

SENSORY QUALITY EVALUATION OF GRILLED CHICKEN PRODUCTS AT KAMPUNG COKLAT RESTAURANT BLITAR

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ABSTRACT

Grilled chicken is one of Indonesia's signature dishes that has become an integral part of the archipelago's culinary culture. This study aims to determine the level of consumer preference for grilled chicken at Kampung Coklat Restaurant Blitar based on color, aroma, texture, and taste, as well as to identify the sensory characteristics most preferred by consumers. This research employed descriptive quantitative methods with hedonic and descriptive sensory tests involving 25 consumer panelists. The hedonic test used a 1-5 Likert scale to measure preference levels, while the descriptive test identified specific sensory attributes. Results showed that taste received the highest score (4.52), followed by aroma (4.28), color (4.16), and texture (4.04), with an overall score of 4.44, categorized as highly preferred. The descriptive test revealed that consumers preferred moderate and balanced sweet taste (60%), strong smoky aroma (56%), very tender and juicy texture (64%), and evenly distributed golden-brown color (52%). This study concludes that the sensory quality of grilled chicken at Kampung Coklat Restaurant Blitar is excellent, particularly in taste, which serves as the main strength, supported by appealing aroma, color, and texture.

1. Introduction

Grilled chicken is one of Indonesia's signature dishes that has become an integral part of the archipelago's culinary culture. The cooking process involves grilling chicken seasoned with distinctive spices, resulting in rich flavors and appetizing aromas. The uniqueness of grilled chicken lies in the variation of spices and grilling techniques that differ in each region, reflecting the richness of local culture and traditions (Agustina, 2019).

Research conducted by Kustiartono et al. (2005) demonstrated that grilled chicken has a special appeal to consumers, especially in major cities. A case study on the "Wong Solo" brand grilled chicken products showed that factors such as taste quality, affordable prices, and good service influence consumer decisions in choosing grilled chicken as their preferred menu (Nuari, 2020). Furthermore, Siddiq et al., (2025) added that product quality and competitive prices significantly affect consumer purchasing decisions. This indicates that grilled chicken is favored not only for its taste but

also for other factors that support consumer satisfaction.

Kampung Coklat Restaurant is a local restaurant that provides several signature menus, combining traditional flavors with modern touches. Located in a strategic tourism area, this restaurant not only offers a unique culinary experience but also plays a role in supporting tourism development based on local wisdom (Zahrulianingdyah et al., 2018). The development of signature menus using local raw materials has proven effective in increasing culinary tourism attraction. For example, research by Mukti et al. (2023) shows that menu diversification by utilizing local ingredients can increase visitor interest and provide a distinctive identity to products. One of the poultry products provided at Kampung Coklat Restaurant Blitar is grilled chicken.

Grilled chicken products at Kampung Coklat Restaurant are produced daily. However, the criteria and sensory quality characteristics of these grilled chicken products have not been identified. Through sensory quality assessment, it is expected to

determine the level of consumer preference for a food product. Sensory quality includes aspects such as taste, aroma, texture, and appearance that play an important role in determining consumer preferences. Sensory evaluation conducted systematically can provide accurate information regarding consumer perceptions of product quality. Thus, producers can make improvements and product innovations based on sensory feedback to increase market competitiveness (Utami et al., 2023). Based on this background, this study examines the sensory quality evaluation of grilled chicken products at Kampung Coklat Restaurant Blitar.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Time and location

This research was conducted from April to June 2025 at Kampung Coklat Restaurant Blitar, East Java, Indonesia. The location was chosen because it is one of the culinary tourism destinations with great potential in food product development, including grilled chicken products. This place also has facilities and supporting resources for conducting sensory testing and involving consumers directly as panelists.

2.2. Research design

This study employed descriptive quantitative research methods. The research aimed to describe the results of sensory analysis of grilled chicken served by Kampung Coklat Restaurant based on panelist assessments of several sensory attributes such as taste, aroma, texture, and appearance. The data obtained were analyzed quantitatively to determine the level of consumer acceptance of the grilled chicken products.

2.3 Sample preparation

The main material in this research was grilled chicken products served by Kampung Coklat Restaurant Blitar. Products were taken directly from the restaurant's production kitchen according to the serving standards usually applied to customers. The grilled chicken was prepared using traditional spice blends and grilling techniques characteristic of the restaurant.

2.4 Sensory evaluation

2.4.1. Hedonic test

Sensory quality assessment was conducted using the hedonic test method. This test involved 25 untrained consumer panelists selected randomly with

the following criteria: healthy and having no allergies to the food ingredients used. Panelists were asked to provide assessments of the sensory parameters of grilled chicken, namely color, aroma, taste, and texture, using a hedonic scale of 1-5, with ranges: 1 = Strongly dislike, 2 = Dislike, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Like, 5 = Strongly like.

2.4.2. Descriptive test

The descriptive test was conducted to identify specific sensory characteristics preferred by consumers. Panelists were asked to describe the attributes of each parameter (taste, aroma, texture, and color) by selecting from the provided descriptive options. The results were presented as the percentage of panelists choosing each descriptive attribute.

2.5. Data analysis

Data obtained from sensory tests were analyzed based on scores given by panelists for several sensory quality parameters. Scores from each panelist were collected and the average value was calculated for each parameter. The average results were then used to assess the level of consumer acceptance of the sensory quality of grilled chicken served by Kampung Coklat Restaurant Blitar. Data were presented in tables and narrative descriptions to facilitate analysis and provide a clear and systematic overview of the sensory quality test results.

3. Results and discussions

3.1. General description of respondents

This research involved active participation from 25 respondents who were direct consumers of Kampung Coklat Restaurant Blitar. These respondents, after purchasing and tasting the signature grilled chicken dish, were asked to fill out questionnaires. The questionnaires were carefully designed to capture their perceptions through two main approaches: hedonic assessment measuring overall preference and liking levels, and descriptive assessment allowing respondents to describe specific sensory attributes of grilled chicken, such as aroma, texture, taste, and visual appearance. The data collected from these questionnaires became crucial information in Kampung Coklat Restaurant's continuous efforts to maintain and improve the quality standards of their grilled chicken products.

3.2. Hedonic test results

The hedonic test results of grilled chicken products at Kampung Coklat Restaurant Blitar showed that consumers generally gave very positive responses to the product's sensory quality. From the four main

parameters assessed—color, aroma, taste, and texture—all aspects received scores above 4, meaning they were in the "like" to "strongly like" category (Table 1).

Table 1. Hedonic test results of grilled chicken sensory parameters

Parameters	Average Score	Category
Color	4.16 ± 0.51	Like
Aroma	4.28 ± 0.54	Like
Taste	4.52 ± 0.71	Strongly like
Texture	4.04 ± 0.68	Like
Overall	4.44 ± 0.65	Strongly like

*Expressed values were mean ± SD (n = 25)

Taste ranked highest in the hedonic test with an average score of 4.52 (Table 1), indicating that grilled chicken was highly liked in terms of flavor. This high taste rating reflects a successful combination of sweet and savory flavors that are balanced and harmonious, with spices that penetrate deep into the meat. The balance of taste, especially the combination of sweet and savory, becomes the main attraction in grilled food products. The taste success of this grilled chicken is not only derived from subjective feelings but is also supported by proper spice composition and cooking techniques. Customer satisfaction with the taste and quality of grilled chicken has a significant effect on repurchase intention (Imran, 2018).

Aroma received a score of 4.28, meaning the characteristic smoke and spice aroma was quite liked by the majority of consumers. Aroma obtained fairly high ratings from consumers with 56% of respondents liking the strong smoky aroma and 32% others smelling the dominant spice aroma (Table 2). This means the grilled chicken aroma at this restaurant successfully creates an authentic and traditional impression that is characteristic of grilled food. The strength of smoke and spice aromas in grilled chicken is not only liked by respondents but is also consistent with academic research results that confirm the significant influence of aroma on sensory attractiveness and consumer preferences (Primandhana, 2024).

Color of grilled chicken obtained a score of 4.16, showing that consumers generally liked the visual appearance of the grilled chicken. Descriptive test results showed that evenly distributed and attractive golden-brown color (52%) reflected perfect maturity

and proper grilling, providing an appetizing impression on the product. However, there were 28% of panelists who assessed the chicken looked somewhat dark but still attractive and 20% who assessed the color was too charred or burnt (Table 2). The golden-brown color is not only attractive but also reinforces the impression of perfect maturity and whets appetite, directly increasing the product's visual appeal in consumers' eyes (Insanaputra, 2023).

Texture also received good ratings from panelists with an average score of 4.04. From descriptive results, 64% of panelists assessed the grilled chicken texture as very tender and juicy (Table 2). This indicates that the grilled chicken cooking technique used has achieved an optimal level of maturity. However, there were also notes from 24% of panelists who stated the texture was quite tender and easy to chew, and 12% who felt the texture was somewhat hard but still chewable. The appropriate treatment of raw materials before the cooking process greatly influences the final quality of chicken product texture, supporting the importance of grilling process control as seen in panelist results in this research.

Overall, grilled chicken at Kampung Coklat Restaurant Blitar obtained a score of 4.44, falling into the strongly liked category. This combination of all four aspects forms product characteristics that are not only liked but also have the potential to create long-term consumer loyalty.

3.3. Descriptive test results

The descriptive test results provide more detailed information about specific sensory characteristics preferred by consumers for each evaluated parameter.

Table 2. Descriptive test results of sensory attributes

Parameter	Descriptive Attribute	Number of Panelists	Percentage
Taste	Moderate sweet and balanced	15	60%
	Strong and dominant sweet	5	20%
	Tends savory and slightly sweet	4	16%
	Too bland and lacking	1	4%
Aroma	Strong smoky aroma and appetizing	14	56%
	Dominant spice aroma	8	32%
	Less pleasant or weak aroma	3	12%
Texture	Very tender and juicy	16	64%
	Quite tender and easy to chew	6	24%
	Somewhat hard but still chewable	3	12%
Color	Evenly distributed attractive golden brown	13	52%
	Somewhat dark but still attractive	7	28%
	Too charred and burnt	5	20%

For the taste parameter, the majority of panelists (60%) chose the description "moderate sweet and balanced taste" (**Table 2**). This result shows that the balance of sweet and savory taste becomes the main attraction of this grilled chicken product. The spicing technique and grilling process succeeded in producing taste that penetrates and is accepted very well by consumers. This is reinforced by the hedonic score of 4.52 (**Table 1**), the highest among all parameters.

In the aroma parameter, most panelists (56%) chose "strong smoky aroma and appetizing," followed by dominant spice aroma (32%). This indicates that the grilling process and spice use contribute significantly to creating an authentic and traditional aroma impression. Strong smoky aroma is one of the characteristics of grilled food that can increase appetite and provide a distinctive sensory experience.

Regarding texture, most panelists (64%) chose "very tender and juicy texture" (**Table 2**). This shows that the grilling technique applied has been quite good in maintaining meat moisture and achieving optimal maturity. However, there are still small notes from panelists about somewhat hard texture (12%), which can be improved through better control of grilling time and temperature.

For the color parameter, 52% of panelists chose "evenly distributed attractive golden-brown color" (**Table 2**). This golden-brown color reflects perfect maturity and provides an appetizing visual impression. However, there are still 20% of panelists who assessed the color was too charred, indicating the need for improvement in grilling technique to produce more consistent color.

3.4. Integration of hedonic and descriptive results

The integration between hedonic test results and descriptive test provides comprehensive understanding of consumer preferences for grilled chicken products at Kampung Coklat Restaurant Blitar. Taste as the highest aspect in hedonic assessment (4.52) is confirmed by descriptive results showing that 60% of consumers prefer moderate sweet and balanced taste. This shows consistency between preference level and specific taste characteristics liked by consumers.

Similarly with aroma, the hedonic score of 4.28 is supported by descriptive data showing that the majority of consumers (56%) like strong smoky aroma. This indicates that the grilling process not only produces liked taste but also creates aroma that strengthens the overall sensory appeal of the product. The relationship between aroma and taste in this grilled chicken product creates a synergistic effect that increases consumer satisfaction.

Although color and texture received slightly lower hedonic scores compared to taste and aroma, descriptive results show that the majority of consumers still prefer the main characteristics of both parameters. Golden-brown color and tender texture are dominant

preferences, although there are notes for improvement in consistency and evenness of both aspects.

4. Conclusions

The level of consumer preference for grilled chicken at Kampung Coklat Restaurant Blitar is generally in the like to strongly like category. Taste obtained the highest score (4.52), followed by aroma (4.28), color (4.16), and texture (4.04), with an overall score of 4.44. Preferred sensory characteristics based on descriptive tests are moderate sweet and balanced taste (60%), strong smoky and appetizing aroma (56%), very tender and juicy texture (64%), and evenly distributed attractive golden-brown color (52%). Thus, the sensory quality of grilled chicken at Kampung Coklat Restaurant Blitar is assessed as very good, especially in terms of taste which is the main strength, followed by aroma, color, and texture. To further improve product quality, it is recommended to optimize grilling techniques to produce more even color, adjust grilling time and temperature for more consistent texture, and maintain spice composition and flavor that have proven to be liked by consumers.

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