



REDESIGN MARKETING MIX IN HJ KARMI'S CHILI CHIPS BASED ON CONSUMER PERCEPTION AND DIGITAL CONCEPT

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ABSTRACT

Hj. Karmi chilli chips, a small enterprise in Dumai City, Riau, Indonesia, is contending with competition from local competitors. This research seeks to revitalize the marketing mix by examining consumer perceptions and digital strategies. The study assesses consumer views on the 7Ps marketing mix (product, price, place, promotion, process, people, physical evidence) for Hj. Karmi chilli chips. This study examines the present condition of these elements and proposes improvements to boost competitiveness and facilitate market growth. Utilizing survey methods with 40 participants and descriptive analysis based on the Likert scale and gap analysis, the study discovered that consumers have a very positive perception of price, people, and process, and a positive perception of place and product. Consumers rated physical evidence and promotion as average. Overall, the marketing perception of Hj. Karmi's consumers are positive. The product features simple packaging that emphasizes the product itself. The chips are priced competitively in Dumai City, providing affordable quality. The store's location suffers from poor accessibility and parking. Limited promotional activities have led to low awareness. Family members manage operations, allowing for close oversight but restricting growth. Consumers highly rate the production process for its quality and hygiene. The physical evidence was considered unattractive. Enhancements are necessary in product, place, promotion, people, and physical evidence to boost competitiveness. Recommendations include enhancing product quality and packaging, improving store accessibility, increasing digital promotion, hiring non-family employees, and upgrading the store layout to attract consumers in Dumai City, Riau.

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INTRODUCTION

Agricultural marketing is the movement of agricultural products from farms to consumers, considering time, place, form, inputs, and utility. The marketing of agricultural products begins with a farm's decision to produce and involves market structure aspects, including pre-harvest and post-harvest operations, processing, assembling, grading, storage, transportation, and distribution (Jeyaramya, 2022; Pandey et al., 2023).

In the competitive agribusiness snack sector, strategic marketing is essential for sustaining growth. The marketing mix offers a structured framework for aligning product offerings with consumer needs, enabling firms to differentiate and enhance market performance. The marketing mix is one approach to building a marketing strategy for agribusiness firms. Initially, the marketing mix was known as the 4P model, discovered by Jerome McCarhasthy in 1960 (Yudhi, 2024), and consisted of product, price, place, and promotion. It has been a fundamental framework, particularly for physical products. As markets evolved, the 4Ps model's limitations became apparent. Designed for tangible goods, it overlooks customer experience and relationship management, inadequately addressing personalization and modern consumer expectations. Created for physical products, it poorly suits the intangible nature of services and human interactions. The model's transaction focus limits its relevance where customer retention matters. It fails to address digital marketing and broader social-technological factors. To overcome these limitations, especially for services, the marketing mix expanded to include people, process, and physical evidence (Saidani & Sudiarditha, 2019). The 7Ps marketing mix extends the traditional 4Ps to address service marketing, emphasizing processes, employee interactions, and physical evidence that shape customer experience. This framework helps businesses meet customer needs, create product differentiation, and build long-term satisfaction through enhanced experiences and after-sales support (Wang, 2023).

The food processing industry is vital to agricultural marketing as it converts raw agricultural materials into consumable food products (Qibtiyana & Ali, 2024; Ramadhanti & Nugraha, 2024). This transformation not only adds value and improves marketability but also results in higher prices and creates a competitive edge while preserving product uniqueness (Agbolosoo et al., 2021). Ministry of Industry data shows Indonesia's food and fisheries industry achieved 7.49% GDP growth (Badan Pusat Statistik, 2020). The food processing industry contributes to Indonesia's economic growth and employment. The food and beverage industry, experiencing rapid growth, significantly influences Indonesia's economy.

Micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) are integral to Indonesia's economy, generating employment and reducing poverty. This sector includes entities from street vendors to medium-sized manufacturing businesses. Indonesia has 64.2 million MSMEs, representing over 99% of businesses. These enterprises contribute 60–61% to national GDP and employ 97% of the workforce, about 119.6 million people (Coordinating Ministry for Economic Affairs (Republic of Indonesia), 2022). MSMEs, like the Hj Karmi chili chip business located in Dumai, North Sumatra, West Sumatra, Batam, and Jabodetabek regions of Indonesia, demonstrate the 7Ps marketing mix. The chilli chip business in Dumai has significant potential, as this popular snack is favoured over other vegetable products (Enggriani et al., 2023).

As a symbol of Dumai City, the chilli chip industry faces competition among three major MSMEs: Ika, Maisatun, and Hj. Karmi chili chips. Hj. Karmi is the oldest MSME in Dumai City but faces competition from Ika and Maisatun, which have wider marketing reach. These MSMEs saw consumer demand drop from 300 Kg/day to 100 Kg/day due to Covid 2019 (Pitri et al., 2024).

The MSMEs, like Hj. Karmi chili chips face marketing challenges, including developing innovative products, setting competitive prices, evolving consumer preferences, and choosing effective distribution channels. There is growing demand for healthier, ethically sourced snack products and digital engagement, while Hj. Karmi's limited digital presence restricts audience reach. Market pressures from e-commerce growth and sustainability demands necessitate repositioning, as traditional strategies inadequately address behavioural shifts toward experiential consumption. Research gaps include snack-specific digital integration, where studies on repositioning emphasize health but neglect digital marketing mix redesigns, lacking frameworks for integrating consumer insights with digital tools. Consumer-centricity limitations persist, as research fails to address how real-time feedback should influence all 7Ps. Case studies of Nando's and Dunkin show digital success, but their applicability to regional brands like Hj. Karmi remains unexplored. This research introduces an integrated consumer-digital framework, proposing a model where consumer preferences shape digital adaptations across the 7Ps. The research aims to revamp Hj. Karmi's marketing mix through consumer perceptions and digital approach, specifically evaluating how consumers perceive the 7Ps marketing mix in Dumai City, Riau, and examining the current state of each element from the consumer perspective. The following questions guide this research: 1) How do consumers evaluate Hj. Karmi Chilli Chips' marketing mix (7Ps: Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence) in Dumai City, Riau? 2) How can the insights from consumer evaluations of the 7Ps inform a digitally integrated marketing mix strategy to enhance Hj. Karmi Chilli Chips' competitiveness and consumer engagement in Dumai City, Riau?

The rationale behind this agricultural marketing research explores the economic, social, and environmental impacts of food selections. It aims to create knowledge networks through technological and digital solutions, facilitating information exchange on sustainable options by farmers and producers. Agrifood marketing, analyzed through food demands and cultural aspects, supports programs to enhance marketing sustainability. This research shapes marketing strategies for MSMEs in Indonesia and engages stakeholders within the snack value chain, including Hj. Karmi Chilli Chips company, customers, supply chain partners, digital platforms, and local communities. By presenting a consumer-oriented approach to revising the marketing mix, this study fosters innovation and sustainability in Indonesia's snack food sector.

RESEARCH METHOD

Study Area

The research was conducted from July to August 2022 at Hj. Karmi chili chips UMKM, Indonesia. Founded in 1982 in Dumai City, the enterprise expanded due to quality, becoming a notable chilli chips producer. The company operates in Dumai

with a Pekanbaru branch. In 2019, monthly revenue reached IDR 18,000,000 (USD 1,200), but declined in 2020 due to COVID-19. Competitors Keripik Cabe Ika and Keripik Cabe Maisatun reported higher revenues (IDR 38,000,000 to 42,000,000 monthly). As a UMKM, it uses manual and semi-automated production. The market serves Dumai City and the surrounding areas, with Pekanbaru as the distribution hub. Challenges include limited marketing, which affects brand awareness. The core product is Chilli Chips ("Keripik Cabe") – a spicy snack made from local ingredients. Product packaging includes standing pouch ziplock bags, jars, and gift boxes. The brand motto is "Bukan Keripik Cabe Biasa." Quality and taste are rated highly with affordable pricing. Distribution occurs through physical outlets. The main store is in Dumai City (Jl. Kesuma Gg. Jeruk No.6, Jaya Mukti), with Pekanbaru for distribution.

Population and Sample Size

The research used a descriptive design. The study focuses on snack consumers in Dumai City, Riau Regency, Indonesia. The sample comprised 40 respondents who are Hj Karmi chili chips consumers with at least two purchases from supermarkets. A multi-stage sampling approach was used, starting with probability sampling to select Dumai City, followed by simple random sampling for Hj. Karmi chili chips, and accidental non-probability sampling for respondents (Kyu-Seong, 2022; Midamba et al., 2025).

Data Source and Collection Techniques

Primary data was collected directly from snack consumers using a carefully crafted questionnaire that examined their opinions on the 7Ps of the marketing mix and evaluated the current state of each component within it. Additional data were obtained from sources such as academic journals, theses, dissertations, books, conferences, magazines, and newspapers.

Data Analysis

Data analysis uses descriptive analysis of the Likert scale for consumer perceptions and gap analysis to formulate recommendations for improving the Hj. Karmi chili chips' marketing mix is based on the results obtained from consumer assessments and interviews with management. The Likert scale analysis tool is most widely used in perception assessment research on both producers and consumers of specific products (Agbolosoo & Anaman, 2021; Joshi et al., 2015). Gap analysis in marketing research plays a role in reading consumer desires and market conditions by comparing the reality and expectations of each attribute of the marketing mix (Artoym et al., 2021).

The primary data collected were summarized using descriptive statistics. Kankaraš & Capecchi (2024) state that the concept of agreement and disagreement can be measured by a Likert scale in various value ranges. A five-point Likert Scale (1= strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, and 5=strongly agree) was used to measure the recapitulation of consumer assessment of the marketing mix of Hj. Karmi chill Chips, Dumai City in Riau. The formula for the Class interval is:

$$Class\ Interval = \frac{Highest\ Value - Lowest\ Value}{Number\ of\ Class}.....(1)$$

Note: the highest value = 5, lowest value = 1 and number of classes = 5

The class interval values and answer categories that the study employed include: 1.00-1.80 (Strongly Disagree); 1.81-2.60 (Disagree); 2.61-3.40 (Neutral); 3.41-4.20 (Agree); 4.21-5.00 (Strongly Agree)

To interpret the average scores for each marketing mix variable, the results were categorized into three assessment criteria: Very Good, Good, and Fair. These categories were determined using a class interval method, which divides the scale range into equal segments to allow for clearer interpretation. The class interval formula is formulated by Equation (1) and adapted for this study:

$$\text{Interval of Assesment Criteria} = \frac{\text{Maximum Score} - \text{Minimun Score}}{\text{Number of Assesment Criteria}} \dots\dots (2)$$

Note: the maximum score = 5, the minimum score = 1, and the number of assessment criteria = 3. This yields the following interpretation thresholds: Very Good: 4.34 – 5.00; Good: 3.01 – 4.33; Fair: 1.00 – 3.00.

These intervals provide a framework for categorizing average scores derived from respondents’ Likert-scale ratings. For instance, if the mean score for the “Price” variable is 4.2, it falls into the “Good” category. This method enables consistent and meaningful interpretation of consumer perception data across all elements of the marketing mix.

Conceptual framework of the 7Ps of marketing mix used by the study

The research examined the 7Ps marketing mix (price, place, promotion, product, process, people, physical evidence). Figure 1 shows the marketing mix flowchart for Kj. Karmi chili chips in Dumai City, Riau.

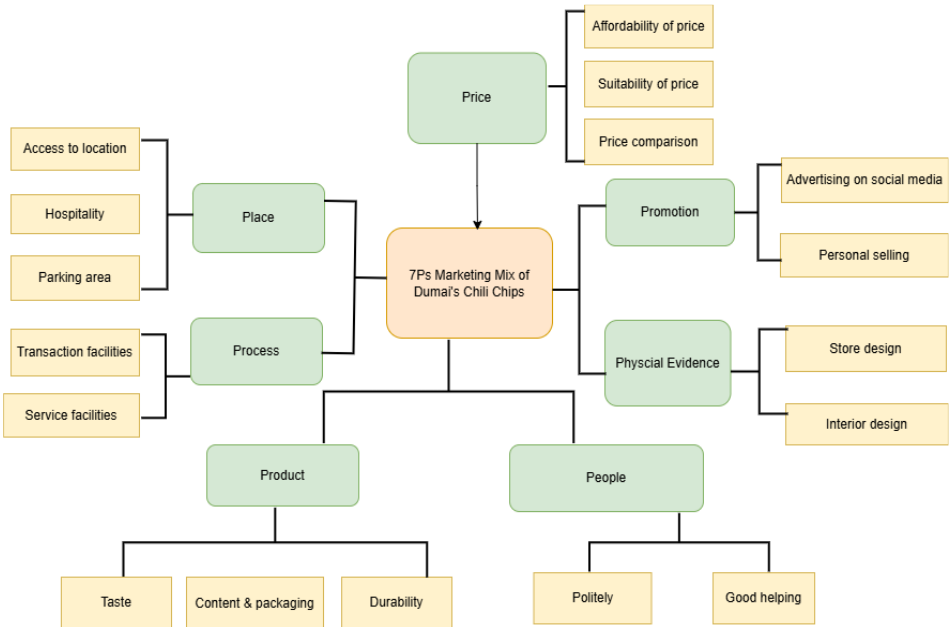


Figure 1.
Thinking Framework of 7Ps

Product

Schönsleben et al. (2019) describe it as a tangible commodity available in the market to satisfy consumer needs in a specific location. Dwivedi et al. (2021), a product comprises physical goods, services, and experiences, with high quality, performance, innovative features, and brands crucial in meeting customer expectations. A product must distinguish itself from competitors through variety, packaging, and services that fulfil customer needs. The marketer's job is to ensure that product quality meets consumer demand (Yudhi, 2024).

Price

Price is the monetary amount charged for a product or service or the total value that consumers exchange for its benefits (Kotler et al., 2008). It signifies what a customer is willing to pay for a product and greatly affects a company's survival and profitability (Anjani et al., 2019). As a key component of the marketing mix, price is the only revenue-generating element. For MSMEs, setting appropriate prices is crucial to attract consumers while maintaining profit margins and considering competitors (Ramadhanti & Nugraha, 2024).

Place

The concept of place in the marketing mix involves strategic planning to determine optimal product and service delivery locations. Kim & Lee (2020) and Saidani & Sudiarditha (2019) define place as both a strategic physical location and a distribution channel to ensure products reach the target market, enhancing customer satisfaction through easy accessibility. It encompasses channels, coverage, assortments, and logistics. It is how products reach customers through distribution channels. Selecting an effective distribution method will significantly impact (Madhavedi et al., 2024).

Promotion

Promotion is one of the most effective strategies in marketing history and is a cornerstone of the marketing mix, enhancing product purchase likelihood (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Promotion is the marketing communication used to inform, influence, and reinforce customer awareness to encourage acceptance and long-term patronage of products or services (Kotler et.al, 2008). It encompasses various strategies, including advertising, direct marketing, personal branding, sales promotion, and public relations efforts. It is the costliest yet essential element of the marketing mix, designed to attract customers (Ejeta & Zewdie, 2021).

People

People consist of individuals involved in delivering products and services to customers to meet their needs. They are active agents in promotion and distribution, aiming to influence consumers' purchasing behavior (Elgarhy & Mohamed, 2022). They are not customers but employees responsible for executing marketing initiatives. These employees play a critical role in marketing by delivering services to clients (Jain & Jain, 2022). Customer loyalty is essential in small businesses because the relationship between sellers and customers is significant (Tamansari et al., 2024).

Process

The process implements actions that increase product value with low cost and high advantage to customers, and is more vital for services than goods (Dwivedi et al., 2021). It starts from consumer orders and culminates in product fulfilment. The concept of processes involves activities and procedures implemented by the business organization providing products or services (Schönsleben et al., 2019). Customer loyalty is essential in small businesses because the relationship between sellers and customers is significant (Anjani et al., 2019).

Physical Evidence

Physical evidence includes all physical elements that can be felt by customers, such as product packaging, store displays, or promoted images (Mujiya et al., 2018). Physical evidence represents the environment where products and services facilitate service delivery and communication. It is the contextual setting for service delivery, including tangible elements that aid in service execution. Physical evidence comprises tangible products owned by an organization.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Consumer Perception On Marketing Mix 7P Of Chili Chips Hj.Karmi

Table 1 presents consumer perceptions of the 7P marketing mix – comprising product, price, place, promotion, process, people, and physical evidence – regarding Hj. Karmi chili chips in Dumai City, Riau. This is assessed using average scores and categorized as very good, good, and fair.

Table 1. Recapitulation of Respondents’ Assessment of the Marketing Mix of Hj. Karmi chili chips

No	Marketing Mix Variable	Average Score	Assessment Criteria
1.	Price	4.38	Very Good
2.	People	4.36	Very Good
3.	Process	4.32	Very Good
4.	Place	3.70	Good
5.	Product	3.68	Good
6.	Physical evidence	3.20	Fair
7.	Promotion	3.09	Fair
	Mean Score of Marketing Mix	3.82	Good

Table 1 showcases consumer assessments of the marketing mix components. Within the study region, Hj. Karmi chili chips exhibit a robust marketing mix. According to consumer feedback, Hj. Karmi chili chips perform exceptionally well in terms of pricing, staff, and processes. However, improvements are necessary in the areas of product, distribution, physical evidence, and promotional tactics.

The product is categorized into taste, packaging contents, durability, and packaging design. Hj. Karmi chili chips have the advantage of providing three product flavour variants, namely, original, turmeric, and spicy. Meanwhile, competitors, on average, only provide original and spicy variants. According to Pitri et al. (2024), delicious and savoury taste indicators are important product indicators

for chip consumers. In general, taste is the main thing that can be felt directly by the human tongue when consuming products in the form of food or drinks. The shape and size of the or pieces of Hj. Karmi chips are thin and round, with a medium size, not all of which have a uniform size. The chilli flavour in the product is distributed evenly and does not clump. Knowledge of products is an essential assessment for consumers when making purchases (Mokobombang & Kusumawati, 2023).

Hj. Karmi chili chips have a shelf life of 3-6 months across all flavour variants. This duration is considered quite long for consumers. The expiration date on packaging significantly impacts sales and purchasing decisions (Shah & Hall-Phillips, 2018). Hj. Karmi chili chips provide two packages in large size (250 gr) and small size (100 gr). Based on consumer assessments, large packaging is more popular with consumers because it is more efficient (Pitri et al., 2024). Ahmad et al. (2022) stated that packaging design and labels influence the decision to purchase a product.



Figure 2.
Product Packaging in Size (250 g)

The price of Hj. Karmi chili chips consist of affordability, suitability, and price comparison. Hj. Karmi Chilli Chips offers a selling price of IDR 5,000/100 g and IDR 10,000/250 g. Consumers only need to pay an affordable price to get a pack of products with a choice of three flavours according to their wishes. According to Al-Fadly (2020), the pricing strategy determined by the company will have an impact on consumer satisfaction. Price comparison with competitors, namely Ika Chilli Chips are sold for IDR 11,000/250 g, Ibu Jumi Chilli Chips are sold for IDR 12,000/250 g, and Masatun Chilli Chips are sold for IDR 12,000/250 g, then Hj. Karmi chili chips have a cheaper price and have price variations for smaller sizes. This is part of the marketing mix that supports Kripik Hj's marketing activities. Price

comparisons are essential information for consumers in choosing the products to buy (Kumar, 2023).

The location serves as the company's designated area for conducting a range of business operations. The ease of consumer access influences decisions regarding location or distribution. Hj. Karmi Chilli Chips is situated in a strategic spot, yet it is inaccessible by public transport at Gg. Jeruk, Jaya Mukti Village, East Dumai District, Dumai City. The sales outlet is a basic room lacking interior features that support marketing efforts and ensure consumer comfort.. However, this MSME provides a reasonably large vehicle parking area in front of the product outlet (Qibtiyana & Ali, 2024).

Hj. Karmi chili chips use direct promotion and social media promotion. A road sign and two banners (100 cm x 50 cm) at the MSME entrance display the business name, address, phone number, and marketing branch details. Social media promotion occurs through WhatsApp, Instagram (@kchj.karmi), and Facebook (@KeripikCabe HjKarmi), managed by the MSME manager. The business needs better promotional media management but relies mainly on direct sales (Mashita et al., 2020). Direct promotion or personal selling is a promotional medium for communicating with consumers.

Hj. Karmi chili chips is managed by five family workers—HR involved is a Muslim woman. Their dress is polite and covered, and they wear the hijab. They serve consumers with care and courtesy so they feel comfortable when visiting. Karsono & Salma (2023) stated that the application of quality people or human resources in providing services with the criteria of being polite, always smiling, greeting, and being willing to help visit consumers will create a feeling as if consumers are more appreciated.

Process indicators in marketing mix include ease of transactions and service quality—Hj. Karmi chili chips offers payment options through direct cash payments or account transfers, eliminating the need for direct seller interaction. (Yogatama, 2023) found that technology and internet media provide easy transactions, both ordering and payment, for consumers. Rashid & Rokade (2019) reported that service quality can be achieved or attempted to satisfy consumers. Good service, according to consumer expectations, will provide consumers with comfort when shopping.

Hj. Karmi chili chips in Dumai City has a shop building next to the owner's house. The size is manageable, with two glass shelves at the front for displaying products. The interior design and product layout appear less attractive. Yusuf et al. (2020) state shop interior design must maximize sales through product arrangement—the size of the Hj. Karmi chili chips shop building. Karmi's small size aids in room cleaning. The brownish-yellow ceramic floor makes the room look cleaner and brighter.

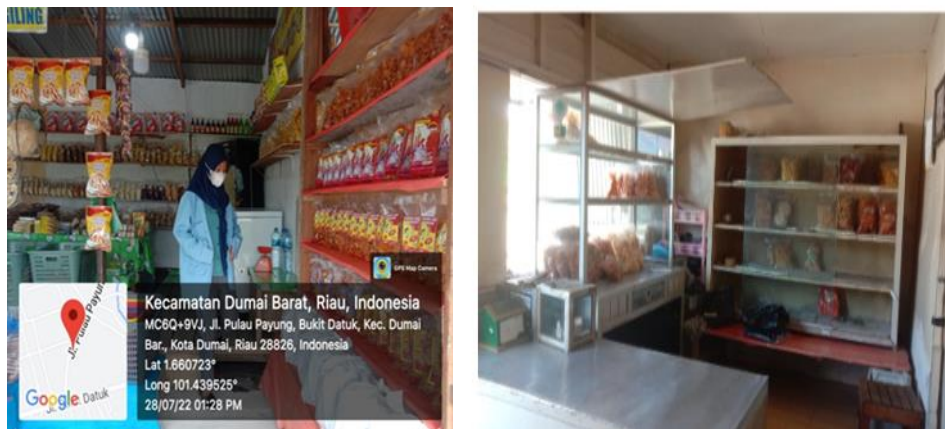


Figure 3.

Product layout in Hj. Karmi chili chips' store in Dumai City, Riau
 Redesign the marketing mix 7P in Hj. Karmi chili chips

Consumers need basic information about the chilli product they want to buy before purchasing. The product characteristics presented in the marketing mix shape consumer beliefs and assessments. Businesses must know what consumers think when choosing a product and how to improve its quality (Camilleri, 2018). Developing the features of a product requires customer participation. Consumers have specific preferences that influence their choices about what they buy (Ramachandran & Basariya, 2019). Thus, assessing marketing mix components is essential for mapping and solving problems to improve marketing performance (Mir & Mir-Bernal, 2022). Perception is essential information that describes consumer behaviour regarding product expectations (Włodarczyk, 2023). The gap between existing conditions in the marketing mix and consumer desires, and the development of business competition, must be captured as a consideration for companies in re-drafting marketing mix-based strategies (Nafis et al., 2024). Using digital media is essential for MSME businesses because it can improve operational performance, attract consumers, and improve company performance.

The taste of the product that consumers like and the price that is cheaper than competitors are the advantages of the marketing mix components of Hj. Karmi chili chips. However, the existence of this MSME competes with large and well-known souvenir outlets in Dumai City, with diversification and varied product displays, and utilizing digital marketing facilities. In a competitive market, the uniqueness of the attributes attached to the product is a must for companies. According to Firmansyah et al. (2021), purchasing decisions are not only determined by the product but also by the location and brand. Hj. Karmi chili chips does not yet have a strong brand compared to its competitors, namely Ika chili chips and Maisatun chili chips, which are already well-known and spread across souvenir outlets in Riau Province. Packaging improvements need to be made to support consumer preferences for the taste of the product and build a consumer image of the Hj. Karmi Chili Chips brand.

Shafira et al. (2022) state that large companies carry out an environmentally friendly marketing concept by implementing the Green Marketing Concept, which focuses on environmentally friendly products and marketing—an interesting concept to be applied by MSMEs. However, adapting to the concept of digital marketing as a strategy to survive and grow also needs to be done by companies to adjust to changes in the economy and consumer behaviour after COVID-19 (Dzulfikar et al., 2022; Fajri et al., 2023). Hj. Karmi needs to handle the advertising sector seriously, especially those related to social media platforms, as a form of marketing development strategy after COVID-19 (Putri et al., 2024).

The strength of the digital marketing mix lies not only in product excellence, cheaper product prices, or employees who provide good service, but also in customer testimonials that build consumer trust (Khairani et al., 2022). Therefore, human resources and capital are needed to manage the digital marketing platform properly. Lestari et al. (2021) state that digital marketing has succeeded in increasing company profits.

Table 2 outlines an alternative approach to the marketing mix for Hj. Karmi chili chips address the discrepancy between actual conditions and what consumers expect.

Table 2. Gap Analysis of Marketing Mix in Hj.Karmi Chili Chips

Component 7P	Reality	Expectation	Gap	Alternative Solution
Product	The product uses a simple packaging design that highlights the product rather than complex visuals.	Consumers expect packaging with QR codes and augmented reality, while providing product flavor, ingredient, and benefit details, enhancing connection and purchasing confidence.	Consumer feedback indicates that Hj. Karmi chili chips' packaging lacks visual appeal and shelf visibility, affecting purchase decisions	Customers of Hj. Karmi Chili Chips recommends implementing a novel and imaginative packaging design as an alternative strategy to boost the product's attractiveness in Dumai city, Riau.
Price	Hj. Karmi chili chips are priced competitively, offering affordable quality to cost-conscious consumers.	In Dumai City, Riau, consumers view Hj. Karmi Chili Chips as cost-effective but emphasize the need for improvements to meet expectations.	Customers of Hj. Karmi Chili Chips believe product enhancement could increase costs and retail prices in Dumai city, Riau, indicating a pricing strategy issue.	Hj. Karmi chili chips customers suggest that the business prioritize sustainable cost-production management strategies.

Component 7P	Reality	Expectation	Gap	Alternative Solution
Place	The store location is not easily accessible by public transport and lacks parking space.	Customers of Hj. Karmi Chili Chips expect stores near major roads, but have concerns about insufficient parking facilities.	Customers of Hj. Karmi Chili Chips indicate that the current business location is not ideal for effective marketing and sales activities.	Hj. Karmi Chili Chips customers recommend using digital marketing platforms as an alternative approach to tackle issues related to the product's physical distribution.
Promotion	The promotional efforts have been limited, resulting in low awareness.	Customers of Hj. Karmi Chili Chips anticipate a marketing strategy that seamlessly combines both offline and online advertising methods.	Customers of Hj. Karmi chili chips have identified a gap in promotion strategy, showing current promotional activities fail to maximize market reach and consumer engagement.	Hj. Karmi chili chips customers suggest using dedicated personnel to manage online promotions on social media as a strategy within the marketing mix.
People	The business is run by family members who handle operations, allowing close management but potentially restricting growth.	Customers of Hj. Karmi Chili Chips expects defined employee roles. This involves outlining duties in production, marketing, and finance to boost efficiency and satisfaction.	Customers of Hj. Karmi Chili Chips has identified a lack of employees with defined job roles and responsibilities as a gap, affecting service quality and operational efficiency.	Customers of Hj. Karmi Chili Chips in Dumai City, Riau, proposes adding staff for online marketing and financial operations to enhance promotion and financial oversight within the 'People' marketing mix element.
Process	Consumers have rated the production process as excellent,	Customers expect consistent quality from Hj. Karmi chili	The marketing mix process for Hj. Karmi Chili customers revealed a gap	The alternative solution for Hj. Karmi Chili Chips customers

Component 7P	Reality	Expectation	Gap	Alternative Solution
	showing satisfaction with quality and hygiene standards, and building trust.	chips online. They want reliable interactions and digital promotions. Meeting these expectations maintains customer loyalty.	caused by the dependence on traditional selling methods.	were implementing an online marketing process that maintains high-quality service facilities
Physical Evidence	The physical evidence, including product layout and store presentation, was deemed unattractive, decreasing consumer interest and highlighting the need for display improvements.	Customers of Hj. Karmi Chili Chips expects the physical evidence aspect of the marketing mix to include a welcoming store layout and an appealing product display.	Customers of Hj. Karmi Chili Chips in Dumai City, Riau, have highlighted deficiencies in the store’s layout and design.	For Hj. Karmi Chili Chips, customers preferred enhanced product layout, interior design, and a standardized production process, documented and accessible via digital marketing with customer testimonials.

The gap analysis aimed to identify differences between consumer expectations and Hj. Karmi's 7Ps marketing mix performance. Table 2 outlines results and solutions. Converting this analysis into a strategy requires identifying gaps, interpreting significance, and creating a feasible product redesign plan. While price, people, and process showed high performance ratings, product, place, promotion, and physical evidence received lower scores. The product gap focused on packaging appeal—consumers value taste and affordability, but find brand presentation inadequate. The current packaging fails to communicate modern brand narratives, weakening market position. The redesign strategy based on consumer insight involves repositioning Hj. Karmi chili chips from a "traditional snack" to a digitally-enabled, culturally relevant brand through consumer co-creation, experience-centric marketing reflecting Dumai's culture, and sustainability orientation. The practical redesign includes resealable ziplock pouches with strong branding, eco-friendly materials, QR codes linking to social media, seasonal flavours, improved chip consistency, and clear nutritional labelling.

Darmawan & Grenier (2021) posited that improving the marketing mix is vital in creating value and consumer satisfaction, and is a tool to win business competition. Furthermore, the marketing mix will shape purchasing decisions and repeat purchases (Hanaysha et al., 2021). Packaging is an essential product attribute.

Packaging that contains elements of creativity will encourage consumer curiosity about the product and motivate purchasing decisions (Ahmad et al., 2022). Companies can improve packaging performance with an alternative to environmentally friendly paper bag concepts (Oloyede & Lignou, 2021) and exclusive or informative packaging (Harahap et al., 2023). Packaging improvements that support improving product quality cause additional production costs, so that they have the potential to increase prices, while Hj. Karmi chips are cheaper than competitors, so the price attributes are perfect for consumers. For this reason, companies need to be aware of and manage production costs so that their business remains technically efficient (Chen, 2023).

Post-COVID shifts in shopping from offline to online can address sales location and promotional challenges for Hj. Karmi Chips through digital marketing concepts for MSMEs with people and process variables (Rundel et al., 2024). The development of the digital economy encourages a marketing mix connected to digital platforms. Marketing activities in the marketing mix that are consumer-oriented and connected to digital media platforms influence marketing performance (Muamalah & Sari, 2023). Marketing through digital channels proliferates every 5 years, requiring a mix of marketing elements, namely human resources (people) who are digitally competent in packaging the marketing mix in digital advertising (Huebner, 2019). Physical evidence, as a component that supports promotions socialized through social media platforms, is compelling in increasing the performance of marketing (Umami & Darma, 2021). (Tamansari et al., 2024) reported that the marketing mix of components in product, price, and people are marketing mix components that do not directly impact purchasing decisions.

In contrast, promotion, place, process, and physical evidence directly impact purchasing decisions. Anjani et al. (2019) studied the successful performance of the 7P components, which can form consumer loyalty, characterized by repeat purchases and recommending them to others. Marketing strategies based on marketing mix performance evaluation can increase the effectiveness of MSMEs by increasing sales and competitiveness (Thabit & Raewf, 2018). Recent studies show that MSMEs that use the right marketing mix strategy can increase their competitiveness and improve their business (Firman & Sanusi, 2023).

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

The research shows consumer views on Hj. Karmi chili chips' 7Ps marketing mix in Dumai City, Riau, varies among components. Price, people, and process were rated excellent, while place and product received good ratings. Promotion and physical evidence were deemed fair, suggesting areas needing improvement. Overall, consumer perception was good. The product features simple packaging that highlights the product in Dumai city, Hj. Karmi chili chips are priced lower than competitors while maintaining quality, appealing to cost-conscious consumers. However, the store's location lacks accessibility and parking spaces. Promotional efforts have been limited, resulting in low awareness. The business is run by a small family team, allowing close management but potentially restricting growth. Consumers rated the production process as excellent, showing satisfaction with

quality standards. Physical evidence, including store presentation, was considered unattractive.

This study highlights several critical implications for marketing mix research and MSME product development. First, the strong consumer perception of price, people, and process suggests that affordability, personalized service, and production quality are key drivers of satisfaction in local snack markets. This implies that future marketing mix models, especially in MSME contexts, should emphasize these variables when targeting cost-conscious, relationship-driven consumers. Second, the weaker evaluations of promotion and physical evidence reveal the continuing gap between traditional business practices and evolving consumer expectations shaped by digital exposure and experiential shopping. This indicates a need to broaden the theoretical understanding of how digital tools and in-store atmospherics affect consumer behaviour in semi-urban markets.

Furthermore, the findings imply that 7Ps frameworks must be dynamically applied, considering regional limitations such as limited infrastructure, technological access, and workforce constraints. The study also offers empirical support for integrating consumer perception as a diagnostic tool in refining marketing strategies for small food producers. On a policy level, the results can inform targeted interventions that focus not only on capital or production but also on marketing skill development and digital literacy among MSMEs. Lastly, the limited sample size and geographic scope imply that future studies should expand to explore how consumer perceptions of the 7Ps vary across cultural and regional contexts, potentially contributing to more adaptive and inclusive marketing theories for small enterprise growth.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENT

[Author 1]: research design, data collection, the initial manuscript draft; [Author 2]: research supervision, analytical guidance, edited the manuscript; [Author 3]: research conceptualization, data analysis ; [Author 4]: data analysis, addressed reviewers' comments. All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the article.

DECLARATION OF COMPETING INTEREST

There are no conflicts of interest in this research. The authors have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have influenced the work reported in this paper.

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ETHIC STATEMENT

Ethical approval was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the University of Riau, Indonesia. In addition, all participants provided informed consent prior to their participation in this study.

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