and focused approach, avoiding jokes during intense service moments to keep the team on track.
I03	9	Not specified.
I03	10	Yes. We could communicate without shouting, and sometimes even played up certain movements or exchanges for the guests, which added to the show. But if someone lost focus or got stressed, it could disrupt the flow for everyone.
I03	11	At the start, it was motivating and even boosted my pride in the job. Over time, especially when I became more fatigued, it was harder to keep that energy, but the early period taught me valuable lessons about teamwork in view of the customer.
I03	12	Not much in structure — the hierarchy is the same — but guests often identify the head chef and sometimes approach them directly. In some places that's part of the attraction, in others it's irrelevant.
I03	13	Yes. Introducing service screens reduced verbal confusion and helped us stay organized. Another strategy was placing guests closer to the pass so interaction with the kitchen happened naturally.
I03	14	I worked mostly in closed kitchens early in my career, which felt comfortable. But after experiencing an open kitchen, I came to prefer it because it challenged me to improve organization, communication, and presentation. It pushed me out of my comfort zone in a positive way.
I03	15	It shaped my identity by exposing me to new ingredients, techniques, and direct feedback. It created a kind of micro-climate where guests were curious and engaged, which made me value the open kitchen format even more.
I03	16	One of the toughest was just before Christmas — an unexpectedly busy service with no reservations planned. We ended up serving over 90 covers with complex dishes. The stress was more about the lack of preparation than the open kitchen itself, but in such moments any visible tension affects both staff and guests.
I03	17	It depends on the workplace culture. In a relaxed, well-managed team, stress feels manageable. In a tense environment, the open kitchen amplifies it because guests and staff all feel the pressure.
I03	18	In high-pressure situations, I focus on controlling my reactions because everything is visible. If leadership is tense and shouting, it spreads quickly, so I try to avoid that.
I03	19	I left my last job due to a combination of health issues, a toxic work environment, poor management practices, and lack of incentives. The fact it was an open kitchen wasn't the main cause, but it added pressure in already difficult conditions.
I03	20	Working in an open kitchen carries extra responsibility — presentation, interaction, and maintaining a positive atmosphere matter. If

		you enjoy service and can keep energy levels high, it creates a positive chain reaction with guests and the team. But you also need to know your own preferences and limits to avoid burnout.
I03	21	I would make it larger, with a bigger dishwashing area, and position the pass so there's a better view of the entire dining room.
I04	1	Calm, organised open line with clear sight of the dining room and the pass. Movement is synchronised and stations flow smoothly.
I04	2	Not especially more intense; it depends on the kitchen and service rhythm. This one feels relaxed.
I04	3	Positives: Guests can see how we work; the team looks coordinated—often compared to a 'dance.' Negatives: None stand out in this context.
I04	4	I can anticipate room needs (e.g., tables about to finish) and prepare ahead. Real-time view of guests helps me adjust if needed.
I04	5	Yes—seeing people happy with what I cook brings satisfaction that goes beyond money.
I04	6	Interaction is easy and friendly. The kitchen is partially open, so guests see most of the action; they often wave or ask to visit the kitchen.
I04	7	A couple said the food brought back family memories (mother/grandmother). It was moving and energised the rest of the service.
I04	8	No—I keep the same persona as in other kitchen contexts.
I04	9	14
I04	10	We keep it light before service, then focus during service. Communication is clear and direct.
I04	11	Little change—professional focus during service, with occasional light moments when appropriate.
I04	12	Open kitchen doesn't change how hierarchy is coordinated.
I04	13	We naturally keep messages short and clear during service; no special extra rules needed.
I04	14	I identify more with open kitchens: I can read guests' reactions and adjust—offer alternatives if needed.
I04	15	Learning about ingredients and sharing that knowledge in real time strengthens my identity as a chef.
I04	16	None come to mind here since I arrived.
I04	17	Stress doesn't depend on being open vs closed; it's driven by other factors.
I04	18	If something goes wrong I get more serious and push for corrections, but avoid drastic shifts.
I04	19	Reasons to leave wouldn't relate to the open-kitchen format; they'd be external.
I04	20	Nothing to add beyond feeling closer to guests in an open kitchen.
I04	21	No changes needed; satisfied with the current design and management.
I05	1	The layout is a straight corridor. On the guest-facing side, there's a refrigerated counter with pre-prepared items and a worktop for service prep (e.g., slicing bread/meat). On the opposite wall are the stove, oven, grill and main utensils—kept away from guests due to noise/smoke.

I05	2	Yes. Noise and smoke are more noticeable, which requires extra care and respect because guests are watching.
I05	3	Positives: visual connection and potential for interaction. Negatives: loud extraction fans and the need to mind language/behaviour.
I05	4	It pushes me to work more methodically and keep a spotless station—whenever I have a spare moment, I reset and tidy.
I05	5	Positively. I value clean, organized spaces; that orderliness lifts my well-being at work.
I05	6	In closed kitchens, contact is minimal. In open ones, interaction can be more personal and direct (varies by venue), which I enjoy.
I05	7	Two examples: (i) a guest once said it was the best tartare they had ever eaten—transformed a tough day; (ii) a misunderstanding about fresh cod being “not cod,” which was frustrating but manageable.
I05	8	I adopt a professional persona in any kitchen. In open kitchens there is extra care with gestures, cleanliness and communication.
I05	9	I am the only person in the bakery section, while the hot line has its own team.
I05	10	Interaction is direct and concise, often using simple language due to a multilingual team (to avoid miscommunication).
I05	11	Currently little impact—my daily work is mostly solo in the bakery section.
I05	12	Open kitchens tend to keep hierarchy communication more polite and controlled (visible to guests).
I05	13	Example: service screens for orders—each station sees tickets on its own screen, which enables a near-silent service.
I05	14	I identify more with open kitchens, especially counter concepts with chef-guest interaction.
I05	15	They challenge me, foster respect for colleagues and guests, and encourage transparency and better behaviour.
I05	16	Worst service: short-staffed back-of-house, disorganized front-of-house, and a sudden batch release of tickets—resulting in chaos.
I05	17	More prone to stress because you can see the dining room activity building before tickets arrive (anticipation).
I05	18	I increase communication with front-of-house and coordinate earlier to avoid a service breakdown.
I05	19	I would leave to start my own open-kitchen food-truck/stand project.
I05	20	I would like more structured opportunities for guest interaction (e.g., occasional small tasting bites or counter experiences).
I05	21	Swap nearby tables for a run of high counter seating to promote chef-guest engagement (low-cost change).
I06	1	Large restaurant with a service kitchen partially open to the dining room and a separate backofhouse production area. Guests can see the line and some stations (e.g., pizza), but interaction is mostly observational. In previous roles, service was fully in front of guests (order-to-plate).
I06	2	Not inherently more intense than closed kitchens, but guests are more aware of noise, smells, flames and movement, especially during peaks. Some diners appreciate the “show”.
I06	3	Positives: immediate feedback and closer connection with guests; you can read satisfaction in real time. Negatives: higher ambient noise from nearby tables (families/children), which can be tiring over long stretches.
I06	4	Technical method doesn’t change, but behaviour does: friendlier tone, more selfawareness, and preservice prep of loud tasks (e.g.,

		blending) to keep service quieter and smoother.
I06	5	Yes. They helped develop communication skills (even in other languages) and adaptability. Good shifts and returning guests boost motivation and overall satisfaction.
I06	6	It depends on the guest; the open line invites approach and questions. Compared with closed kitchens, approachability and spontaneous conversation are easier.
I06	7	Repeat visits in the same week and direct thanks from guests (e.g., from Lisbon) are energising and reinforce that the team is on the right track.
I06	8	No deliberate persona change. Concentration can make him look serious, but that's about focus rather than the openkitchen setup.
I06	9	–
I06	10	Not really. Communication runs mainly via a digital ticket/screen system; verbal exchanges are brief and functional.
I06	11	Stable under normal conditions; behaviour only shifts if the service goes badly.
I06	12	It doesn't. Hierarchy and role coordination don't depend on being open or closed.
I06	13	Yes. Using the screen system for pacing and visually monitoring the room (table progress) improves timing and flow.
I06	14	Open kitchen. Enjoys engaging with guests and explaining dishes; finds value in that relationship.
I06	15	Early on it required adaptation (talking while cooking), but now it's routine; it doesn't redefine professional identity.
I06	16	New Year's Eve in a previous position: logistical overload and loss of sequence for ~2 hours. Outcome OK, but very stressful; not caused by the kitchen being open.
I06	17	Potentially more, due to additional stimuli (noise, proximity to guests; e.g., a child's chair scraping repeatedly).
I06	18	Mask the stress: breathe, keep posture and a friendly expression—first impressions are visible to everyone.
I06	19	Leaving would relate to the role shifting too much to people management over cooking; that's about position, not the openkitchen format.
I06	20	Emphasises personal presentation/discipline and the communication gains that open kitchens demand; they help build loyalty.
I06	21	Smaller overall capacity (e.g., ~30 seats) to raise consistency, control, and personalisation.
I07	1	The kitchen is part of the dining area, with a long counter where guests can sit and watch the preparation. Behind it, stations are arranged logically: hot section, cold section, and pastry, all visible to guests. The space is compact but organized to make service smooth.
I07	2	Yes. There's a constant awareness of being seen and heard, which means controlling tone of voice, movements, and even facial expressions. Sounds of cooking blend with guest conversations and music, creating a unique but sometimes challenging atmosphere.
I07	3	Positives: Immediate guest feedback, more engagement, and a sense of connection between kitchen and dining room. Negatives: Less privacy, higher pressure to maintain cleanliness and composure, and the need to manage noise and odors.

I07	4	They make me more disciplined — everything must be tidy, communication clear, and service efficient. On the other hand, it can be tiring to constantly perform at that level of visibility.
I07	5	Yes. The energy from guest interaction can be motivating, but the pressure of always being on display can also be mentally drained over long periods.
I07	6	Interaction feels more personal — eye contact, small conversations, answering questions. Guests are curious about techniques, ingredients, and inspiration behind dishes. In a closed kitchen, this connection is much weaker.
I07	7	Once, a guest told me it was the best meal they'd ever had. That kind of feedback lifts the entire team's mood and can turn a regular service into a memorable one.
I07	8	Yes, in a way. I become more aware of body language and try to project confidence and positivity, even if service is stressful.
I07	9	Four people in total, all visible to guests during service.
I07	10	Yes. Communication is quieter and more deliberate, avoiding slang or jokes that could be misunderstood by guests. Everything is more professional.
I07	11	It keeps me focused and organized, but also encourages mutual respect — we're all aware that we represent the restaurant as much as the food does.
I07	12	The hierarchy remains the same, but leadership becomes more visible. Guests can see who is directing the service and how the team works together.
I07	13	Yes. We use discreet gestures and short, agreed-upon phrases to communicate quickly without drawing guest attention.
I07	14	I've learned to enjoy the open kitchen more. It adds a layer of challenge and interaction that keeps the work exciting, though it's not for everyone.
I07	15	It reinforces the idea that cooking is a performance as much as a craft — you're not just feeding people, you're creating an experience they'll remember.
I07	16	One Valentine's Day, we were fully booked with a complex menu and multiple dietary restrictions. Timing was critical, and the open setting meant guests could see every delay or hiccup.
I07	17	More prone — you can't hide frustration or mistakes, so there's extra pressure to keep everything running perfectly.
I07	18	I try to channel it into precision and calmness, but on bad days it can make me more serious and less talkative with guests.
I07	19	A toxic work environment or loss of passion for the concept would make me leave. The open kitchen format wouldn't be the main reason, but in a negative context it could amplify the stress.
I07	20	It's a constant reminder that you're part of the guest's experience from the moment they walk in. It pushes you to be better, but you must enjoy the spotlight to truly thrive in it.
I07	21	I would add more storage space and slightly expand the cooking area to improve workflow.
I08	1	The restaurant has a counter at the back with three seats available. Behind the counter is a workbench, which also serves as the pass.

		Behind this is the hot kitchen section. The open kitchen is about 10 m ² within a 75 m ² restaurant, so space is limited, requiring careful organisation.
I08	2	Yes. Customers can see and smell the preparation. We reduce unpleasant odours by keeping strong-smelling cooking in the back hot kitchen and doing aromatic, pleasant preparations—like torching squid or caramelising sugar—in the open kitchen.
I08	3	Positives include improved organisation and cleanliness and direct customer feedback. Negatives can be that chefs uncomfortable with visibility may feel pressure, and lack of organisation becomes obvious.
I08	4	After years in open kitchens, it's automatic. Initially, it took conscious effort, but now it's natural.
I08	5	Absolutely. In a closed kitchen, I was unhappy. In an open kitchen, interaction with customers keeps me motivated.
I08	6	Interaction is direct and constant—both positive and negative. It requires self-control to manage difficult customers while maintaining professionalism.
I08	7	Yes. Once, a service error caused delays, leading to an angry customer. I apologised, and offered the meal on the house, but they refused and left a bad review. Others present understood the situation. It was frustrating but a learning experience.
I08	8	Slightly—I'm naturally easygoing, but in front of customers, I become more tolerant and flexible to avoid conflicts.
I08	9	Three people in total—two in the kitchen, one in the dining area.
I08	10	Not significantly. Organisation and readiness are the same as in closed kitchens, but timing and coordination are more visible.
I08	11	I'm calmer at work than at home. As owner, I aim to create a good atmosphere for productivity.
I08	12	It doesn't. Roles and responsibilities remain the same as in a closed kitchen.
I08	13	Yes, especially keeping comments discreet so customers can't overhear, adjusting tone and expressions accordingly.
I08	14	Open kitchen—it's lighter, encourages collaboration, and allows meaningful customer interaction.
I08	15	Customer reactions influence dish creation. I sometimes add visual or aromatic elements for impact, enhancing the dining experience.
I08	16	Reservation overlaps cause stress—late arrivals colliding with on-time bookings overwhelm staff, leading to occasional mistakes.
I08	17	More prone, because disorganisation is visible. Customers can see everything, so presentation must be perfect.
I08	18	I may interact less with customers during high-stress moments, though I remain polite.
I08	19	Operational and structural limitations can be frustrating, but customer satisfaction and team dynamics keep me committed.
I08	20	It suits my personality and approach to hospitality. Despite challenges, it strengthens my connection to the craft.
I08	21	I'd redesign the layout to increase space and efficiency, allowing more staff in the kitchen and smoother service flow.
I09	1	Counter-focused layout with guests seated around (approx. 12 seats) and a small dining area (~15 seats). Guests could see chefs from various angles, creating constant visibility.
I09	2	Yes — simultaneous customer conversations (in various languages), music, ambient noise, and preparation/plating. Required high

		focus to handle tasks while interacting with guests and occasionally performing front-of-house duties.
I09	3	Positives: Guest interaction, immediate feedback, language practice, broader skillset. Negatives: Constant scrutiny, noise, higher cognitive load, need for immaculate presentation.
I09	4	Initially challenging, but over time improved focus and multitasking skills; ability to manage service flow proactively.
I09	5	Both positive and negative — stimulating but exhausting, especially during long shifts (~16 hours) and high-volume service.
I09	6	In open kitchens, chefs present dishes directly, answer questions, and receive instant feedback — unlike closed kitchens with minimal contact.
I09	7	Both praise and criticism affect mood; as an owner, critical feedback on value required calm explanations while maintaining service composure.
I09	8	Yes — maintaining a service smile, moderating tone, and avoiding visible frustration or open corrections.
I09	9	Core counter team: 1–2 chefs; others in the back. Numbers varied by shift.
I09	10	Yes — sensitive issues handled discreetly away from guests; open setting demands restraint.
I09	11	Promotes self-control; conflicts delayed to avoid public scenes.
I09	12	Formal hierarchy unchanged; management style varies by restaurant.
I09	13	Yes — visual cues like marking tickets to indicate progress, reducing verbal communication during service.
I09	14	Prefers open kitchens — enjoys pressure, contact with guests, and challenge.
I09	15	Strengthens pride, adaptability, and communication; suits cold-station precision and guest engagement.
I09	16	Mistakes (product or plating) were main stress triggers, along with high demand and long shifts.
I09	17	More — requires emotional control in public view.
I09	18	Maintains composure, delays confrontations, communicates calmly.
I09	19	Life changes (e.g., motherhood) rather than open-kitchen format.
I09	20	No additional points beyond what was discussed.
I09	21	Reduce FOH duties for cooks; provide FOH support or systems like a dish drop-off point to ease workload.
I10	1	The open kitchens I worked in were compact and optimized for both prep and service. During service, tools and ingredients were kept within immediate reach to reduce movement in a limited space.
I10	2	Yes. Customers could watch the whole process, which made it more engaging for them and required greater care from us in plating, organization, and how we spoke to colleagues.
I10	3	Positives: direct engagement and the ability to show dishes visually; it can motivate both guests and cooks. Negatives: less freedom of movement, constant tidiness, and stricter organization due to visibility.

I10	4	It pushed me to be more methodical and organized—mise en place tight, stations clean, and flows clear before and during service.
I10	5	Yes. Positive guest feedback improved my mood and sense of satisfaction at work.
I10	6	Interaction was direct: guests frequently asked about ingredients and techniques—unlike closed kitchens where this is filtered by waitstaff.
I10	7	Several times guests thanked me at the counter for a dish or suggestion. That immediate feedback boosted motivation for the rest of the shift.
I10	8	No different persona; same approach as in closed kitchens—just slightly more aware of posture and wording because guests could hear and see us.
I10	9	Team size varied by venue; in open kitchens we ensured enough cooks per station to avoid rushing and visible stress.
I10	10	Yes. Communication was more polite and less abrupt than in a closed kitchen, given guest proximity.
I10	11	It didn't limit teamwork. Daily briefings clarified roles and priorities.
I10	12	The head chef had to manage staffing and stationing carefully to prevent running around and to maintain composure in front of guests.
I10	13	No specific informal rules remembered beyond standard service cues.
I10	14	I identify more with closed kitchens—greater freedom and less pressure to keep the space visually perfect at all times.
I10	15	Real-time interaction did not significantly shape my chef identity.
I10	16	Understaffing—needing to cover multiple stations and work excessive hours—was a key stressor.
I10	17	Staff shortages are harder in open kitchens because you must keep pace and composure under guest view.
I10	18	Stress made me less communicative and less inclined to interact with colleagues and guests.
I10	19	I left due to poor team management and chronic understaffing, not due to the open-kitchen concept itself.
I10	20	Managers should check in on staff well-being and invite suggestions regularly.
I10	21	Cut fewer line cooks; if reductions are needed, reduce management layers instead.
I11	1	In my current kitchen, most of the work is done behind the scenes, with only the pass area visible to customers. I have worked in other open kitchens where everything — from the stove to the grill — was in full view. Here, the kitchen is technically open but a bit more concealed. There is a counter area, but only in the bar section.
I11	2	At first, you're more conscious that someone might be watching, but once service starts and you're focused on your tasks, that awareness fades. Even in kitchens with full customer view, focus on the work itself tends to overshadow other sensory distractions.
I11	3	Positives include natural light, which makes the environment feel lighter, and direct customer feedback — seeing them watch and appreciate your work. Negatives are minimal for me, but for some chefs, constant visibility can add pressure.
I11	4	It depends on the person. Some feel pressured or anxious with customers watching. Personally, it doesn't bother me — I even enjoy light interaction with customers, as it can be very rewarding.

I11	5	Yes, definitely. The light, the openness, and customer interaction all contribute positively to my enjoyment of the job.
I11	6	In a closed kitchen, we never think about customers directly. In an open kitchen, you are aware that they can see and approach you, which can sometimes make you feel less at ease. This can slightly affect performance if you're not used to it.
I11	7	Once, a family really appreciated the meal and wanted a photo with the chef. The head chef called the whole team to be in the photo, which created a great sense of unity and boosted morale for the rest of the service.
I11	8	Not generally, although it depends on the day and the customers. Sometimes you notice someone paying close attention, which can make you self-conscious — but I've always tried to take it positively, as motivation.
I11	9	17
I11	10	The main difference is being more careful with language, since customers might overhear. Otherwise, interaction remains the same.
I11	11	It doesn't change much for me. I believe in addressing issues directly in the moment and moving on, without it affecting the work environment.
I11	12	–
I11	13	No significant difference — each kitchen has its own keywords and ways of working. In closed kitchens, there might be more casual conversation or music, but service communication remains the same.
I11	14	Open kitchens — for the lighter atmosphere, natural light, and the ability to see customers' reactions.
I11	15	It's part of an ongoing process of adapting and improving. I often think about how things look from the customer's side and adjust behaviour to avoid transmitting stress to them.
I11	16	Stress often depends on the chef leading the service — if they are tense, the whole team feels it. Calm leadership helps services flow better. Workload and lack of rest days also add to stress.
I11	17	Slightly more prone — when you're not having a good day, you can't "hide" as you might in a closed kitchen.
I11	18	–
I11	19	Stress, exhaustion, and understaffing. These would be the same in any kitchen, although in open kitchens, customer interaction can sometimes help counter stress. Closing
I11	20	No, I think we covered the key points.
I11	21	Add counter seating. This could be a mix — some customers could be more stressful, others could be uplifting — but overall, it would add value.
I12	1	The restaurant has a central open-fire cooking station surrounded by guests. It is a relatively small kitchen compared to traditional ones, with only essential prep and support areas. Most dishes are prepared in front of customers, while the support kitchen handles minor preparations like sauces or cold elements.
I12	2	Yes, especially with the open fire, which produces flames, smoke, and aromas that fully involve guests. Customers see the cooking process, ask questions, and engage more, making the experience richer both for them and for us.

I12	3	Positives include direct interaction with guests and the opportunity to share experiences and passion for food. Negatives occur when customers are disengaged or not interested, which can be demotivating. Maintaining consistent service standards is also challenging.
I12	4	They don't change the technical standard we aim for, but when guests show interest, it adds energy and motivation.
I12	5	Yes. The space combines fine dining with a relaxed, interactive atmosphere. This balance makes me enjoy my work more and feel good about the environment.
I12	6	Interaction is direct — we cook, plate, and serve to the guests ourselves. It creates proximity and allows guests to see the person behind the dish, which strengthens the connection.
I12	7	When we suspect Michelin inspectors or high-profile guests are present, we stay more alert, but we still maintain the same service for everyone. Most feedback is non-verbal — expressions tell us if guests are enjoying it. Sometimes long service duration frustrates some, but it's part of our unique format.
I12	8	Yes. I'm more formal and technical when explaining dishes, using storytelling to engage guests — something I wouldn't do in a closed kitchen.
I12	9	Two main chefs, sometimes assisted by interns for short periods.
I12	10	My communication with the other chef is good. We keep a professional and serious tone in front of guests but interact normally in the support kitchen.
I12	11	We work in sync, often anticipating each other's moves. Communication is clean and quick to ensure any delays or issues are not visible to guests.
I12	12	Not much. The head chef leads, but we have a strong relationship based on trust and smooth collaboration.
I12	13	Yes — small verbal cues or looks to coordinate timing, keeping service fluid without disturbing guests.
I12	14	Open kitchens. They require you to be well-presented and ready to interact with guests, which I enjoy. In closed kitchens, there's less personal connection.
I12	15	It's a challenge — mistakes are visible, so precision is key. It also reinforces sustainability, as we prepare exact quantities to avoid waste, using garden produce efficiently.
I12	16	Recently, guests arrived uninterested and distracted, plus there was suspicion of an inspector. The long service format and physical demands added to the stress.
I12	17	More prone — constant exposure to guests and the need for consistent performance increases focus and pressure.
I12	18	It can shift my focus too heavily to specific issues, sometimes at the expense of other tasks, though experience helps manage it.
I12	19	The main reason would be moving to another country for new experiences. I value the uniqueness of my current role and see myself staying for several years unless such an opportunity arises.
I12	20	Working in an open kitchen goes beyond cooking — you must understand the “why” behind each dish to explain to guests. It fosters continuous learning about products, producers, and processes.

I12	21	I wouldn't change much — perhaps adding one more team member to make service more dynamic and allow more direct guest engagement.
I13	1	It was a line kitchen with distinct stations: hot section on the pass, cold/first courses for starters, and pastry. These worked side-by-side around the pass.
I13	2	Yes — being visible makes you mentally more organized and extra tidy/clean. Music allowed during prep, but not during service; softer voice with guests present.
I13	3	Negatives: none. Positives: better guest experience, easier direct feedback, and more honest interactions.
I13	4	For chefs who struggle with stress, open kitchens can be challenging because you can't explode. Personally, I keep it calm and address errors after service.
I13	5	No clear negative impact on well-being; encouraged better organization and calmness.
I13	6	Open kitchens foster human warmth and immediate feedback; ideal setup is chef's counter model.
I13	7	Positive feedback was frequent and motivating — made me want to improve every day.
I13	8	No, I remain myself; moved away from the shouting chef culture over time.
I13	9	- 7
I13	10	We stay focused during service — light jokes only to break the ice; debrief after service.
I13	11	Becomes natural to work calmly in front of guests; behaviour stabilizes with habit.
I13	12	No big change; we cross-train so anyone can cover another role if needed.
I13	13	No special rules; a glass panel dampened sound, and communication flowed well.
I13	14	Open kitchen — avoids isolation and maintains guest contact.
I13	15	High-quality products were shown to guests, adding story and value to the meal.
I13	16	New Year's Eve in Lisbon — under-prepared, poor communication, too many guests.
I13	17	Less prone to stress; self-control is essential.
I13	18	Calm, team-first approach; errors addressed after service.
I13	19	Left due to a better opportunity, not because of the open-kitchen context.
I13	20	-
I13	21	System worked well; if silence is preferred, headsets/walkie-talkies can be used.
I14	1	In one, the stove was behind us; in front, a counter where guests sat, bar-style. We plated, served directly, and explained dishes face-to-face. In the other, same concept but with seated tables and a front-of-house team instead of a counter.
I14	2	Yes — guests watch every move. Attention to detail is higher, and the fact they see the food being prepared makes the experience

		more impactful.
I14	3	Positives: Heightened hygiene and professionalism; improved ability to solve problems in the moment (I kept a “surprise box” of backup ingredients). Negatives: Guests not understanding the concept or failing to mention allergies in advance — harder to adapt in the moment; requires meticulous planning.
I14	4	Preparation is essential. In the fixed-menu setting, contingency ingredients were key to adapting; in à la carte, adaptation was easier because of menu variety.
I14	5	At first, extra psychological pressure — I was introverted. Over time, guest interaction became enjoyable. The pressure was more mental than physical, and positive guest feedback boosted my motivation.
I14	1	We “sold a story” and adapted to each table — some preferred conversation, others quiet service. Interaction was more direct and emotionally engaging than in a closed kitchen.
I14	2	Feedback was always positive and uplifting. We led the experience, guiding customers’ emotions, which improved team spirit and service flow.
I14	3	Not a different persona, but I became more extroverted. The open-kitchen format developed a side of me that had been underused in closed kitchens.
I14	1	First restaurant: 3–4 working alongside me. Second: 2.
I14	2	Yes — in front of guests, we kept a more professional posture, sometimes with light humour to ease the mood.
I14	3	Personally, I stayed consistent — professional and positive. My approach didn’t change.
I14	4	Yes, if planned in advance during briefings. Roles must be clearly assigned to avoid confusion and manage egos.
I14	5	Yes — eye contact, discreet gestures, light taps, quiet side-comments, and a service board with next steps.
I14	1	Open kitchen — I value real-time interaction and reading guests’ reactions.
I14	2	It built adaptability and calm under pressure; improved my ability to think on my feet — skills that stayed with me even in closed kitchens.
I14	1	High number of covers with a small team. Intense focus sometimes led to skipped steps; pressure to keep everything perfect increased stress.
I14	2	More prone — more eyes on you, constant double/triple-checking of every move, added reputational stakes.
I14	3	During service, stress must be suppressed — “poker face” — and released before/after. Issues should be handled discreetly away from guests.
I14	4	Left for better opportunities — unrelated to open-kitchen work.
I14	1	—
I14	2	Layouts worked well. I’d recommend more emotional-management training and even therapy for staff; emotional strain is a key

		reason some return to closed kitchens.
I15	1	The kitchen is a two-level counter: a workbench and a serving level for guests. I can exit on both sides — one side is a passage along a wall; the other leads to the restrooms and a small bar. Another wall closes the restaurant.
I15	2	Not necessarily more intense. In an open kitchen we try to minimize smells and noise so they do not reach guests. In closed kitchens, frying and loud noises are common; in open kitchens, once service starts, everything must be quiet and as odor-free as possible.
I15	3	Positives: proximity and transparency — guests can see how everything is made. Negatives: tasks like blending can disturb the room, so I either do them very quickly or move to a back area to avoid noise.
I15	4	Positives motivate me and let me control the dining room better (timing, pacing, noticing when guests stand up). Negatives demand stronger planning and organization to avoid disturbance.
I15	5	Yes. It's more fun and exciting and gives me greater responsibility, since I can directly monitor the pace of service. I like having that control.
I15	6	Frequent, direct contact — at the counter or when I step out to help at tables. Guests enjoy giving feedback straight to the person who cooked their food; it enriches the experience versus a closed kitchen.
I15	7	Guest feedback has immediate impact: positive feedback motivates; negative feedback triggers reflection. I acknowledge it and keep the service flowing.
I15	8	Yes. I adopt a more controlled posture so guests perceive calm, even under pressure. Emotions must be contained and professionalism visible at all times (as I learned working in a starred restaurant).
I15	9	3
I15	10	Interaction is more controlled; voice kept low. Communication tends to be brief and discreet so as not to disturb guests.
I15	11	It helps maintain calm and prevents escalation during service since guests are present.
I15	12	During service, hierarchy becomes less top-down and more coordinated across the team; strong central command before service, coordination during service.
I15	13	Yes. Example: a subtle, agreed-upon sound signaled that a dish was ready — guests barely noticed, but the team understood immediately.
I15	14	I identify more with open kitchens due to transparency and tighter coordination between kitchen and dining room; I see it as the future of hospitality.
I15	15	It strongly shapes my identity. My upcoming role also has an open kitchen; that mattered because I value guest interaction and visibility.
I15	16	The most stressful services stem from poor leadership (imposition rather than guidance) or disorganization (e.g., missing ingredients).
I15	17	For me, stress is similar in open or closed kitchens, though open kitchens add responsibility to keep the station pristine with guests nearby.

I15	18	It doesn't create stress by itself, but heightens responsibility for cleanliness and organization in full view of guests.
I15	19	My decision to leave the last job was unrelated to the open-kitchen context; I prefer staying in open kitchens because they give me better service control.
I15	20	Design/management: ensure a nearby water point (constant handwashing/cleaning) and maintain sightlines to the dining room from all areas for control and responsiveness.
I15	21	Open kitchens require everything to be tidy at all times — nothing can be hidden — so constant organization is challenging but essential.
I16	1	We have a counter where two cooks work in front, preparing starters, desserts, and serving customers directly. One chef is in charge at the front, managing timings and service flow. Inside, there is a hot section that is separated from the counter and managed by another cook. At the front, we not only prepare food but also interact with customers, serve drinks, and manage orders.
I16	2	Absolutely. There's constant observation from customers, which increases pressure. Everything—cleanliness, organisation, even body language—must be more precise. You're aware that people are watching every detail. I enjoy that, but it requires more focus.
I16	3	Positives: closer contact with clients, more control over what's happening in the dining room, and the ability to correct mistakes quickly. Negatives: higher pressure, constant exposure, and less margin for error.
I16	4	They make me more alert and organised, but also increase my anxiety if not managed well. Over time, I've learned techniques to remain calm and trust my team.
I16	5	Yes, both positively and negatively. Positively, they give me greater control and connection to the service. Negatively, the constant exposure can be mentally tiring if not balanced.
I16	6	I'm very open and interactive with customers, making them feel at home. People come for food but also for the experience of talking with the chef. The counter encourages a relaxed, friendly atmosphere.
I16	7	I'm sensitive to the energy customers bring. Positive feedback lifts the whole service; negative comments can affect the team, especially younger cooks. When I notice a difficult customer, I take the lead to manage the situation and protect my team.
I16	8	Yes, I'm more playful and smiling when interacting at the counter. Service has phases—focused at the start, more relaxed later, and highly concentrated during peak pressure.
I16	9	3
I16	10	It's easier to communicate with those in front. Inside, I trust the person in the hot section to work independently. We adapt depending on who is where.
I16	11	I prioritise creating a family-like environment based on trust, loyalty, and camaraderie. This improves service quality and staff satisfaction.
I16	12	I promote open communication rather than rigid hierarchy. While there are guidelines, trust is essential.
I16	13	Yes. For example, adapting communication style to each team member—more guidance for newer staff, more autonomy for

		experienced ones.
I16	14	Open Kitchen. I thrive on the interaction and energy it provides.
I16	15	It keeps me engaged and happy. My team is a huge part of my identity as a chef, and their support helps me face challenges.
I16	16	Yes—working excessive hours, combined with high pressure, once led to severe stress and anxiety. I’ve since learned to manage my workload better and maintain balance.
I16	17	More prone, because customers see everything and feedback is immediate.
I16	18	It forces me to be calmer and more diplomatic, since customers are watching. Mistakes must be corrected discreetly and quickly, without showing frustration.
I16	19	Losing value or recognition from management. It’s more about workplace culture than the open kitchen context.
I16	20	Strong team bonds are essential. Friendship and camaraderie help overcome stressful moments.
I16	21	Nothing significant—our setup works well for our style of service.
I17	1	The less visually appealing areas (garde-manger, dishwashing) are positioned away from the guests’ line of sight. The visible zones include the stove, ovens, and cold line, with refrigerated glass displays showing produce—demonstrating hygiene and rigor, especially important in a Michelin-starred setting.
I17	2	Yes, it requires coherence in behavior—no loud noises, shouting, or clashing pans. Communication often happens through eye contact or small gestures, especially in an experienced team.
I17	3	Positive: clear view of the dining room, ability to gauge guest reactions, opportunities for direct interaction. Negative: Without a counter, interaction is more distant; visibility increases the pressure to maintain perfection.
I17	4	They demand rigor, calm, and humility. Old-style tension is avoided; speech is kept low, and work is executed with transparency.
I17	5	Personally, not significantly—though effects can vary depending on the individual.
I17	6	In the current restaurant, interaction is generally distant unless guests initiate it. A designated person (head chef or deputy) greets and presents the kitchen in a humble, cordial manner.
I17	7	Positive feedback motivates; negative feedback triggers an effort to improve without showing strain. For example, adjusting the serving temperature of a wine after a guest’s comment, resulting in a better experience.
I17	8	Yes—service mode is more serious, rigorous, and humble, similar to being on camera. Outside of peak hours, the team is more relaxed, but during service the “switch” is immediate.
I17	9	6.
I17	10	Yes. Quieter, coded communication is necessary. Energy shifts depending on guest presence.
I17	11	It fosters composure and consistency; professionalism is reinforced by visibility.
I17	12	It’s more challenging—requires well-trained staff and subtle coordination without public confrontation.

I17	13	Only one voice leads the service. The chef also monitors the dining room for small needs (missing glasses, fallen napkins) to keep things running smoothly.
I17	14	Open Kitchen—real-time guest feedback is “super gratifying” and central to the profession, despite the added pressure.
I17	15	Learning happens daily—from maintenance staff to HR to peers. No chef is ever “complete”; growth is continuous.
I17	16	A front-of-house colleague had an anxiety attack while serving an important guest. The chef intervened, calmed them, reassigned roles, reorganized service, and even helped FOH—resulting in positive feedback.
I17	17	More prone—everything is exposed and judged, from noise to body language to accidental expressions.
I17	18	Stays calm, avoids shouting, pauses service if needed, reorganizes roles, and resumes with order.
I17	19	Not likely to leave due to context. Would consider an exceptional offer or building a personal project from scratch.
I17	20	Stress and burnout are prevalent yet under-discussed; the topic is important and timely.
I17	21	Reduce distance between tables and kitchen to improve interaction—while managing noise impact.
I18	1	Our kitchen is located right in the center of the restaurant. It’s divided into three sections: snacks, pastry, and hot dishes. Although each section has its function, we all help each other as needed. The stove is central, with a small grill and a Japanese griddle, reflecting our Asian influences. We work without traditional gas flames.
I18	2	Not necessarily more intense, but it requires more self-control. We can’t be as expressive as in a closed kitchen because customers are right in front of us.
I18	3	Positives: direct contact with customers, presenting dishes ourselves, and seeing their immediate reactions. Negatives: if we make a mistake, it happens in front of an audience, which adds pressure.
I18	4	At first, there was pressure, but after three years, I feel completely at ease. It’s like being at home. Sometimes the chef even says we’re too relaxed.
I18	5	Yes. Seeing customers’ immediate reactions to our dishes is satisfying and keeps us connected to their experience.
I18	6	I greet customers, present dishes, and often engage in small talk, even about personal topics like family. It’s part of the fine dining experience, which is more than just a meal.
I18	7	Once, an American customer complained that her dish had been plated too long, even though it was a tepid dish that requires time to plate. It was frustrating, but I controlled my reaction, stepped away, and let the head chef handle it.
I18	8	I try to be friendlier and smile more when interacting with customers, as I naturally have a more serious expression. In terms of cooking, nothing changes—I do the same work I would in any kitchen.
I18	9	Five in the kitchen and five in the dining room.
I18	10	Yes. The kitchen leads the service and manages the timing of dishes. We rely on subtle communication, often just eye contact, to keep things discreet for customers.

I18	11	It strengthens team unity. We see ourselves as one team, kitchen and dining room, working toward the same goal.
I18	12	It doesn't change much—everyone knows their role, and respect for the hierarchy remains the same.
I18	13	Yes. We have established routines—like knowing exactly what to prepare when a certain number of customers arrive—so much so that sometimes no words are needed.
I18	14	I used to prefer closed kitchens, but now I prefer open kitchens because of the customer interaction and the emotions involved in seeing their reactions.
I18	15	My culinary identity leans strongly toward Portuguese cuisine, while my head chefs bring in Asian influences. The open kitchen itself doesn't directly affect my identity, but it allows for richer interaction.
I18	16	Disorganization, poor communication between kitchen and dining room, and disruptive behaviour from one team member.
I18	17	More prone, because emotions must be controlled at all times in front of customers.
I18	18	I've learned to self-regulate, but sometimes I need to step away briefly to compose myself before returning.
I18	19	Nothing related to the open kitchen would make me leave. I enjoy what I'm doing now.
I18	20	No, I think we covered everything.
I18	21	The only issue is the shortage of dining room staff. Otherwise, the kitchen design and management work very well.
I19	1	I have worked in three open kitchens. Two were smaller, with around 12 seats, focused on tasting menus, often with a central balcony that seated 16 people plus a few tables. In these cases, contact with the customer was immediate and constant. At Prado, there was no balcony, only table service, creating a more distant interaction. A balcony layout makes the experience different for both sides and can feel more dynamic.
I19	2	Yes, especially in fire-based kitchens. The smell of burning wood, the intense heat from the ovens, and the visual impact of flames create a raw, "rock 'n' roll" energy. Each fire behaves differently, and this unpredictability adds to the sensory intensity. In balcony setups, customers fully experience this, while in table-service open kitchens the sensory connection is more visual and less immersive.
I19	3	Positives include the ability to interact directly with customers, share knowledge, and create memorable moments. Negatives involve the need to maintain image control under pressure—unexpected incidents (burns, spills, forgotten items) are visible to customers and can disrupt the atmosphere. The chef must manage situations so customers leave with a positive experience, regardless of backstage issues.
I19	4	They require constant awareness of both the food and the presentation of the work environment. I adapt my behaviour to project professionalism and calmness, even under stress, ensuring that the service looks smooth from the customer's perspective.
I19	5	Yes. Facing customers can initially feel uncomfortable, as chefs are used to working internally within the team. However, it develops social skills, adaptability, and the ability to read situations. It can be tiring, but overall it enriches the role and creates a sense of pride.
I19	6	In open kitchens, my position as Head or Sous Chef drew customers' attention, particularly as a woman in a leadership role. It created more opportunities for conversation and recognition compared to closed kitchens, where the team remains unseen.

I19	7	Positive feedback, especially from hospitality professionals, is valuable and can lead to constructive adjustments. Negative experiences included disputes over menu terms or disrespectful behaviour. In these cases, I remained firm but professional, setting boundaries while maintaining service quality. In balcony contexts, customer behaviour tends to be more respectful due to proximity.
I19	8	Yes. Outside of work I'm relaxed and playful, but in service I'm highly focused, demanding, and serious. Customers see the professional persona, not the personal one, although small moments of warmth can occur when the context allows.
I19	9	Variable, but often small and highly coordinated, especially in Michelin-starred contexts.
I19	10	Yes. In open kitchens, communication is more concise and often non-verbal, relying on eye contact and quick gestures. Strong teamwork allows for minimal verbal exchange while maintaining efficiency.
I19	11	A united team with shared goals creates trust and fluidity in service. It encourages adaptability and consistent high standards.
I19	12	Hierarchy remains essential. Friendships within the team must not blur professional roles, and leaders sometimes need to assert authority more firmly in open environments.
I19	13	Yes—daily briefings are essential to review reservations, allergies, and previous issues. Open dialogue, adaptability, and active listening help maintain efficiency.
I19	14	I adapt well to both. Closed kitchens offer privacy and operational focus, while open kitchens bring variety and customer interaction. The preference depends on the concept, team, and cuisine style.
I19	15	In fire-based open kitchens, teamwork and mutual support strengthen the sense of identity. The shared challenge and visible collaboration create a memorable environment for both team and customers.
I19	16	Stress is constant in high-end service, but I manage it by focusing on the customer and performance. I avoid showing stress during service, addressing issues afterwards. Pressure is often linked to responsibility and expectations.
I19	17	It depends on circumstances. Delays, late arrivals, or reservation issues can create pressure, especially in tasting menu settings. The chef's composure is crucial to prevent stress from affecting the team.
I19	18	I may feel stressed internally but project calmness externally, using strategic thinking to keep the service flowing and prevent a "snowball effect."
I19	19	I leave a role when I feel I have achieved all I can there and need to grow further. The open kitchen format has never been a reason for leaving.
I19	20	Open kitchens are challenging but rewarding. They push you to manage emotions, read people, and adapt communication, which enriches the profession.
I19	21	Improve reservation management to reduce delays and last-minute no-shows, which affect both customer flow and service atmosphere.
I20	1	In one of the open kitchens I worked in, the kitchen was centralised in the middle of the restaurant, with guests seated around it. There was a main table for 10 people, and the rest of the seating was arranged to accommodate more than 30 guests in total.

I20	2	Yes, it is much more sensory. There is constant interaction between the kitchen and the guests, often with chefs explaining dishes directly at the table. This level of engagement makes the final experience more detailed and attentive, heightening guests' senses and making the thought process behind each dish more incisive.
I20	3	Positively, it creates dynamic interactions and memorable guest experiences. Negatively, not everyone is suited for the social demands—speaking to 30 different people in a day can be draining and requires strong social energy.
I20	4	They keep us more alert, knowing many people are watching. This can influence whether guests leave with a negative or highly positive impression, directly impacting our professionalism.
I20	5	Good and bad days happen in any kitchen. In open kitchens, guest attitudes can shape the energy of the service—some days guests are highly engaged, others they just want a meal. This variability affects the emotional atmosphere.
I20	6	We had a set introduction script to break the ice, which helped gauge each guest's interest. From there, we could adapt—some wanted detailed explanations, others preferred minimal interaction.
I20	7	Yes. Once, a guest stood up before leaving and said it was a pleasure to watch me work, calling my performance “masterful.” That simple compliment gave me an emotional boost for the rest of the service.
I20	8	Yes. It's necessary to create a more neutral, polite, and adaptable persona to suit different guest personalities. This ensures respect and professionalism regardless of whether guests are introverted or extroverted.
I20	9	Four, including myself.
I20	10	Yes. Communication was always direct and face-to-face, never shouted across the room. We worked with mutual respect and professionalism.
I20	11	The open kitchen required more preparation and adaptability, influencing how I worked compared to closed kitchens. My methods had to adjust to the space and visibility.
I20	12	Hierarchy remains the same—one main voice, with the second-in-command taking over when necessary.
I20	13	Yes. The reservation system provided guest details, preferences, and allergens in advance, allowing us to adapt service proactively.
I20	14	Open kitchens, but drawing from varied experiences in 12 different restaurants. I aim to create a locally sourced yet globally inspired menu, served from a central table for 10 guests.
I20	15	It strengthens teamwork and leadership when everyone shares the same goal. However, experiences differ—small, focused teams feel more personal than larger hotel operations with less individual care.
I20	16	Overbooking beyond our service capacity. Management insisted on taking more guests despite limited resources, reducing job satisfaction.
I20	17	More prone, because there is an added variable—being watched by guests—which requires greater emotional control.
I20	18	I learned to manage emotions and communicate with guests to mitigate delays, sometimes offering compensations to maintain goodwill.

I20	19	My decision to leave past jobs was not solely due to the open kitchen format. I've had both very positive and negative open kitchen experiences, so I evaluate each situation individually.
I20	20	Open kitchens enhance guest interaction, creating memories beyond the food itself—how dishes were prepared and the emotions guests felt.
I20	21	Allow chefs more time for guest interaction rather than constant kitchen rush. Staffing should match service needs, and team members should have the right mindset for open kitchen work. Upselling opportunities directly from the chef to the guest can also be highly beneficial.
I21	1	Island-style open kitchen. Entry from the dining room leads to a corridor with storage and dish pit; then the kitchen has continuous counters, a central stove with a workbench, an opposing run of counter space, and the oven on the other side.
I21	2	Pressure is higher because we are being observed. We can't shout or let off steam as freely; playful moments must be toned down. It doesn't always feel "more intense," but we are less at ease and must self-regulate constantly.
I21	3	Positives—encourages calm and professionalism; keeps behaviour in check; enables proximity to guests. Negatives—every movement is exposed; less room to vent or be casually playful during service.
I21	4	They push me to be calmer and more mindful under pressure. I communicate more carefully with colleagues and I enjoy brief, positive exchanges with guests near the pass.
I21	5	Mixed effects. Holding back frustration can be tiring, but positive guest feedback near the kitchen is rewarding and lifts morale.
I21	6	In a closed kitchen there's virtually no interaction. In the open kitchen, guests sometimes tip at the counter, talk with us, or even ask for team photos—usually positive contacts.
I21	7	Interactions are generally positive and don't derail the service. When something less good happens, impact is limited because tables turn over and the shift moves on.
I21	8	I'm not a different person, but I'm consciously more cordial and smiling with guests; professionalism is more visible.
I21	9	Around 10 in the kitchen (with dish pit support).
I21	10	Yes. We frequently remind ourselves we're in an open kitchen—so we keep calm, avoid shouting, and manage reactions.
I21	11	With a full room watching, we maintain composure even when many tickets drop at once; communication stays controlled.
I21	12	I don't think it changes hierarchy coordination in a meaningful way.
I21	13	Nothing formal or specific to open kitchens. We pass service by talking to each other much like in a closed kitchen.
I21	14	I like open kitchens when they include genuine guest interaction—that suits me. If it's "open" only for looks, I might prefer a closed kitchen to feel fully at ease.
I21	15	Speaking with guests about the food and seeing their reactions reinforces my motivation and sense of purpose as a chef.
I21	16	Seeing front-of-house release many mains at once—batching tickets—spikes pressure. Watching that happen in real time (e.g., on tablets) is stressful. Limited kitchen space also contributes.

I21	17	Hard to classify. Open kitchens stop me from showing stress (good), but bottling it up can be draining. Closed kitchens allow venting, which isn't necessarily healthy either.
I21	18	I have to mask irritation and self-regulate, which can feel more frustrating precisely because I can't outwardly release tension.
I21	19	Reasons are sector-related rather than tied to open kitchens—e.g., hour load and split shifts.
I21	20	–
I21	21	Nothing specific to change in the open-kitchen concept itself at this venue.
I22	1	The kitchen has a “G” shape, with a side entrance that forms a kind of labyrinth. There's a pass-through window at two heights. The cold kitchen is fully open and visible, while the hot kitchen is more enclosed, though still with some visibility.
I22	2	Absolutely. The first impression for customers is hygiene and organisation. On quiet days this is easier to maintain, but during busy services any disorder is visible and can create a negative impression. Customers also tend to choose dishes they've seen being prepared or plated, which helps sales and menu communication.
I22	3	Positives: Direct contact between customer and chef, which usually builds trust and conveys a sense of safety when they see organisation and hygiene. Negatives: It requires a more qualified and well-trained team. In a closed kitchen, chaos can be hidden; in an open kitchen, everything is exposed.
I22	4	They definitely influence my work. Since 2015, when I started in open kitchens, I've had to adapt my organisation and self-discipline to maintain high standards in full view of customers.
I22	5	Yes, because it forces me to maintain a high level of self-awareness and discipline, which can be tiring. However, it also brings satisfaction, as I'm constantly presenting my work directly to customers.
I22	6	Interaction is more immediate and personal. Customers can ask questions directly, give feedback, and sometimes even engage in casual conversation. It's very different from a closed kitchen, where interaction is usually indirect.
I22	7	Yes, I remember a customer praising a dish right in front of me. It instantly lifted my mood and gave me extra motivation for the rest of the service. It's a simple gesture, but it makes a big difference when you're in the middle of a busy shift.
I22	8	Yes, I become more attentive to my posture, my expressions, and even the way I speak. In a closed kitchen, I might be more relaxed in my movements and communication with colleagues, but in front of customers I'm always aware that I'm part of the “show”.
I22	9	12 people.
I22	10	Yes, communication has to be more concise and discreet so as not to disturb the customer experience.
I22	11	It makes me more careful with words and tone. I also try to anticipate colleagues' needs so we can avoid unnecessary conversations during service.
I22	12	It flattens the hierarchy a bit in terms of communication, because everything happens in real time and in view of everyone. But it also reinforces the need for the head chef to lead by example.
I22	13	Yes, we develop hand signals and short codes to communicate quickly without disturbing the atmosphere.

I22	14	Open Kitchen. I enjoy the interaction, the visual presentation of my work, and the direct feedback from customers.
I22	15	It keeps me connected to all aspects of the craft — from ingredient preparation to plating and customer satisfaction — and constantly reminds me why I chose this profession.
I22	16	Yes, a fully booked day with unexpected large group arrivals, combined with staff shortages, made the service extremely challenging.
I22	17	More prone, because you have to manage both the service and the “public performance” aspect at the same time.
I22	18	It makes me more focused on controlling my expressions and voice, so customers don’t notice the pressure behind the scenes.
I22	19	A lack of professional growth opportunities or a toxic environment. In an Open Kitchen, such issues become more evident, so they might push me to leave sooner.
I22	20	It constantly challenges me to balance cooking with performance, which has made me more disciplined and attentive.
I22	21	I would improve the ergonomics of the hot kitchen area to make it more efficient without losing visibility.
I23	1	It’s a rectangular layout. One of the long sides faces the dining room with sections we call “taxi” stations, all in full view of customers. On the opposite long side, there’s the grill with an adjacent station where one person works, and another station for cutting food and opening oysters.
I23	2	Definitely. In a closed kitchen, you only focus on colleagues, superiors, and your own tasks. In an open kitchen, you have an extra “social layer” — customers are watching you, so you must be aware of body language and behaviour. If there’s a counter, like in my current place, you may have direct interaction with customers, adding more layers of awareness. It’s noisier, with music, conversations, and orders to manage, requiring constant mental flexibility and focus.
I23	3	Positive: Immediate feedback from customers, which can be enriching. The atmosphere is more relaxed, with opportunities to engage directly — for example, adding extra sauce if a customer likes it. Negative: Harder to concentrate if conversations take too much time. Noise levels and constant attention to both cooking and customers can be mentally draining. Over time, it can exhaust your social energy.
I23	4	They demand high adaptability, multitasking, and awareness of everything happening. This improves flexibility and service skills, but long-term can be tiring.
I23	5	Yes. They can be energising if you enjoy the interaction, but also mentally exhausting if constant over time.
I23	6	Interaction is fantastic. At my workplace, there’s no separation between kitchen and dining room. I often leave the kitchen to talk to guests, get feedback, and build rapport. This makes the work more fulfilling compared to closed kitchens, where you don’t see customers’ reactions.
I23	7	Yes. Both positive and negative feedback are welcome. For example, a customer recently didn’t like a smoked cabbage dish — it was a matter of personal taste. We considered the opinion, but continued with our style. Positive feedback makes the team happier, but negative feedback doesn’t change our approach unless it’s constructive and relevant.
I23	8	Yes. I become more sociable, energetic, and engaging compared to my private life, where I’m calmer. This amplified persona helps

		create a welcoming environment in an open kitchen.
I23	9	5 (including me).
I23	10	Not really. We maintain the same teamwork style, just with more awareness of language and behaviour in front of customers.
I23	11	It fosters a respectful, calm environment without shouting or unnecessary stress.
I23	12	It doesn't change the hierarchy — my style is democratic until something goes wrong, then I take decisive control as head chef.
I23	13	Clear verbal confirmation is key. When reading a ticket, everyone must respond to confirm they heard it. If noise interferes, we use physical cues like tapping someone's foot to get their attention.
I23	14	Open kitchens — they allow me to see the direct impact of my work.
I23	15	It strengthens my sense of purpose, as I can witness customers' reactions and connect with them personally.
I23	16	Not specifically in open kitchens — stress depends more on personal traits. For some people, public interaction is stressful; for me, it's enjoyable and calming.
I23	17	It depends on the person. I don't find it more stressful — in fact, it can be less so if you enjoy engaging with customers.
I23	18	You must control emotions. If someone struggles, I either help them adapt or move them to another section. Customers should never sense negativity from the team.
I23	19	Not directly related to open kitchens — more about general industry challenges, like lack of qualified staff and slow equipment maintenance.
I23	20	Leadership style is even more crucial than in closed kitchens. Authoritarian, unpleasant leadership can destroy team spirit. A positive, respectful environment creates better service and morale.
I23	21	Update some older equipment and improve maintenance speed.
I24	1	On one wall we have the hot line. Starting from the right: a door leading to the scullery, then the meat section with a workbench and charcoal grill, a gas plancha, a six-burner stove, two 10L fryers, and an oven. Underneath are refrigerated drawers. In front, parallel to the wall, there's a full counter.
I24	2	Not necessarily more intense for the team. Openness mainly forces us to be more controlled in our reactions and focused during service. Intensity comes more from workload than from being open or closed.
I24	3	Positives: Forces us to stay alert, maintain high cleanliness and organization, and control emotions. Guests see what we do, which builds trust. The space feels dynamic and engaging for them. Negatives: Less storage space, less privacy, and constant exposure.
I24	4	They make me more organized, composed, and careful with reactions—always aware we are being observed.
I24	5	They don't negatively affect my well-being; in fact, open kitchens can be better for mental health—there's movement, people, and natural light, unlike closed kitchens that feel claustrophobic.
I24	6	Interaction is much greater. The kitchen faces the street, so guests see us immediately on arrival. Many ask questions, take photos,

		thank us after meals, and regulars know us by name—there’s real closeness.
I24	7	I’ve had both positive and negative feedback. In an open kitchen I can watch tables throughout the meal, so feedback comes with context. That makes it easier to judge fairly and respond appropriately.
I24	8	I’m naturally more serious and focused during service, but that’s true in any kitchen. Sometimes we even forget it’s open, which keeps things natural.
I24	9	5
I24	10	Yes—communication is clearer and spoken more softly; reactions are more controlled, and we mind our language because guests can hear us.
I24	11	It’s beneficial. The openness prevents heated exchanges; if something needs addressing, we wait until after service—by then, it often isn’t an issue anymore.
I24	12	Hierarchy exists but doesn’t need to be constantly invoked. Communication is lighter and more considerate, with everyone clear on their role.
I24	13	Nothing special beyond speaking closer and lower, and keeping messages concise to avoid calling out across the room.
I24	14	Open kitchens. The proximity builds a stronger connection—guests know our faces and names, and sometimes even invite us to personal events. Openness also demands higher organization and cleanliness.
I24	15	It reinforces my preference for informality. I dislike titles and ceremony; I want to be seen as part of the team. The closeness of an open kitchen supports that.
I24	16	The most stressful services result from a mix of factors: long hours, lack of sleep, excessive workload, and miscommunication within the team.
I24	17	Both. Seeing front-of-house disorder can be stressful when I can’t intervene, but openness also forces me to regulate emotions and deal with issues later.
I24	18	I’m more contained—no matter the situation, I can’t react as I might in a closed kitchen.
I24	19	Not applicable in the usual sense - I own the restaurant. If I left, I’d still choose an open kitchen, so the format wouldn’t be the reason.
I24	20	–
I24	21	Add a service counter to interact directly with guests; improve extraction, sound insulation, and balance functionality with aesthetics.
I25	1	The front counter has under-counter refrigeration and plating space on top. The hot section — stoves, fryers, oven — is at the back, keeping heat away from the customer-facing line.
I25	2	Yes. Usually there’s more natural light, more ambience, and music that makes service smoother. It definitely enhances my overall experience.
I25	3	Negatives: Strong smells can spread into the dining room, so I have to adapt prep and avoid certain items during service. Positives: Guests see my work and who I am professionally, which I enjoy. It’s both discipline-enhancing and personally rewarding.

I25	4	They make me stay sharper, more disciplined, and mindful of every action since I'm always visible to guests.
I25	5	Yes. I'd feel more frustrated in a closed kitchen. Seeing and being seen by guests helps me feel better at work.
I25	6	I don't talk much, but guests enjoy watching. I can read their reactions immediately when plates arrive, and I'm comfortable with photos or filming. It's gratifying.
I25	7	Positive feedback, like an older guest loving a traditional dish, can make my whole shift. Negative feedback can sting, but I try to manage my expression so guests don't notice, addressing issues with the team after service.
I25	8	Yes. I'm more relaxed during mise en place, but once service starts, I become more reserved and disciplined. It's not limiting — it energises me.
I25	9	5.
I25	10	No. Team dynamics are similar to closed kitchens; the main shift is when guests arrive and the ambience changes.
I25	11	The ambience lifts our mood, which makes interaction smoother.
I25	12	It doesn't — roles remain clear to keep service flow intact.
I25	13	Yes. Everything must be spotless and organised all the time. In an open kitchen, standards can't drop even for a moment.
I25	14	Open kitchen — I enjoy being there, being seen, and the better working conditions.
I25	15	Seeing guests' immediate reactions boosts my confidence and sense of accomplishment, while also increasing visibility among peers.
I25	16	At a previous workplace (also open kitchen), disorganisation — overlapping reservations and orders, multiple tickets dropping at once — led to the only time I argued in front of guests.
I25	17	Less prone. Natural light, music, and overall ambience make me more comfortable and better at handling pressure.
I25	18	If it's team-related, I address it after service. Otherwise, I internalise it, keeping a neutral face while my body stays tense.
I25	19	The open-kitchen context wouldn't make me leave — it's actually the best part of my work.
I25	20	It makes me feel consistently better at work. Seeing guests, even kids enjoying their food, supports my mental health.
I25	21	Improved extraction/ventilation to prevent odours from spreading to the dining area.
I26	1	The main dining room has a U-shaped communal counter with the grill placed in the center, where all cooking and plating happen in front of the guests. At the back, although still visible, there is the preparation area, and on the other side is the dining room space. No matter where we are, either in front or in the back, we are always in direct contact with the clients.
I26	2	Yes, definitely. Guests witness the full process — from raw ingredients to plating. It is not just food suddenly arriving at the table; they see every step. That creates an immersive and theatrical dimension to the dining experience, making the sensory impact stronger than in traditional kitchens.
I26	3	Positively, there is direct contact with the guests and the opportunity to personalize their experience. We can immediately notice details, like if a napkin falls, and assist the front-of-house team. The guests' mood influences the service, and it makes our work more

		interactive and fulfilling. On the negative side, errors cannot happen — or if they do, they must be solved discreetly and calmly, without the guest realizing. There is a constant pressure to perform perfectly.
I26	4	They demand constant self-control. We cannot lose focus or react negatively. Every gesture is observed, which forces us to maintain composure. At the same time, it motivates me to raise my standards and improve every detail of the service.
I26	5	Yes. The pressure can be stressful, but I see it as positive pressure — a sign of growth and commitment. Working in an open space full of light and contact with clients makes me feel better than being in a closed, underground kitchen. It aligns with my personality and contributes to my daily satisfaction.
I26	6	Interaction is highly personalized. I adapt to each guest’s mood and openness. Some prefer to stay quiet; others enjoy engaging in conversation. Throughout the meal I test reactions — asking questions, joking, or pulling back if they are not receptive. This constant reading of people is only possible in an open kitchen, unlike closed kitchens where chefs barely see customers.
I26	7	Positive feedback during service always lifts the mood and energizes the team. Negative comments are rare but I remember one guest complaining strongly about a meat dish. While it was unpleasant, we handled it with lightness, not letting it disrupt the rest of the service. Constructive criticism is welcome, but purely destructive comments we try to separate emotionally so as not to affect performance.
I26	8	I don’t adopt a fake persona — what people see is truly me. I am playful and enjoy joking with guests. However, I do enter a “performance mode” where I need to maintain the same positive mood every night, even on days when I feel tired or less social. It’s like acting, but it remains authentic to who I am.
I26	9	Four in total — myself, another chef, and two colleagues from the front-of-house team who also support service.
I26	10	Yes. During service we barely speak because the workflow is already well-synchronized. Communication often happens through gestures, eye contact, or signals. Outside of service, in preparation time, we interact a lot — listening to music, talking, laughing. That balance strengthens our teamwork.
I26	11	It makes us closer as a team. The pre-service bond creates trust and reduces the need for words during service. It also creates a lighter environment, helping me stay calm and confident while leading.
I26	12	The open setting reduces authoritarian behaviour. Because guests are present, harsh tones or conflicts are filtered. Leadership becomes more collaborative and subtle.
I26	13	Absolutely. We use nonverbal signals to avoid unnecessary noise: a touch on the back instead of saying “behind,” eye contact to indicate readiness, or small hand gestures to control timing. These informal strategies keep the flow smooth without disturbing the guests.
I26	14	Open kitchens. Even though I am naturally shy, I discovered that I thrive in front of people. It gives me joy to cook knowing it is for someone right there, sharing the moment. I could not imagine myself running a closed kitchen in the future.
I26	15	It reinforces my personality and the restaurant’s identity. The interaction is constant — guests see not just the food but also my character, and that connection shapes both my style and the restaurant’s essence. Cooking in this context makes me feel authentic and

		aligned with my values.
I26	16	The first year was the hardest. I had a colleague who did not share the same cooking style and did not engage creatively, leaving the pressure of menu creation entirely on me. Combined with personal struggles, it was a very stressful period. Creativity suffers when you are not well personally, and that year was difficult.
I26	17	Less prone. Because guests are watching, behaviour must be filtered, which reduces shouting or aggressive reactions common in closed kitchens. There is a natural self-control that helps manage stress.
I26	18	It forces me to remain composed. Even if I feel pressure inside, I cannot show it outwardly. That discipline helps me grow as a professional and keeps the service smooth for the guests.
I26	19	The only reason would be unsustainable working hours. Fortunately, I currently have control over that, focusing only on dinners with a fixed schedule. Open kitchen itself is not a problem; on the contrary, it motivates me. Time management is the only decisive factor.
I26	20	Working in an open kitchen gives me freedom to express myself, connect directly with people, and feel that my work has an immediate impact. It is not just about food but about creating a shared experience.
I26	21	I would enhance the arrival experience for guests. For example, improving the garden reception, creating a small greenhouse for welcome drinks, or other details that strengthen the immersive atmosphere before they even sit down.

Annex D: Global Representation of Obtained Results

Int ervi ew_ ID	R - N u m	Initial Codes	Primary Theme	Secondary Theme(s)
I01	1	Constant sensory vigilance; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Physical & Sensory Environment	Design & Operational Efficiency
I01	2	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	Design & Operational Efficiency
I01	3	Pressure of visibility; Immediate customer evaluation; Customer education & curiosity; Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Stress induced by performance visibility; Operational flaws exposed to customers	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Customer Interaction; Professional Standards in Open Kitchens; Stress & Burnout Management
I01	4	Perceived performance outcomes	Work Outcomes	
I01	5	Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Work Outcomes	
I01	6	Immediate customer evaluation	Customer Interaction	
I01	7	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I01	8	No data	No data	
I01	9	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team	

			Dynamics & Communication	
I01	10	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	
I01	11	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	Team Dynamics & Communication
I01	12	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I01	13	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I01	14	Adaptation/Identity	Work Outcomes	
I01	15	Professional pride from visibility; Immediate customer evaluation; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Motivation & Recognition	Customer Interaction; Team Dynamics & Communication; Work Outcomes
I01	16	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I01	17	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	

I01	18	Pressure of visibility; Stress induced by performance visibility	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Stress & Burnout Management
I01	19	Exit decision catalysts under open-kitchen conditions	Retention & Turnover	
I01	20	Identity growth & confidence	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour	
I01	21	Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies; Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Design & Operational Efficiency	
I02	1	Adaptation/Identity	Work Outcomes	
I02	2	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I02	3	Pressure of visibility; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication
I02	4	Perceived performance outcomes	Work Outcomes	
I02	5	Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Work Outcomes	
I02	6	Customer recognition of labour	Motivation & Recognition	
I02	7	Professional pride from visibility; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Motivation & Recognition	Team Dynamics & Communication
I02	8	Public persona & identity work	Professional	

			Identity & Emotional Labour	
I02	9	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I02	10	Constant sensory vigilance; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Physical & Sensory Environment	Team Dynamics & Communication
I02	11	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I02	12	Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I02	13	Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I02	14	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Team Dynamics & Communication	Design & Operational Efficiency

I02	1 5	Customer education & curiosity	Customer Interaction	
I02	1 6	Kitchen–FOH interdependence	Cross-Boundary Collaboration	
I02	1 7	Pressure of visibility; Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Stress induced by performance visibility	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens; Stress & Burnout Management
I02	1 8	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Emotional regulation strategies	Team Dynamics & Communication	Stress & Burnout Management
I02	1 9	Exit decision catalysts under open-kitchen conditions	Retention & Turnover	
I02	2 0	Professional pride from visibility; Customer recognition of labour; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Motivation & Recognition	Team Dynamics & Communication
I02	2 1	Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Design & Operational Efficiency	
I03	1	Constant sensory vigilance; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Physical & Sensory Environment	Team Dynamics & Communication; Design & Operational Efficiency
I03	2	Constant sensory vigilance; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Physical & Sensory Environment	Design & Operational Efficiency
I03	3	Pressure of visibility; Constant sensory vigilance; Heightened self-	Customer	Physical & Sensory Environment;

		regulation under customer gaze; Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure; Exit decision catalysts under open-kitchen conditions	Gaze & Performance Pressure	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens; Design & Operational Efficiency; Work Outcomes; Retention & Turnover
I03	4	Pressure of visibility; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Stress induced by performance visibility	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication; Stress & Burnout Management
I03	5	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I03	6	Professional pride from visibility; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Motivation & Recognition	Team Dynamics & Communication; Work Outcomes
I03	7	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I03	8	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Public persona & identity work	Team Dynamics & Communication	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour
I03	9	No data	No data	
I03	10	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Stress induced by performance visibility; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Team Dynamics & Communication	Stress & Burnout Management; Design & Operational Efficiency
I03	11	Professional pride from visibility; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure; Learning in public view	Motivation & Recognition	Work Outcomes; Professional Development

I03	1 2	Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I03	1 3	Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Cross-Boundary Collaboration	Design & Operational Efficiency
I03	1 4	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Identity growth & confidence; Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	
I03	1 5	Immediate customer evaluation; Customer education & curiosity; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Customer Interaction	Work Outcomes
I03	1 6	Pressure of visibility; Stress induced by performance visibility	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Stress & Burnout Management
I03	1 7	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Stress induced by performance visibility	Team Dynamics & Communication	Stress & Burnout Management
I03	1 8	Pressure of visibility; Stress induced by performance visibility	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Stress & Burnout Management
I03	1 9	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	

I03	20	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Stress induced by performance visibility	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	Team Dynamics & Communication; Stress & Burnout Management
I03	21	Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Cross-Boundary Collaboration	Design & Operational Efficiency
I04	1	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Team Dynamics & Communication	Cross-Boundary Collaboration; Design & Operational Efficiency
I04	2	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I04	3	Customer recognition of labour; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Motivation & Recognition	Team Dynamics & Communication
I04	4	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I04	5	Pride/Motivation	Motivation & Recognition	
I04	6	Customer education & curiosity	Customer Interaction	
I04	7	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I04	8	Public persona & identity work	Professional Identity &	

			Emotional Labour	
I04	9	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I04	10	Constant sensory vigilance; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Physical & Sensory Environment	Team Dynamics & Communication
I04	11	Constant sensory vigilance; Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Physical & Sensory Environment	Design & Operational Efficiency
I04	12	Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze; Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Team Dynamics & Communication	Design & Operational Efficiency
I04	13	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I04	14	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I04	15	Learning in public view	Professional Development	
I04	16	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I04	17	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I04	1	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/	

	8		Descriptive	
I04	19	Exit decision catalysts under open-kitchen conditions	Retention & Turnover	
I04	20	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I04	21	Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Work Outcomes	
I05	1	Constant sensory vigilance; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Physical & Sensory Environment	Design & Operational Efficiency
I05	2	Constant sensory vigilance	Physical & Sensory Environment	
I05	3	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	
I05	4	Adaptation/Identity	Work Outcomes	
I05	5	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	Work Outcomes
I05	6	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I05	7	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I05	8	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Adaptive teamwork	Professional	Team Dynamics & Communication;

		strategies under visibility pressure; Public persona & identity work	1 Standards in Open Kitchens	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour
I05	9	Constant sensory vigilance; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Physical & Sensory Environment	Team Dynamics & Communication
I05	10	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	Team Dynamics & Communication
I05	11	Adaptation/Identity	Work Outcomes	
I05	12	Pressure of visibility; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication
I05	13	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I05	14	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I05	15	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	
I05	16	Kitchen-FOH interdependence	Cross-Boundary Collaboration	
I05	1	Kitchen-FOH interdependence; Stress induced by performance visibility	Cross-Boun	Stress & Burnout Management

	7		dary Collaborati on	
I05	1 8	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Team Dynamics & Communica tion	Cross-Boundary Collaboration; Design & Operational Efficiency
I05	1 9	Exit decision catalysts under open-kitchen conditions	Retention & Turnover	
I05	2 0	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze & Performanc e Pressure	
I05	2 1	Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Design & Operational Efficiency	Work Outcomes
I06	1	Kitchen–FOH interdependence	Cross-Boun dary Collaborati on	
I06	2	Professional pride from visibility; Constant sensory vigilance	Motivation & Recognition	Physical & Sensory Environment
I06	3	Immediate customer evaluation; Constant sensory vigilance	Customer Interaction	Physical & Sensory Environment
I06	4	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Professiona l Standards in Open Kitchens	Design & Operational Efficiency
I06	5	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Team Dynamics	Work Outcomes

			& Communica tion	
I06	6	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze & Performanc e Pressure	
I06	7	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communica tion	
I06	8	Public persona & identity work; Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Professiona l Identity & Emotional Labour	Design & Operational Efficiency
I06	9	No data	No data	
I06	1 0	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communica tion	
I06	1 1	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Professiona l Standards in Open Kitchens	
I06	1 2	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze; Public persona & identity work	Team Dynamics & Communica tion	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour
I06	1	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Operational design	Team	Design & Operational Efficiency

	3	exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Dynamics & Communication	
I06	1 4	Pride/Motivation	Motivation & Recognition	
I06	1 5	Self-monitoring	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	
I06	1 6	Adaptation/Identity	Work Outcomes	
I06	1 7	Constant sensory vigilance	Physical & Sensory Environment	
I06	1 8	Pressure of visibility; Public persona & identity work; Stress induced by performance visibility	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour; Stress & Burnout Management
I06	1 9	Public persona & identity work	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour	
I06	2 0	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	Team Dynamics & Communication
I06	2 1	Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies; Perceived performance outcomes	Design & Operational Efficiency	Work Outcomes

I07	1	Pressure of visibility; Constant sensory vigilance; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Physical & Sensory Environment; Design & Operational Efficiency
I07	2	Constant sensory vigilance; Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Physical & Sensory Environment	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens
I07	3	Immediate customer evaluation; Constant sensory vigilance; Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Stress induced by performance visibility; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Customer Interaction	Physical & Sensory Environment; Professional Standards in Open Kitchens; Cross-Boundary Collaboration; Stress & Burnout Management; Work Outcomes
I07	4	Pressure of visibility; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication
I07	5	Pressure of visibility; Public persona & identity work; Stress induced by performance visibility; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour; Stress & Burnout Management; Work Outcomes
I07	6	Customer education & curiosity	Customer Interaction	
I07	7	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I07	8	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	
I07	9	Pressure of visibility	Customer	

			Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I07	10	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I07	11	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I07	12	Pressure of visibility; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication
I07	13	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I07	14	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I07	15	Perceived performance outcomes	Work Outcomes	
I07	16	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I07	17	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I07	18	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I07	1	Stress induced by performance visibility; Exit decision catalysts under	Stress &	Retention & Turnover

	9	open-kitchen conditions	Burnout Management	
I07	20	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I07	21	Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies; Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Design & Operational Efficiency	
I08	1	Constant sensory vigilance; Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Physical & Sensory Environment	Cross-Boundary Collaboration; Design & Operational Efficiency
I08	2	Constant sensory vigilance	Physical & Sensory Environment	
I08	3	Pressure of visibility; Immediate customer evaluation; Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Stress induced by performance visibility	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Customer Interaction; Professional Standards in Open Kitchens; Stress & Burnout Management
I08	4	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I08	5	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I08	6	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I08	7	Operational flaws exposed to customers; Learning in public view	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Professional Development

I08	8	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I08	9	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I08	10	Pressure of visibility; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication
I08	11	Perceived performance outcomes	Work Outcomes	
I08	12	Coordination/Hierarchy	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I08	13	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	
I08	14	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I08	15	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I08	16	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I08	1	Pressure of visibility; Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze;	Customer	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens

	7	Operational flaws exposed to customers	Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I08	18	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I08	19	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I08	20	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I08	21	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies; Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency; Perceived performance outcomes	Team Dynamics & Communication	Design & Operational Efficiency; Work Outcomes
I09	1	Pressure of visibility; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Design & Operational Efficiency
I09	2	Public performance framing; Constant sensory vigilance; Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Kitchen–FOH interdependence	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Physical & Sensory Environment; Professional Standards in Open Kitchens; Cross-Boundary Collaboration
I09	3	Immediate customer evaluation; Constant sensory vigilance; Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Customer Interaction	Physical & Sensory Environment; Professional Standards in Open Kitchens
I09	4	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Team Dynamics &	Design & Operational Efficiency

			Communication	
I09	5	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I09	6	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I09	7	Pride/Motivation	Motivation & Recognition	
I09	8	Pressure of visibility; Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens
I09	9	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I09	10	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I09	11	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I09	12	Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I09	13	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics &	

			Communication	
I09	1/4	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I09	1/5	Professional pride from visibility; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Motivation & Recognition	Team Dynamics & Communication; Work Outcomes
I09	1/6	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Stress induced by performance visibility	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	Stress & Burnout Management
I09	1/7	Pressure of visibility; Emotional regulation strategies	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Stress & Burnout Management
I09	1/8	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I09	1/9	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I09	2/0	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I09	2/1	Kitchen–FOH interdependence	Cross-Boundary Collaboration	
I10	1	Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Design & Operational Efficiency	
I10	2	Pressure of visibility; Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Customer Gaze &	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens

			Performanc e Pressure	
I10	3	Pressure of visibility; Customer education & curiosity; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Customer Gaze & Performanc e Pressure	Customer Interaction; Work Outcomes
I10	4	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Identity growth & confidence	Professiona l Standards in Open Kitchens	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour
I10	5	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze & Performanc e Pressure	
I10	6	Kitchen–FOH interdependence	Cross-Boun dary Collaborati on	
I10	7	Immediate customer evaluation; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Customer Interaction	Work Outcomes
I10	8	Public persona & identity work	Professiona l Identity & Emotional Labour	
I10	9	Pressure of visibility; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Stress induced by performance visibility	Customer Gaze & Performanc e Pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication; Stress & Burnout Management
I10	10	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communica	

			tion	
I10	1 1	Coordination/Hierarchy	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I10	1 2	Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I10	1 3	Self-monitoring	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	
I10	1 4	Stress induced by performance visibility; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Stress & Burnout Management	Design & Operational Efficiency
I10	1 5	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I10	1 6	Adaptation/Identity	Work Outcomes	
I10	1 7	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I10	1 8	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I10	1	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team	

	9		Dynamics & Communication	
I10	20	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I10	21	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I11	1	Pressure of visibility; Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Cross-Boundary Collaboration; Design & Operational Efficiency
I11	2	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I11	3	Pressure of visibility; Professional pride from visibility; Customer recognition of labour; Immediate customer evaluation; Constant sensory vigilance; Stress induced by performance visibility	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Motivation & Recognition; Customer Interaction; Physical & Sensory Environment; Stress & Burnout Management
I11	4	Professional pride from visibility; Constant sensory vigilance	Motivation & Recognition	Physical & Sensory Environment
I11	5	Constant sensory vigilance	Physical & Sensory Environment	
I11	6	Perceived performance outcomes	Work Outcomes	
I11	7	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Team Dynamics &	Work Outcomes

			Communication	
I11	8	Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Work Outcomes	
I11	9	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I11	10	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	
I11	11	Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Design & Operational Efficiency	
I11	12	No data	No data	
I11	13	Constant sensory vigilance; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Physical & Sensory Environment	Team Dynamics & Communication
I11	14	Constant sensory vigilance	Physical & Sensory Environment	
I11	15	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Stress induced by performance visibility	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	Stress & Burnout Management
I11	16	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Stress induced by performance visibility; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Team Dynamics & Communication	Stress & Burnout Management; Design & Operational Efficiency

I11	1 7	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/ Descriptive	
I11	1 8	No data	No data	
I11	1 9	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Managem ent	
I11	2 0	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/ Descriptive	
I11	2 1	Pride/Motivation	Motivation & Recognition	
I12	1	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I12	2	Customer education & curiosity; Constant sensory vigilance	Customer Interaction	Physical & Sensory Environment
I12	3	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I12	4	Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Design & Operational Efficiency	Work Outcomes
I12	5	Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Design & Operational Efficiency	
I12	6	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I12	7	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I12	8	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I12	9	Coordination/Hierarchy	Team	

			Dynamics & Communication	
I12	10	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	Team Dynamics & Communication
I12	11	Pressure of visibility; Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens; Team Dynamics & Communication
I12	12	Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I12	13	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I12	14	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I12	15	Pressure of visibility	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I12	16	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	

I12	1 7	Stress induced by performance visibility; Perceived performance outcomes	Stress & Burnout Management	Work Outcomes
I12	1 8	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I12	1 9	Public persona & identity work	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour	
I12	2 0	Customer education & curiosity; Learning in public view	Customer Interaction	Professional Development
I12	2 1	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Team Dynamics & Communication	Design & Operational Efficiency; Work Outcomes
I13	1	Constant sensory vigilance; Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Physical & Sensory Environment	Cross-Boundary Collaboration; Design & Operational Efficiency
I13	2	Pressure of visibility; Constant sensory vigilance; Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Physical & Sensory Environment; Professional Standards in Open Kitchens
I13	3	Immediate customer evaluation	Customer Interaction	
I13	4	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I13	5	Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Work	

			Outcomes	
I13	6	Immediate customer evaluation	Customer Interaction	
I13	7	Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Design & Operational Efficiency	Work Outcomes
I13	8	Coordination/Hierarchy	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I13	9	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I13	10	Constant sensory vigilance	Physical & Sensory Environment	
I13	11	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	
I13	12	Public persona & identity work; Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour	Design & Operational Efficiency
I13	13	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I13	14	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze &	

			Performance Pressure	
I13	1 5	Pride/Motivation	Motivation & Recognition	
I13	1 6	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I13	1 7	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I13	1 8	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I13	1 9	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I13	2 0	No data	No data	
I13	2 1	Adaptation/Identity	Work Outcomes	
I14	1	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Kitchen-FOH interdependence	Team Dynamics & Communication	Cross-Boundary Collaboration
I14	2	Pressure of visibility	Customer Gaze &	

			Performance Pressure	
I14	3	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	
I14	4	Adaptation/Identity	Work Outcomes	
I14	5	Stress induced by performance visibility; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Stress & Burnout Management	Work Outcomes
I14	1	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I14	2	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Team Dynamics & Communication	Design & Operational Efficiency
I14	3	Public persona & identity work; Learning in public view	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour	Professional Development
I14	1	Adaptation/Identity	Work Outcomes	
I14	2	Constant sensory vigilance	Physical & Sensory Environment	
I14	3	Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Design & Operational Efficiency	

I14	4	Coordination/Hierarchy	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I14	5	Constant sensory vigilance	Physical & Sensory Environment	
I14	1	Pride/Motivation	Motivation & Recognition	
I14	2	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I14	1	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Stress induced by performance visibility	Team Dynamics & Communication	Stress & Burnout Management
I14	2	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I14	3	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I14	4	Adaptation/Identity	Work Outcomes	
I14	1	No data	No data	
I14	2	Design & Operational Efficiency	Physical & Sensory	Design & Operational Efficiency

			Environme nt	
I15	1	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I15	2	Constant sensory vigilance	Physical & Sensory Environme nt	
I15	3	Constant sensory vigilance	Physical & Sensory Environme nt	
I15	4	Kitchen–FOH interdependence	Cross-Boun dary Collaborati on	
I15	5	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/ Descriptive	
I15	6	Immediate customer evaluation	Customer Interaction	
I15	7	Immediate customer evaluation	Customer Interaction	
I15	8	Pressure of visibility; Stress induced by performance visibility	Customer Gaze & Performanc e Pressure	Stress & Burnout Management
I15	9	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/ Descriptive	
I15	1 0	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communica	

			tion	
I15	1 1	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I15	1 2	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I15	1 3	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I15	1 4	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Kitchen-FOH interdependence	Team Dynamics & Communication	Cross-Boundary Collaboration
I15	1 5	Pressure of visibility; Public persona & identity work	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour
I15	1 6	Operational flaws exposed to customers	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I15	1 7	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I15	1 8	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Stress induced by performance visibility	Professional Standards	Stress & Burnout Management

			in Open Kitchens	
I15	19	Exit decision catalysts under open-kitchen conditions	Retention & Turnover	
I15	20	Kitchen–FOH interdependence	Cross-Boundary Collaboration	
I15	21	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I16	1	Constant sensory vigilance; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Physical & Sensory Environment	Team Dynamics & Communication; Design & Operational Efficiency
I16	2	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Stress induced by performance visibility	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	Stress & Burnout Management
I16	3	Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Stress induced by performance visibility; Operational flaws exposed to customers	Cross-Boundary Collaboration	Stress & Burnout Management; Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure
I16	4	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Stress induced by performance visibility; Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Team Dynamics & Communication	Stress & Burnout Management; Design & Operational Efficiency
I16	5	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I16	6	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I16	7	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team	

			Dynamics & Communication	
I16	8	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I16	9	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I16	10	Constant sensory vigilance; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Physical & Sensory Environment	Team Dynamics & Communication
I16	11	Perceived performance outcomes	Work Outcomes	
I16	12	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I16	13	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I16	14	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I16	15	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Team Dynamics & Communication	Work Outcomes

			tion	
I16	1 6	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I16	1 7	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I16	1 8	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I16	1 9	Professional pride from visibility	Motivation & Recognition	
I16	2 0	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I16	2 1	Adaptation/Identity	Work Outcomes	
I17	1	Pressure of visibility; Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens; Design & Operational Efficiency
I17	2	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	Team Dynamics & Communication
I17	3	Pressure of visibility; Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Stress induced by performance visibility	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Cross-Boundary Collaboration; Stress & Burnout Management
I17	4	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Stress induced by	Professional	Stress & Burnout Management

		performance visibility	1 Standards in Open Kitchens	
I17	5	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I17	6	Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I17	7	Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Design & Operational Efficiency	
I17	8	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Public persona & identity work	Team Dynamics & Communication	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour
I17	9	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I17	10	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I17	11	Pressure of visibility; Perceived performance outcomes	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Work Outcomes
I17	12	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics &	

			Communication	
I17	1 3	Kitchen–FOH interdependence	Cross-Boundary Collaboration	
I17	1 4	Professional pride from visibility; Immediate customer evaluation; Stress induced by performance visibility	Motivation & Recognition	Customer Interaction; Stress & Burnout Management
I17	1 5	Learning in public view	Professional Development	
I17	1 6	Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Stress induced by performance visibility	Cross-Boundary Collaboration	Stress & Burnout Management
I17	1 7	Constant sensory vigilance; Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Physical & Sensory Environment	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens
I17	1 8	Coordination/Hierarchy	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I17	1 9	Exit decision catalysts under open-kitchen conditions	Retention & Turnover	
I17	2 0	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	

I17	2 1	Constant sensory vigilance; Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Physical & Sensory Environment	Design & Operational Efficiency
I18	1	Constant sensory vigilance	Physical & Sensory Environment	
I18	2	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I18	3	Stress induced by performance visibility; Operational flaws exposed to customers	Stress & Burnout Management	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure
I18	4	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I18	5	Professional pride from visibility	Motivation & Recognition	
I18	6	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I18	7	Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I18	8	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I18	9	Kitchen–FOH interdependence	Cross-Boundary	

			Collaboration	
I18	10	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I18	11	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Kitchen-FOH interdependence	Team Dynamics & Communication	Cross-Boundary Collaboration
I18	12	Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze; Public persona & identity work; Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Team Dynamics & Communication	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour; Design & Operational Efficiency
I18	13	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I18	14	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I18	15	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I18	16	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Kitchen-FOH interdependence; Operational flaws exposed to customers	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	Team Dynamics & Communication; Cross-Boundary Collaboration; Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure
I18	17	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I18	1	Emotional regulation strategies	Stress &	

	8		Burnout Management	
I18	19	Exit decision catalysts under open-kitchen conditions	Retention & Turnover	
I18	20	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I18	21	Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Cross-Boundary Collaboration	Design & Operational Efficiency
I19	1	Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Design & Operational Efficiency	
I19	2	Constant sensory vigilance	Physical & Sensory Environment	
I19	3	Pressure of visibility; Public persona & identity work; Stress induced by performance visibility; Exit decision catalysts under open-kitchen conditions	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour; Stress & Burnout Management; Retention & Turnover
I19	4	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Stress induced by performance visibility	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	Stress & Burnout Management
I19	5	Professional pride from visibility; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Public persona & identity work	Motivation & Recognition	Team Dynamics & Communication; Professional Identity & Emotional Labour
I19	6	Professional pride from visibility; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze; Public persona & identity work	Motivation & Recognition	Team Dynamics & Communication; Professional Identity & Emotional Labour

I19	7	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Perceived performance outcomes	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	Work Outcomes
I19	8	Public persona & identity work	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour	
I19	9	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I19	10	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Perceived performance outcomes	Team Dynamics & Communication	Work Outcomes
I19	11	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I19	12	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I19	13	Perceived performance outcomes	Work Outcomes	
I19	14	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	

I19	15	Pressure of visibility; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication
I19	16	Stress induced by performance visibility; Perceived performance outcomes	Stress & Burnout Management	Work Outcomes
I19	17	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Stress induced by performance visibility	Team Dynamics & Communication	Stress & Burnout Management
I19	18	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I19	19	Public persona & identity work; Exit decision catalysts under open-kitchen conditions	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour	Retention & Turnover
I19	20	Professional pride from visibility; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Motivation & Recognition	Team Dynamics & Communication
I19	21	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies; Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Team Dynamics & Communication	Design & Operational Efficiency
I20	1	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I20	2	Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Work	

			Outcomes	
I20	3	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I20	4	Exit decision catalysts under open-kitchen conditions	Retention & Turnover	
I20	5	Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Work Outcomes	
I20	6	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I20	7	Pressure of visibility; Perceived performance outcomes	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Work Outcomes
I20	8	Public persona & identity work	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour	
I20	9	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I20	10	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I20	11	Pressure of visibility; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Design & Operational Efficiency

I20	1 2	Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I20	1 3	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I20	1 4	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I20	1 5	Coordination/Hierarchy	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I20	1 6	Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Design & Operational Efficiency	Work Outcomes
I20	1 7	Emotional regulation strategies	Stress & Burnout Management	
I20	1 8	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I20	1 9	Exit decision catalysts under open-kitchen conditions	Retention & Turnover	
I20	2 0	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze &	

			Performance Pressure	
I20	2 1	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I21	1	Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Cross-Boundary Collaboration	Design & Operational Efficiency
I21	2	Constant sensory vigilance; Stress induced by performance visibility; Emotional regulation strategies	Physical & Sensory Environment	Stress & Burnout Management
I21	3	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	
I21	4	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Stress induced by performance visibility; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Team Dynamics & Communication	Cross-Boundary Collaboration; Stress & Burnout Management; Design & Operational Efficiency
I21	5	Professional pride from visibility; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Motivation & Recognition	Work Outcomes
I21	6	Customer education & curiosity; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Customer Interaction	Team Dynamics & Communication
I21	7	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I21	8	Pressure of visibility	Customer	

			Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I21	9	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I21	10	Emotional regulation strategies	Stress & Burnout Management	
I21	11	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I21	12	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I21	13	Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Cross-Boundary Collaboration	Design & Operational Efficiency
I21	14	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I21	15	Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Work Outcomes	
I21	16	Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Stress induced by performance visibility; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Cross-Boundary Collaboration	Stress & Burnout Management; Design & Operational Efficiency

			on	
I21	1 7	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I21	1 8	Public persona & identity work; Stress induced by performance visibility; Emotional regulation strategies	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour	Stress & Burnout Management
I21	1 9	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I21	2 0	No data	No data	
I21	2 1	Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Design & Operational Efficiency	
I22	1	Pressure of visibility; Constant sensory vigilance; Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Physical & Sensory Environment; Cross-Boundary Collaboration; Design & Operational Efficiency
I22	2	Pressure of visibility; Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens; Team Dynamics & Communication
I22	3	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	Team Dynamics & Communication
I22	4	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I22	5	Pride/Motivation	Motivation &	

			Recognition	
I22	6	Immediate customer evaluation; Customer education & curiosity	Customer Interaction	
I22	7	Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Work Outcomes	
I22	8	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I22	9	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I22	10	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I22	11	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	
I22	12	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I22	13	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I22	1	Immediate customer evaluation; Heightened self-regulation under	Customer	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens

	4	customer gaze	Interaction	
I22	1 5	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	
I22	1 6	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I22	1 7	Perceived performance outcomes	Work Outcomes	
I22	1 8	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I22	1 9	Exit decision catalysts under open-kitchen conditions	Retention & Turnover	
I22	2 0	Perceived performance outcomes	Work Outcomes	
I22	2 1	Pressure of visibility; Constant sensory vigilance; Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Physical & Sensory Environment; Design & Operational Efficiency
I23	1	Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Cross-Boundary Collaboration	Design & Operational Efficiency
I23	2	Constant sensory vigilance; Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Physical & Sensory Environment	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens
I23	3	Immediate customer evaluation; Constant sensory vigilance	Customer Interaction	Physical & Sensory Environment
I23	4	Adaptation/Identity	Work	

			Outcomes	
I23	5	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I23	6	Professional pride from visibility; Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Exit decision catalysts under open-kitchen conditions	Motivation & Recognition	Cross-Boundary Collaboration; Retention & Turnover
I23	7	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Team Dynamics & Communication	Design & Operational Efficiency
I23	8	Public persona & identity work	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour	
I23	9	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I23	10	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	
I23	11	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I23	12	Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze; Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Team Dynamics & Communication	Design & Operational Efficiency

I23	1 3	Constant sensory vigilance	Physical & Sensory Environment	
I23	1 4	Adaptation/Identity	Work Outcomes	
I23	1 5	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I23	1 6	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I23	1 7	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I23	1 8	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I23	1 9	Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Design & Operational Efficiency	
I23	2 0	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Team Dynamics & Communication	Work Outcomes
I23	2 1	Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies; Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Design & Operational Efficiency	
I24	1	Constant sensory vigilance	Physical & Sensory	

			Environment	
I24	2	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I24	3	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	Design & Operational Efficiency
I24	4	Emotional regulation strategies	Stress & Burnout Management	
I24	5	Constant sensory vigilance; Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Physical & Sensory Environment	Work Outcomes
I24	6	Customer education & curiosity	Customer Interaction	
I24	7	Pressure of visibility	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I24	8	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I24	9	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I24	10	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Professional Standards in Open	Team Dynamics & Communication

			Kitchens	
I24	1 1	Design & Operational Efficiency	Physical & Sensory Environment	Design & Operational Efficiency
I24	1 2	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze; Public persona & identity work	Team Dynamics & Communication	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour
I24	1 3	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I24	1 4	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	
I24	1 5	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I24	1 6	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I24	1 7	Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Emotional regulation strategies	Cross-Boundary Collaboration	Stress & Burnout Management
I24	1 8	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	

I24	1 9	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/ Descriptive	
I24	2 0	No data	No data	
I24	2 1	Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Design & Operational Efficiency	
I25	1	Constant sensory vigilance; Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Physical & Sensory Environment	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens; Design & Operational Efficiency
I25	2	Constant sensory vigilance	Physical & Sensory Environment	
I25	3	Professional pride from visibility; Customer recognition of labour; Kitchen–FOH interdependence	Motivation & Recognition	Cross-Boundary Collaboration
I25	4	Pressure of visibility	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I25	5	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I25	6	Professional pride from visibility	Motivation & Recognition	
I25	7	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	

I25	8	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I25	9	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I25	10	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication	
I25	11	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I25	12	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Team Dynamics & Communication	Design & Operational Efficiency
I25	13	Self-monitoring	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	
I25	14	Adaptation/Identity	Work Outcomes	
I25	15	Pressure of visibility	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I25	16	Operational flaws exposed to customers	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I25	17	Constant sensory vigilance; Stress induced by performance visibility	Physical & Sensory	Stress & Burnout Management

			Environment	
I25	18	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Stress induced by performance visibility	Team Dynamics & Communication	Stress & Burnout Management
I25	19	Exit decision catalysts under open-kitchen conditions	Retention & Turnover	
I25	20	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	
I25	21	Constant sensory vigilance; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Physical & Sensory Environment	Design & Operational Efficiency
I26	1	Pressure of visibility; Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens; Cross-Boundary Collaboration; Design & Operational Efficiency
I26	2	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	
I26	3	Professional pride from visibility; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Kitchen–FOH interdependence; Stress induced by performance visibility	Motivation & Recognition	Team Dynamics & Communication; Cross-Boundary Collaboration; Stress & Burnout Management
I26	4	Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Design & Operational Efficiency	
I26	5	Constant sensory vigilance; Stress induced by performance visibility; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Physical & Sensory Environment	Stress & Burnout Management; Design & Operational Efficiency

			nt	
I26	6	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure	
I26	7	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Perceived performance outcomes	Team Dynamics & Communication	Work Outcomes
I26	8	Public persona & identity work; Perceived performance outcomes	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour	Work Outcomes
I26	9	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Kitchen–FOH interdependence	Team Dynamics & Communication	Cross-Boundary Collaboration
I26	10	Constant sensory vigilance; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Physical & Sensory Environment	Team Dynamics & Communication; Design & Operational Efficiency
I26	11	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Emotional regulation strategies	Team Dynamics & Communication	Stress & Burnout Management
I26	12	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	

I26	1 3	Constant sensory vigilance; Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure; Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Physical & Sensory Environment	Team Dynamics & Communication; Design & Operational Efficiency
I26	1 4	Contextual/Descriptive	Contextual/Descriptive	
I26	1 5	Pride/Motivation	Motivation & Recognition	
I26	1 6	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management	
I26	1 7	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze; Stress induced by performance visibility	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens	Stress & Burnout Management
I26	1 8	Customer education & curiosity; Stress induced by performance visibility; Emotional regulation strategies	Customer Interaction	Stress & Burnout Management
I26	1 9	Adaptation/Identity	Work Outcomes	
I26	2 0	Adaptation/Identity	Work Outcomes	
I26	2 1	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction	

Annex E: Final Codes and Themes, according to Coding Rules

Coding Rules (Keywords and Examples)	Initial Code	Final Theme
watched;observed;visible;spotlight;no way to hide; visible; visibility; gaze; exposed; on stage; spotlight; performance; watched; observed; on display	Pressure of visibility	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure
on stage;performance in public; front-stage; theatre; show; performance in public	Public performance framing	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure
proud;valued;recognition;appreciation;rewarding;satisfying	Professional pride from visibility	Motivation & Recognition
customers understand;see;appreciate our work	Customer recognition of labour	Motivation & Recognition
immediate;direct feedback;opinion;praise;complaint	Immediate customer evaluation	Customer Interaction
explain;educate customers; customer curiosity	Customer education & curiosity	Customer Interaction
noise;smells;heat;steam;lighting;crowded	Constant sensory vigilance	Physical & Sensory Environment
team;coordination;communication;flow	Adaptive teamwork strategies under visibility pressure	Team Dynamics & Communication
hierarchy;‘Yes, Chef’;roles	Power dynamics exposed to customer gaze	Team Dynamics & Communication
FOH;waiters;dining room;pass	Kitchen–FOH interdependence	Cross-Boundary Collaboration
persona;mask;role;self-presentation;confident;communicative	Public persona & identity work	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour
comfort zone;personal growth	Identity growth & confidence	Professional Identity & Emotional Labour
stress;pressure;burnout;anxiety;tension	Stress induced by performance visibility	Stress & Burnout Management
keep calm;composed;emotion regulation;avoid showing stress	Emotional regulation strategies	Stress & Burnout Management
layout;workflow;equipment;capacity;pass	Operational design exposure & resource-related inefficiencies	Design & Operational Efficiency

change;improve;upgrade;reconfigure	Critical reflections on spatial design & efficiency	Design & Operational Efficiency
mistakes visible;disorganization caught	Operational flaws exposed to customers	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure
well-being;job satisfaction;motivation;engagement	Emotional balance shaped by open-kitchen exposure	Work Outcomes
performance;service quality;efficiency	Perceived performance outcomes	Work Outcomes
learning;lessons;skill development	Learning in public view	Professional Development
leave;quit;resign;turnover	Exit decision catalysts under open-kitchen conditions	Retention & Turnover
recognition; rewards; motivation; morale; job satisfaction; acknowledgment	Pride/Motivation	Motivation & Recognition
adaptation; work identity; performance; efficiency; productivity; methodical; routine	Adaptation/Identity	Work Outcomes
guest engagement; table talk; service contact; guest feedback; compliments	Engagement/Feedback	Customer Interaction
coordination; hierarchy; roles; communication; handoffs	Coordination/Hierarchy	Team Dynamics & Communication
self-monitoring; hygiene; cleanliness; presentation; behaviour; standards	Self-monitoring	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens
visibility; customer-facing; observation; public view	Customer-facing awareness	Customer Gaze & Performance Pressure
design; efficiency; workflow; layout	Design & Operational Efficiency	Physical & Sensory Environment
self-control; hygiene; posture; observation	Heightened self-regulation under customer gaze	Professional Standards in Open Kitchens

Annex F: Theme Distribution

Int erv iew _I D	Conte xtual/ Descr iptive	Cross-B oundar y Collabo ration	Customer Gaze & Performa nce Pressure	Cust omer Inter actio n	Design & Operati onal Efficien cy	Motiv ation & Recog nition	N od ata	Physical & Sensory Environ ment	Profes sional Develo pment	Profession al Identity & Emotional Labour	Profession al Standards in Open Kitchens	Reten tion & Turn over	Stress & Burnou t Manage ment	Team Dynamic s & Commu nication	Wo rk Out com es
I01	1	0	3	3	3	1	1	1	0	1	4	1	4	4	4
I02	0	1	2	2	2	4	0	1	0	1	1	1	2	11	3
I03	0	2	5	1	7	2	1	3	1	1	3	1	9	9	4
I04	5	1	0	4	3	2	0	2	1	1	0	1	1	5	1
I05	1	3	4	1	3	0	0	3	0	1	5	1	1	5	4
I06	0	1	2	1	4	2	1	3	0	4	4	0	1	7	3
I07	1	1	7	6	2	0	0	3	0	1	3	1	4	6	3
I08	3	1	6	4	2	0	0	2	1	0	3	0	3	4	2
I09	4	2	4	3	2	2	0	2	0	0	4	0	4	6	1
I10	2	1	5	3	2	0	0	0	0	2	3	0	3	5	3
I11	3	1	3	1	3	4	2	5	0	0	2	0	4	3	3
I12	1	0	2	9	3	0	0	1	1	1	2	0	2	7	3
I13	2	1	2	2	3	1	1	3	0	1	2	0	2	4	3
I14	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	3	1	1	1	0	4	4	4
I15	3	3	3	4	0	0	0	2	0	1	1	1	3	4	0
I16	2	1	1	4	2	1	0	2	0	0	1	0	5	9	3
I17	2	3	3	1	3	1	0	2	1	1	4	1	5	7	1
I18	1	4	3	7	2	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	3	6	0
I19	1	0	2	0	2	4	0	1	0	6	2	2	5	11	4
I20	1	0	7	2	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	5	4

I21	2	4	2	2	6	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	7	4	2
I22	2	1	3	3	2	1	0	2	0	0	5	1	1	7	3
I23	1	2	0	3	6	1	0	3	0	1	2	1	3	4	3
I24	5	1	1	1	3	0	1	3	0	1	3	0	2	5	1
I25	2	1	3	3	3	2	0	4	0	0	2	1	2	4	1
I26	1	3	2	2	6	2	0	3	0	1	4	0	7	7	4
To tal	47	39	76	73	79	33	9	56	6	29	63	16	88	153	67