Research Article

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Process Standardization for preparation of Butter Garlic Chicken

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ABSTRACT

The present study was undertaken to standardize the method for preparation of butter garlic chicken. Optimization trials were conducted for batter formulation, sauce composition and chicken chunk thickness to obtain superior product quality. The 1:1 proportion of corn flour and refined wheat flour produced the best performance, recording higher flavour, juiciness, texture and overall acceptability scores. Incorporation of 21% butter and 8% garlic in sauce formulation significantly enhanced cooking yield, appearance, odour, flavour and juiciness compared to control and higher garlic treatments. The chicken chunk thickness of 8 mm resulted in maximum cooking yield and better sensory characteristics due to improved moisture retention and uniform heat transfer. The cost analysis demonstrated economic feasibility of the standardized formulation. Overall, butter garlic chicken was found to be a palatable, nutritious and commercially viable product with good consumer acceptability.

Keywords: butter garlic chicken; sensory analysis; batter; sauce; chicken chunk

INTRODUCTION

The Indian poultry industry has witnessed rapid growth in recent years, with broiler meat production reaching approximately 4.5 million tonnes and a market value of USD 30.46 billion in 2024, projected to grow at a CAGR of 8.10% (Jarpula, 2025). This expansion is driven by increasing demand for affordable and high-quality animal protein. Chicken is widely preferred over red meat due to its lean nature, lower saturated fat content, and higher polyunsaturated fatty acids, making it a healthier dietary choice (Lawrie, 2014). Additionally, its broad acceptance across diverse populations, with minimal religious restrictions, enhances its role as a major protein source (Scudiero et al. 2023).

Rapid urbanization and changing lifestyles have increased the demand for convenient foods, particularly ready-to-cook (RTC) and ready-to-eat (RTE) poultry products, thereby promoting the growth of the processing sector (Agriculture Institute, 2023). However, only about 6% of poultry production in India undergoes formal processing, leading to variability in product quality, sensory attributes, and shelf life (MoFPI, 2023). This highlights the need for standardized processing techniques to ensure uniform quality and consumer satisfaction.

Butter and garlic are key ingredients in butter garlic chicken, significantly influencing its sensory and functional properties. Butter enhances flavour, juiciness, and texture due to its high fat content and presence of volatile compounds (Walstra et al. 2006). Garlic contributes characteristic flavour along with antioxidant and

antimicrobial properties, improving product safety and shelf stability; however, excessive use may negatively affect acceptability (Mahmood et al. 2019).

Butter garlic chicken is a traditional product available in restaurants and hotels. However, the literature on its standardized method of preparation is not available. Therefore, the present investigation was undertaken to standardize the method for preparation of butter garlic chicken by optimizing batter formulation, sauce composition, and chicken chunk thickness so as to achieve consistent quality and improved sensory characteristics.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Source of raw materials

Deboned and deskinned chicken breasts obtained from 35–40 days old healthy broiler chickens were procured from the local market under hygienic conditions. The breasts were trimmed to remove visible fat and connective tissue, washed with distilled water, drained, packed in low-density polyethylene (LDPE) pouches and stored at −20 ±1°C until further use. Prior to processing, the breasts were thawed under refrigeration (4 ± 1°C) for 12 h.

Refined sunflower oil was procured from the local market and used as the frying medium. All ingredients used in the preparation of butter garlic chicken, including spices, condiments, and flavouring agents, were of good quality and obtained fresh from the local market. Fresh ginger, garlic, and green chillies were peeled, washed thoroughly, and chopped into small pieces. The condiment paste was prepared by blending these ingredients in the ratio of 2:2:1 using a mixer grinder to obtain a fine and homogeneous paste, which was used for marination and flavouring during product preparation. Spices such as black pepper powder and chopped green chillies were used for flavour enhancement. Condiments and seasonings used in the formulation included salt, vinegar, light soy sauce, sugar, lemon juice, and crushed lemon rind. Aromatic and flavouring agents such as chopped garlic, butter, coriander leaves, and green chillies were incorporated to enhance sensory quality. Corn flour, refined wheat flour (maida), and egg white were used as a binding and coating agents, while corn starch slurry prepared in water was used as a thickening agent. Drinking water was used as the liquid medium during the product preparation.

Preparation of Butter Garlic Chicken

Chicken breasts were cut into thin, equal-sized slices and placed in a bowl. They were thoroughly mixed with the marinade so that all pieces were evenly coated. Thereafter, the batter was added to help the coating to stick to the chicken pieces and to give a crispy texture after frying. Refined sunflower oil was heated in a shallow pan over medium-high heat, and the coated chicken slices were carefully fried until they turned golden brown on both sides and were then removed and kept on a sieve to drain the excess oil. For preparation of the sauce, butter was melted in a wok over high heat. Roughly chopped garlic, green chilli, and coriander stems were added and cooked for 2–3 minutes, making sure that the garlic did not brown. Hot water was then added, followed by salt, soy sauce, vinegar, black pepper powder, and sugar. The sauce was cooked for another 2–3 minutes over high heat. A slurry made by mixing corn flour with water was added during cooking to thicken the sauce. The fried chicken pieces were then added to the sauce along with lemon juice and lemon zest, and mixed gently so that all pieces were evenly coated.

Table 1: Marinade, batter and sauce formulations:

Marinade Formulation	
Ingredient	**Proportion (%)**
Salt	27.65
Black pepper powder	04.20
Vinegar	18.30
Light soy sauce	04.95
Ginger, garlic & green chilli paste	44.90
Total	100 .00

Batter Formulation	
Ingredient	**Proportion (%)**
Corn flour	27.03
Refined wheat flour	27.03
Egg white	45.94
Total	100 .00

Butter Garlic Sauce Formulation	
Ingredients	**Proportion (%)**
Chopped garlic	12.00
Butter	17.00
Green chillies chopped	02.20
Coriander leaves chopped	01.00
Water	56.42
Light soya sauce	00.25
Black pepper powder	00.29
Sugar	00.54
Corn starch slurry	05.50
Lemon juice	02.20
Lemon rind crushed	00.15
Spring onion chopped	01.10
Salt	00.25
Vinegar	01.10
Total	100

(Figure 1)

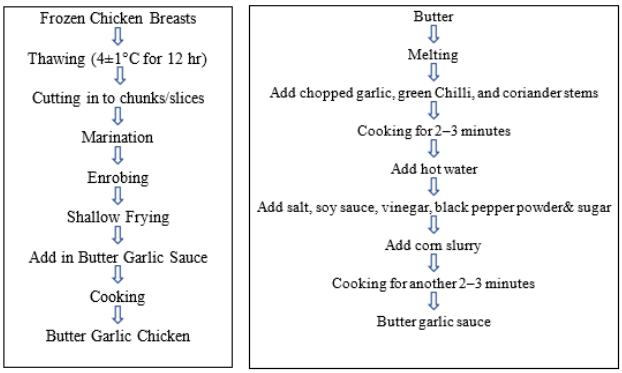

Figure 1. Flow Chart for Preparation of Butter Garlic Chicken

EXPERIMENTAL DESIGNS

Optimization of batter formulation

Butter garlic chicken was prepared by using the batter containing varying proportions of the corn flour and refined wheat flour, while the formulations of the marinade and sauce were constant for all the treatments as follows.

Particulars	Proportion (%)				
	T0	T1	T2	T3	T4
Binder					
Corn Flour	100	75	50	25	0
Refined Wheat Flour	0	25	50	75	100
Marinade Formulation					
Salt	27.65	27.65	27.65	27.65	27.65
Black pepper powder	04.20	04.20	04.20	04.20	04.20
Vinegar	18.30	18.30	18.30	18.30	18.30
Light soy sauce	04.95	04.95	04.95	04.95	04.95
Ginger, garlic & green chilli paste	44.90	44.90	44.90	44.90	44.90
Butter Sauce Formulation					
Chopped garlic	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00	12.00
Butter	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00	17.00
Green chillies chopped	02.18	02.18	02.18	02.18	02.18
Coriander leaves chopped	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99	0.99
Water	56.82	56.82	56.82	56.82	56.82
Light soya sauce	00.24	00.24	00.24	00.24	00.24
Black pepper powder	00.29	00.29	00.29	00.29	00.29
Sugar	00.53	00.53	00.53	00.53	00.53
Corn starch slurry	05.45	05.45	05.45	05.45	05.45
Lemon juice	02.18	02.18	02.18	02.18	02.18
Lemon rind crushed	00.14	00.14	00.14	00.14	00.14
Salt	01.09	01.09	01.09	01.09	01.09
Vinegar	01.09	01.09	01.09	01.09	01.09

Optimization of sauce composition

Butter garlic chicken was prepared as per the method standardized during the experiment number 1 in which corn flour and refined wheat flour were used in 1:1 ratio. Butter garlic sauce was prepared by varying the proportions of butter and garlic.

Ingredients	Proportion (%)		
	T0	T1	T2
Chopped garlic	12.00	08.00	16.00
Butter	17.00	21.00	13.00
Green chillies chopped	02.18	02.18	02.18
Coriander leaves chopped	0.99	0.99	0.99
Water	56.82	56.82	56.82
Light soya sauce	00.24	00.24	00.24
Black pepper powder	00.29	00.29	00.29
Sugar	00.53	00.53	00.53
Corn starch slurry	05.45	05.45	05.45
Lemon juice	02.18	02.18	02.18
Lemon rind crushed	00.14	00.14	00.14
Salt	01.09	01.09	01.09
Vinegar	01.09	01.09	01.09
Total	100	100	100

Optimization of chicken chunk thickness

Butter garlic chicken was prepared as per the method standardized during the experiment number 1 and 2 in which corn flour and refined wheat flour were used in 1:1 ratio and butter garlic sauce was prepared by using 21 % butter and 8 % garlic. The product was prepared by using chicken chunk of varying thickness while the length and breadth were kept constant.

Dimension (mm)	T0	T1	T2
Thickness	4	8	12
Length	40	40	40
Breadth	30	30	30

ANALYTICAL METHODS

pH: Ten gram *sample of the butter garlic chicken was homogenized with 50 ml of distilled water using mortar and pestle for 1 min. The pH was measured with digital pH meter equipped with a combined glass electrode (Eutech pH 700, Thermo scientific) as per the method described by Trout et al.* (1992).

Proximate analysis: Moisture, crude protein, crude fat and ash contents in both treatment samples and control were determined by using standard procedures prescribed by AOAC (1995).

Sensory Evaluation: **Butter garlic chicken s**amples were offered to semi trained panelists for evaluation of appearance & colour, odour, flavour, texture, juiciness, and overall acceptability by using 8-point descriptive scale (Keeton et al., 1983).

Cooking yield: The weights of butter garlic chicken samples were recorded before and after cooking. The cooking yield was calculated and expressed as a percentage using the formula:

Cooking Yield (%) = Weight of cooked meat Weight of raw meat $\times 100$

Statistical Analysis: The experiments were repeated three times and the data generated during the study were analyzed by one-way ANOVA as per standard methods suggested by Snedecor and Cochran (1994).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

OPTIMIZATION OF BATTER FORMULATION

The formulation of batter significantly influenced both cooking yield and sensory attributes of butter garlic chicken. Among the different treatments, the formulation containing equal proportions of corn flour and refined wheat flour (1:1) exhibited the most desirable characteristics. This treatment recorded the highest scores for appearance and colour, odour, flavour, texture, juiciness, and overall acceptability.

Although the treatment containing 100% corn flour demonstrated the highest cooking yield (67.57%), it was associated with comparatively lower sensory scores. This indicates that cooking yield alone is not a sufficient indicator of product quality. Improved performance of the formulation containing corn flour and refined wheat flour in 1:1 proportion can be attributed to the synergistic effect of both flours. Corn flour, being rich in starch, enhances water-holding capacity and contributes to crispiness, whereas refined wheat flour provides gluten, which improves binding and structural integrity of the coating (Toldra, 2010). The balanced interaction between these components resulted in a product that was crisp externally while retaining internal juiciness, thereby improving overall palatability.

The results are consistent with earlier reports recording the positive effect of corn flour on cooking yield of meat products. Ahamed *et al.* (2006) and Devadason *et al.* (2010) documented that the corn flour recorded the higher cooking yield of buffalo meat cutlet and buffalo meat nuggets respectively. The results are also consistent with earlier reports about sensory parameters. Habiba *et al.* (2021) reported that the incorporation of corn flour and refined wheat flour enhanced the colour, odour, juiciness and flavour of beef sausages. Kumari *et al.* (2020) observed enhanced texture of nuggets coated with a combination of flours.

Table 2: Effect of different proportions of corn flour and refined wheat flour on quality

of butter garlic chicken

Parameters	T0	T1	T2	T3	T4	F value
Cooking yield	67.57± 0.04^{a}	66.35±0.06^{b}	65.27±0.29^{c}	64.98±0.58^{c}	63.25±0.37^{d}	23.129**
Sensory attributes						
Appearance and colour	6.89± 0.06^{ab}	7.08± 0.10^{ab}	7.25± 0.16^{a}	6.72± 0.11^{b}	6.63± 0.26^{b}	2.762*
Odour	6.92± 0.06^{b}	7.09± 0.04^{b}	7.41± 0.09^{a}	6.87± 0.09^{b}	6.52± 0.10^{c}	16.449**
Flavour	6.55± 0.08^{cd}	6.83± 0.05^{bc}	7.43± 0.08^{a}	6.90± 0.14^{b}	6.42± 0.16^{d}	12.650**
Juiciness	7.07± 0.03^{b}	6.83± 0.06^{c}	7.48± 0.10^{a}	6.82± 0.06^{c}	6.46± 0.11^{d}	22.279**
Texture	6.86± 0.08^{b}	6.90± 0.05^{b}	7.49± 0.06^{a}	6.87± 0.14^{b}	6.42± 0.10^{c}	17.229**
Overall acceptability	6.88± 0.08^{b}	7.00± 0.14^{b}	7.53± 0.05^{a}	6.92± 0.15^{b}	6.44± 0.09^{c}	12.509**

Optimization of Sauce Composition

The formulation of butter garlic sauce played a crucial role in determining the sensory quality of the final product. Among the different treatments, the sauce containing 21% butter and 8% garlic yielded the highest scores for all sensory parameters, including appearance, flavour, juiciness, and overall acceptability. The higher butter content contributed to improved mouthfeel, gloss, and flavour richness due to the presence of milk fat and flavour compounds such as diacetyl and lactones (Walstra et al., 2006). Butter also enhanced moisture retention, thereby improving juiciness and texture of the product. Garlic, on the other hand, provided characteristic pungency and aroma due to the presence of organosulphur compounds such as allicin. However, excessive garlic levels negatively affected sensory acceptance, as strong pungency and slight bitterness were observed in treatments with higher garlic concentration. Similar findings have been reported where optimal levels of garlic improved flavour, whereas excessive levels reduced acceptability (Sallam et al., 2004). Thus, a balanced proportion of butter and garlic is essential to achieve desirable sensory attributes and consumer acceptance.

Similar findings have been previously reported about the cooking yield of meat products. Raziuddin et al. (2022), documented improved cooking yield in butter-enriched goat meat spread, and Rezende-de-Souza et al. (2024), reported higher cooking yield in beef products by incorporation of butter. Similar findings about sensory parameters have also been reported previously. Improvement in colour, odour, flavour, juiciness and texture due to butter incorporation have been reported in goat meat spread by Raziuddin et al. (2022) and in various

meat spreads by Karthikeyan et al. (2024).

Table 3: Effect of different sauce formulations on quality of butter garlic Chicken

Parameters	T0	T1	T2	F value
Cooking yield	65.18±0.39^{b}	67.12±0.10^{a}	64.67±0.16^{b}	26.753**
Sensory Attributes				
Appearance and colour	7.04±0.08^{b}	7.47±0.13^{a}	6.55±0.12^{c}	16.204**
Odour	7.03±0.10^{b}	7.46±0.06^{a}	6.55±0.06^{c}	35.043**
Flavour	7.06±0.19^{b}	7.47±0.06^{a}	6.58±0.05^{c}	14.185**
Juiciness	6.84±0.19^{b}	7.54±0.06^{a}	6.39±0.09^{c}	19.862**
Texture	7.01±0.12^{b}	7.50±0.11^{a}	6.39±0.09^{c}	26.747**
Overall acceptability	7.01±0.10^{b}	7.43±0.06^{a}	6.51±0.12^{c}	23.659**

Optimization of Chicken Chunk Thickness

Chicken chunk thickness was found to significantly influence both, cooking yield and sensory quality. Among the treatments evaluated, the 8 mm thickness produced the most acceptable product, recording the highest cooking yield (67.98%) and superior sensory scores.

The thinner pieces (4 mm) showed relatively lower juiciness, likely due to rapid moisture loss during frying. In contrast, thicker pieces (12 mm) exhibited uneven cooking and inadequate flavour penetration, which adversely affected texture and overall acceptability. The 8 mm thickness provided an optimal balance between surface browning and internal moisture retention. It also allowed uniform heat transfer and proper coating adhesion, resulting in a product that was tender, juicy, and well-flavoured. This finding highlights the importance of standardizing product dimensions in ensuring consistent quality of value-added meat products.

Comparable enhancements in cooking yield with optimized chunk size have been reported by McDermott et al. (1999) and Gurikar et al. (2012), who found that smaller or standardized meat pieces improved water-holding capacity and reduced cooking losses.

Similar findings about sensory parameters of meat products have been documented previously. Basha et al. (2023), reported that standardized chunk dimensions improved visual characteristics, odour and flavour of restructured meat products. Comparable enhancements in juiciness and texture of meat products with optimized chunk sizes have been reported by Gurikar et al. (2012) and McDermott et al. (1999) respectively.

Table 4: Effect of chicken chunk thickness on quality of butter garlic chicken

Parameters	T0	T1	T2	F value
Cooking yield	66.25±0.25^{b}	67.98±0.10^{a}	64.49±0.16^{b}	45.169**
Sensory Attributes				
Appearance and colour	6.45±0.11^{b}	7.46±0.10^{a}	7.00±0.29^{ab}	7.321**
Odour	6.46±0.10^{b}	7.51±0.05^{a}	7.09±0.25^{a}	11.384**
Flavour	6.56±0.26^{b}	7.60±0.10^{a}	6.92±0.26^{b}	9.551**
Juiciness	6.57±0.11^{b}	7.56±0.09^{a}	7.17±0.29^{a}	7.024**
Texture	6.57±±0.12^{b}	7.57±0.15^{a}	7.05±0.27^{ab}	6.807**
Overall acceptability	6.6±0.06^{b}	7.49±0.13^{a}	7.06±0.22^{ab}	8.310**

Proximate Composition

The proximate composition of the standardized butter garlic chicken revealed moisture content of 41.57%, protein 21.65%, fat 18.37%, crude fibre 1.47%, and ash 4.41%. The relatively high protein content indicates that the product serves as a good source of high-quality animal protein. The fat content was higher due to the incorporation of butter in the formulation, which contributed to improved sensory characteristics. The presence of crude fibre, although minimal, may be attributed to the addition of flour and plant-based ingredients. Overall, the product exhibited a nutritionally rich profile, although moderate consumption is recommended due to its fat content.

The moisture content recorded in the present study is also comparable to that reported by Lukman et al. (2010) for commercial chicken nuggets (34.71–56.51%). The higher protein content in the present product compared to that recorded by Anandh et al. (2005) and Pathania et al. (2013) may be attributed to the predominance of muscle proteins, the inclusion of egg albumin, and minimal use of non-meat extenders. Similarly, the higher fat content than that of conventional chicken products as reported by Yogesh et al. (2013) may be attributed to the inclusion of butter in the sauce, resulting in increased fat retention during cooking. Similarly, increases in the crude fibre and ash content have been observed by Behailu and Abebe (2020) and Bhat and Pathak (2012) respectively.

Cost of Production

The production cost of standardized butter garlic chicken was calculated to be ₹335.67 per kg of finished product. The major cost components included chicken meat, butter, and other ingredients used in formulation. Despite the inclusion of relatively expensive ingredients such as butter, the overall cost remained reasonable, making the product economically viable for both small-scale and commercial production. The cost-effectiveness, combined with improved sensory quality, enhances the market potential of the product.

CONCLUSIONS

The butter garlic chicken with desirable sensory characteristics was produced by using the chicken chunks of 8 mm thickness, batter formulation containing the corn flour and refined wheat flour in 1:1 proportion and sauce formulation consisting of 21 per cent butter and 8 per cent chopped garlic. The production cost of butter garlic chicken was Rs. 335.67 per kg which indicated that the butter garlic chicken can be produced economically and has good potential as a value-added chicken product.

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