

## Marketing Mix Practices Among Women Culinary Entrepreneurs In Indonesia

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### Abstract:

*This study attempts to investigate how the marketing mix is practiced among women culinary entrepreneurs. A descriptive approach was used, with data collected through closed-ended questionnaires from 75 women culinary entrepreneurs. The results show that women culinary entrepreneurs in Bogor City do not implement several elements of the marketing mix, and their source of knowledge about the marketing mix is derived solely from business experience. The limited use of marketing mix elements is attributed to constraints faced by women culinary entrepreneurs, particularly limited working capital. A limitation of this study is its static nature, as it provides a descriptive overview of marketing mix practices without in-depth insight into the effects of these practices. Future research is suggested to empirically investigate the influence of marketing mix practices among women culinary entrepreneurs using a mixed-method approach.*

**Keywords:** *Marketing Mix, Women Entrepreneurs, Culinary.*

## INTRODUCTION

Women entrepreneurs have emerged as a promising roadmap for reducing poverty and boosting the national economy in recent years (Sari et al., 2022). In Indonesia, the phenomenon has shown that many women have started small-scale businesses, and some have already achieved success in their ventures. One of the most dominant sectors in women's entrepreneurship is the food and beverage sector. This is rooted in the common perception among women that culinary business is the fastest way to become an entrepreneur. It requires relatively low startup capital, involves minimal risk, and often uses equipment already available at home, making it an attractive choice for women (Nasution & Lesmana, 2018).

Enhancing women's competence in management and entrepreneurship is crucial for business sustainability (Tajeddini et al., 2017a). Marketing strategy plays an essential role in sustaining businesses and maintaining long-term relationships with customers (Crane, 2010). The marketing mix is considered a vital aspect in the formulation and implementation of marketing strategies, emphasizing the combination of several factors to maximize organizational and consumer goals. Its components are commonly known as the 'Four Ps': price, place, product, and promotion.

Previous studies on the practice of the marketing mix in MSMEs have been conducted by Mutsikiwa et al. (2007) and Wahyudi et al. (2021). However, research specifically investigating how the marketing mix is practiced by women culinary entrepreneurs has not yet been conducted. This study also takes into account the suggestion by Roomi & Parrott (2008) to analyze the underlying factors that prevent women entrepreneurs from sustaining businesses in the food and beverage sector. This research has the potential to pave the way for improving the sustainability of women-owned businesses, especially considering their

significant role in enhancing family welfare and creating job opportunities for other women in their communities. Therefore, a detailed investigation into their marketing mix activities is crucial. The primary objective of this study is to explore the perceptions of women culinary entrepreneurs regarding the practice of the marketing mix in their businesses.

**RESEARCH METHOD**

This study is based on the importance of marketing mix practices (product, price, place, and promotion) in achieving business sustainability for women culinary entrepreneurs in the small and medium culinary sector. The research was conducted in the Suryakencana culinary tourism area in Bogor, Indonesia. This location was chosen because Bogor's culinary spots are a favorite destination for both domestic and international tourists, especially on weekends. The city of Bogor has a strategic location and is renowned for its rich culinary appeal, creating a dynamic environment with a high level of competition.

A descriptive quantitative methodology was used in this study, as it aligns with the research objective of providing an objective overview of a situation using numerical data, starting from data collection to interpretation (Arikunto, 2015). Primary data were collected through a questionnaire. The questionnaire included questions related to the perceptions of women culinary entrepreneurs in the Bogor area regarding their marketing mix practices.

The questionnaire consisted of three main sections. The first section included questions related to the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The second section comprised questions about the marketing mix practices implemented by the respondents. The third section addressed the sources of knowledge regarding the application of the marketing mix among the respondents. A total of 75 women culinary entrepreneurs agreed to participate in the survey. Table 1 presents the characteristics of small and medium-scale women culinary entrepreneurs.

Table 1. Characteristics of Women Culinary Entrepreneurs in the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

Respondent Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age Distribution		
Under 30	9	12%
31–40	24	32%
41–50	27	36%
51–60	8	11%
Over 60	7	9%
Education Level		
High School	68	91%
Bachelor’s Degree	7	9%
Reason for Starting Business		
Personal Interest	27	36%
Family Business	48	64%

Out of a total of 75 respondents, 36% were aged between 41–50 years, 32% between 31–40 years, 12% were under 30 years old, 9% were over 60, and only 11% were aged between 51–60 years. Among the respondents, 68% had completed high school, 7% held a bachelor's degree, and 13.3% (uncategorized). The majority of respondents, or 48%, started their business as a continuation of a family business, while only 27% became entrepreneurs due to personal interest.

**RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Based on the descriptive analysis, the marketing mix practices among women culinary entrepreneurs have covered the four components of the marketing mix, although they are still implemented in a relatively simple manner and some components have not been fully optimized. Table 2 summarizes the overview of the respondents’ marketing mix practices.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics of Marketing Mix Practices by Women Culinary Entrepreneurs

Marketing Mix Practice Indicators	Mean	%
Offering a variety of menu options for culinary products	3.68	0.860
Regularly updating or developing new products for the business	3.52	0.901
Product prices are adjusted to match the purchasing power of the target market	3.64	0.832
Offering discounts or special promotions during certain occasions	3.84	0.831
Business location is strategic and easily accessible to customers	3.67	0.862
Utilizing online platforms to sell products	3.82	0.834
Using social media to promote culinary products	3.78	0.890
Conducting collaborations or joint promotions with other businesses	3.69	0.862

The majority of respondents stated that the marketing mix plays a variety of alternative roles. As shown in Table 2, this study reveals that offering discounts or special promotions is considered a key marketing tool (3.84). Additionally, 3.82 respondents reported utilizing online platforms to sell products as part of the marketing mix. Using social media for promotional purposes (3.78), collaborating with other businesses (3.69), offering menu variety (3.68), having a strategic and accessible business location (3.67), and adjusting product prices to match the target market (3.64) were also cited as important marketing mix functions by several women culinary entrepreneurs in the study area. Around 3.52 respondents indicated that updating or developing new products plays a marginal or less significant role in their business operations.

Women culinary entrepreneurs tend to view marketing narrowly, as merely a tactic to boost sales, rather than embracing a broader business orientation. Marketing mix tools such as promotion were highly favored by the respondents, whereas product and pricing strategies were the least preferred. This implies that many women culinary entrepreneurs are mainly motivated to engage in promotional and location-based strategies. However, marketing is about identifying, anticipating, and fulfilling customer needs. Women culinary entrepreneurs must ensure that their products and services consistently meet customer demands. One way to achieve this is through the product mix as a core marketing strategy.

The findings of this study are consistent with Sari (2017), who showed that MSMEs have not yet fully implemented the elements of the marketing mix. In her research, it was found that aspects such as pricing, location, and promotion were not being practiced adequately. The obstacles to full implementation of the marketing mix include limited working capital, restricted access to financing, and legal limitations. These findings are also consistent with evidence from Zahrah & Mandey (2021), who found that MSMEs in Manado had applied marketing mix practices in their business operations and had naturally seen a positive impact on their sales volumes, even though they had not paid significant attention to, or had limited understanding of, the marketing mix itself. Nevertheless, MSMEs had organically taken all elements of the marketing mix into account.

The third part of the questionnaire addressed respondents' feedback on how women culinary entrepreneurs acquired knowledge about the marketing mix, which is interpreted and presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Sources of Marketing Knowledge among Women Culinary Entrepreneurs

Source of Marketing Knowledge	Frequency	Percentage (%)
From experience gained during the course of running the business	36	48%
From reading specialized marketing books	9	12%
From participating in marketing training and seminars	26	35%
Owner has a background or qualification in marketing	4	5%

The research findings indicate that women culinary entrepreneurs acquire their knowledge about marketing mix practices primarily through experience gained during the course of their business journey, accounting for 48%. Overall, 35% of respondents reported participating in marketing training and

seminars to support their business activities, while 12% gained knowledge from reading specialized marketing books. Lastly, 5% had colleagues with intermediate-level marketing qualifications.

These findings are consistent with Anaba (2017), who studied marketing mix practices in Ghana. According to his research, several reasons explain why MSME actors do not seek to enhance their marketing knowledge, including high costs, lack of marketing expertise among managers or owners, and the belief that they already have a strong customer base. MSMEs that perceive themselves as having a loyal customer base tend not to see the need for formal marketing knowledge.

## CONCLUSION

There are two valuable findings that can be drawn from this study. The first finding is that many women culinary entrepreneurs still adopt the marketing mix in a simplified form and possess an incomplete understanding of marketing concepts. This indicates that women culinary entrepreneurs in Bogor tend to equate the marketing mix with sales or advertising, placing greater emphasis on short-term goals such as increasing sales rather than focusing on long-term sustainability. The second finding relates to how women culinary entrepreneurs acquire knowledge of the marketing mix in their business activities. The majority of women culinary entrepreneurs in Bogor consider business experience as the primary source of their marketing knowledge.

Further research is necessary using a mixed-methods approach to explore more deeply and comprehensively the types of marketing knowledge that could be accessible to them, especially if they lack formal marketing education. It is also important to examine how elements of the marketing mix, such as product and service personalization, can contribute to increased sales. A key limitation of this study is that it does not explore the causal relationships between marketing mix elements and business success. The research findings only provide static information without offering deeper insights into which factors influence marketing performance or what strategies could be implemented to address the identified issues.

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