

THE ROLE OF MARKETING PUBLIC RELATIONS (MPR) IN MODERATING THE PRICE STRATEGY ON CUSTOMER AWARENESS OF GERAKAN PANGAN MURAH (GPM) ACTIVITIES IN JAMBI CITY

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Abstract

This study aims to analyze the role of marketing public relations (MPR) in moderating price strategies for customer awareness in the activities of the Gerakan Pangan Murah (GPM) in Jambi City. The research method used is a quantitative approach with analysis techniques using SmartPLS version 4.0. The sample in this study consisted of 96 respondents who were selected through purposive sampling techniques. Data collection was carried out through observation, questionnaires and literature studies. The results of the study show that pricing strategies have a positive and significant influence on customer awareness. In addition, marketing public relations also has a positive and significant effect on customer awareness. Testing the effect of moderation shows that marketing public relations plays a role in moderating the relationship between marketing public relations and pricing strategies, but marketing public relations as moderation plays a role in weakening the relationship between price strategies and customer awareness. The implication of this study emphasizes that companies need to pay attention to the policies of marketing public relations to increase customer audience effectively. Because the company does not only rely on price strategies in building customer awareness. Therefore, it is necessary to balance the pricing strategy with marketing public relations so that marketing can be achieved optimally

Keywords: Pricing Strategy, Marketing Public Relations, Customer Awareness

Introduction

Marketing has a function in influencing desired social behavior in society in addition to selling goods and services. Marketing is highly influential in achieving the goals of economic growth and positive social change. (Sik, 2024). The conditions for good economic growth can be seen from a low, stable and sustainable inflation rate and ultimately improve people's welfare (Widasari et al., 2023). Prices of food commodities are considered important in influencing inflation because higher prices can create inflation (Sundoro, 2021). These challenges include the growing demand for food in line with population growth, the threat of food crisis, global temperature and weather changes, unequal access to food in all regions, and price fluctuations. (Bapanas, 2022). With the application of price strategies in marketing, it has a huge impact on consumer decisions in making purchases (Maulana et al., 2021). For marketers, price is very important because it determines the company's revenue and profits, which are needed to ensure the continuity of the company. (Aras et al., 2021).

One of the community engagement strategies that can be used to increase company sales is Marketing Public Relations (Puspita, 2019). Through consistent exposure, the development of a good image also means increased brand appeal. Customers will judge the brand by seeing, hearing and thinking about it, which will help the brand stick in their minds. One strategy that can attract consumers to try a product is through Public Relations which can increase Customer Awareness (Topan & Wideasanty, 2022). As for one of the biggest factors that influence customers to buy a product, namely Trust (Siregar, 2021).

The Indonesian government implements social marketing which aims to make food more affordable for households, and communities, the government implements social marketing. Social marketing is carried out in the form of Gerakan Pangan Murah (GPM), especially in areas with relatively high food price inflation rates and areas that are or may experience instability in food availability and prices. The Gerakan Pangan Murah (GPM) activity is one of the government's efforts to stabilize supply and prices and manage food inflation, the government seeks to make it easier for people to get food at reasonable prices, because the increase in strategic food prices is enough to affect the purchasing power of the community.

However, not many people know about social markets, especially the gerakan pangan murah (GPM) organized by the government in Jambi City. For this reason, a marketing strategy is needed to increase customer awareness of the gerakan pangan murah (GPM) which aims for social change with the target of changing people's behavior and policies in meeting their food needs. Gerakan pangan murah (GPM) is very different from commercial markets because it is non-profit. The marketing process of the gerakan pangan murah (GPM) is carried out through socialization or campaigns by visiting places close to the community with the aim of increasing people's purchasing power.

Literature Review

Pricing Strategy

Pricing strategy is a process or pattern used by a company or a business organization to systematically determine the face value of a product (Made et al., 2022). In the most important pricing strategy, the suitability of determining the price must be aligned with the overall marketing plan. In pricing, each company may use a different approach. But the purpose of each strategy they have to use remains the same. (Sopiyan, 2020). Pricing strategy can be measured through the following indicators (Sopiyan, 2020): 1) Price compatibility with the quality of a product; 2) List price; 3) Special discounts; 4) Perceived price

Marketing Public Relations

Marketing Public Relations (MPR) is often defined as a process of designing, implementing, and assessing initiatives that can increase customer satisfaction and purchases by conveying accurate information and creating a favorable perception of the brand or its goods according to the needs, wants, concerns, and interests of customers (Ruslan, 2005). Marketing Public Relations is measured by the following indicators (Ruslan, 2005): 1) Product publication; 2) Public service advertisement; 3) Special event promotion and program publication; 4) Advertorial (Sponsorship).

Customer Awareness

Customer Awareness will shape consumer attitudes in choosing which products to consume. In order for customers to recognize a brand from a variety of goods and decide to buy a well-known product, businesses must increase consumer awareness of a brand through information sharing (Anwar et al., 2023). From the lowest to the highest level, there are four indicators of consumer awareness: 1) knowledge; 2) understanding; 3) attitudes, 4) behavior patterns. Each signifies a stage for the next step and represents a certain level of customer awareness (Anwar et al., 2023).

Framework Thinking

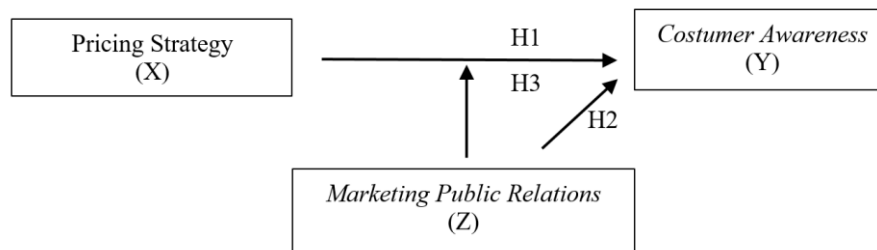


Figure 1. Framework Thinking

Hipotesis

Based on the framework above, the hypotheses proposed by researchers in this study are:

- H1 : The Price Strategy variable has a significant role in Customer Awareness of the Gerakan Pangan Murah (GPM) activities in Jambi City.
- H2 : Marketing Public Relations (MPR) variables have a significant role in Customer Awareness of Gerakan Pangan Murah (GPM) activities in Jambi City
- H3 : The role of Marketing Public Relations (MPR) moderates the relationship between Price Strategy and Customer Awareness in Gerakan Pangan Murah (GPM) activities in Jambi City.

Methods

This research uses descriptive quantitative methods to analyze the role of Marketing Public Relations (MPR) in moderating the price strategy on customer awareness in the *Gerakan Pangan Murah (GPM)* activities in Jambi City. This positivism philosophy-based approach emphasizes hypothesis testing through empirical data analysis using statistical methods and is processed with the SmartPLS 4.0 application. The research location is Jambi City. With a population of the total population of Jambi City. The sample was taken by purposive sampling based on the lemeshow formula with an error tolerance of 10%, resulting in 96 respondents.

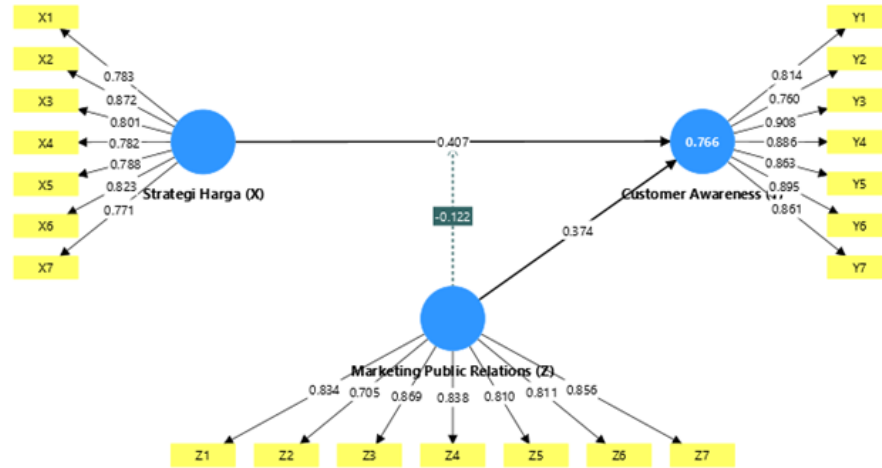
The Partial Least Square (PLS) method used in this study is a variant-based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach that allows simultaneous testing of measurement models and structural models. Testing the outer model includes validity tests, such as convergent validity and discriminant validity, as well as reliability tests through Composite Reliability and cronbach's Alpha to ensure the quality of the instrument. The structural model (inner model) evaluates the relationship between latent variables through multicollinearity tests ($VIF \leq 5$), R-Square values for predictive power, and hypothesis testing using bootstrapping with t-statistics > 1.96 and p-values < 0.05 . This approach ensures reliability and accuracy in explaining the causal relationship between variables in the study.

Results and Discussion

There are three criteria for data analysis techniques with Smart PLS (v.4.0) to assess the outer model, namely convergent validity, discriminant validity, and composite reliability.

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity of the measurement model with indicator reflection is assessed based on the correlation between item score/component score.



Source: Smartpls processed data, 2025

Figure 2. Outer Loading

Based on the picture above, the outer loading shows that none of the variable indicators have an outer loading below 0.5 so that all indicators are said to be valid for use in research and further analysis.

Reliability Test (Composite Reliability and Cronbach Alpha)

There are two commonly used methods for measuring construct reliability. Constructs are considered reliable if the composite reliability and cronbach alpha values exceed 0.70. The following is the data from the test analysis:

Table 2. Composite Reliability and Cronbach Alpha

Matriks	Cronbac h's Alpha	Rho_A	Composite Reability	Avarage Variance Extraced (AVE)
Pricing Strategy (X)	0.908	0.910	0.927	0.646
Marketing Public Relations (Z)	0.918	0.927	0.934	0.671
Customer Awareness (Y)	0.939	0.943	0.951	0.734

Source: data processed SmartPLS, 2025

The test results above show that the composite reliability and Cronbach alpha are realizable, which is > 0.70.

Discriminant Validity

Testing discriminant validity can be seen from the cross loading value of each indicator. In this study, the reference value used is > 0.70.

Table 3. Cross Loading

Variable	Customer Awareness (Y)	Marketing Public Relations (Z)	Pricing Strategy (X)
X1	0.695	0.582	0.783
X2	0.724	0.636	0.872
X3	0.675	0.509	0.801
X4	0.623	0.610	0.782
X5	0.586	0.666	0.788
X6	0.632	0.672	0.823
X7	0.677	0.677	0.771
Y1	0.814	0.598	0.615
Y2	0.760	0.616	0.595
Y3	0.908	0.701	0.779
Y4	0.886	0.723	0.735
Y5	0.863	0.679	0.763
Y6	0.895	0.688	0.738

Variable	Customer Awareness (Y)	Marketing Public Relations (Z)	Pricing Strategy (X)
Y7	0.861	0.684	0.686
Z1	0.729	0.834	0.672
Z2	0.429	0.705	0.439
Z3	0.727	0.869	0.662
Z4	0.668	0.838	0.615
Z5	0.595	0.810	0.625
Z6	0.635	0.811	0.688
Z7	0.639	0.856	0.678

Source: data processed SmartPLS, 2025

Testing The Inner Model

R-Square and Adjusted R-Square

In assessing the model with PLS, it starts by looking at the R-Square for each dependent variable. The following is a table of R-Square estimation results using Smart PLS 4

Tabel 4. Nilai R-Square

Variable	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
Customer Awareness (Y)	0,774	0,766

Source: data processed SmartPLS, 2025

R-Square Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

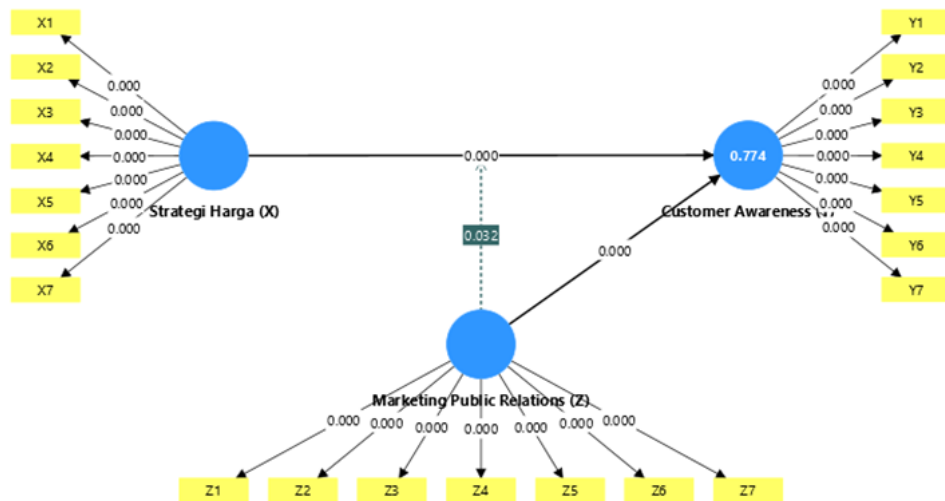
Based on the results presented in the table, the R - Square value of the customer awareness variable (Y), obtained an R - Square value of 0.774. This means that 77.4% in customer awareness can be explained by related variables. This value indicates that the factors used in this study have a very large contribution in explaining customer awareness.

Next, the Adjusted R - Square value generated for customer awareness (Y) amounts to 0.766. This means that 76.6% of the variables can be explained by the related variables. Thus, the research model remains stable and has good generalization ability.

Hypothesis Testing

To test the hypotheses, this study employs the bootstrapping method, which analyzes the significance of the relationships between independent and dependent variables. Bootstrapping is conducted by examining the path coefficients, which represent the strength and direction of the relationships, along with the t-statistics to determine significance.

In this analysis, statistical significance is assessed using a two-tailed t-value threshold of 1.96 at a 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$). If the computed t-value exceeds 1.96, the relationship between variables is considered significant. This hypothesis testing approach provides a deeper understanding of the direct and indirect effects within the research model, particularly in evaluating the mediating role of trust in QRIS adoption decisions.



Source: data processed SmartPLS, 2025

Picture 2. Bootstrapping

Tabel 5. Path Coefficient

Variable	Original sample (O)	Sampel Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistik (/O/STDEV/)	P Value
Marketing Public Relations (Z) → Customer Awareness (Y)	0.374	0.385	0.092	4.085	0.000
Marketing Public Relations (Z) Pricing Strategy (X) → Customer Awareness (Y)	-0.122	-0.091	0.057	2.147	0.032
Pricing Strategy (X) → Customer Awareness (Y)	0.407	0.417	0.095	4.287	0.000

Source: data processed SmartPLS 2025

The Effect of Price Strategy (X) on Customer Awareness (Y)

It is suspected that the price strategy has a significant role in customer awareness. As can be seen from the hypothesis test results of 0.407 the path coefficient is quite positive. The impact of price strategy on customer awareness is formed by a p-value of 0.000, and a statistical t-value of 4.287. Therefore, this result is in accordance with the general rule which states that the T statistic < 1.96 and the p value < 0.05 . Thus, it can be stated that the price strategy has a positive and significant effect on customer awareness of the gerakan pangan murah (GPM) activities in Jambi City. This means that H1 is accepted, because the price strategy is proven to have a positive and significant influence on customer awareness. The findings of other studies have not shown many results that the price strategy has a positive and significant effect on customer awareness.

The Effect of Marketing Public Relations (Z) on Customer Awareness (Y)

It is suspected that marketing public relations has a significant role in customer awareness. The path coefficient is known to have a positive value of 0.374 based on the findings of the hypothesis test. This finding is in accordance with general guidelines which state that the p-value must be less than 0.05 and the t-statistic must be less than 1.96. The p-value that shows the impact of marketing public relations on customer awareness is 0.000 and the t-statistic value is 4.085. Thus, it can be stated that marketing public relations has a positive and significant effect on customer awareness of gerakan pangan murah (GPM) activities in Jambi City. This means that H2 is accepted, because marketing public relations is proven to have a positive and significant influence on customer awareness. The results of this study are in line with research conducted by Sudibyo, (2020) and research conducted by Dewantoro (2020). Which shows that marketing public relations is an activity in building a consumer awareness obtained through promotional activities.

The Role of Marketing Public Relations (Z) Moderates the Relationship Between Price Strategy (X) and Customer Awareness (Y)

It is suspected that marketing public relations (MPR) plays a role in moderating the relationship between price strategy and customer awareness. It is known that the route coefficient is negative -0.122 based on the hypothesis test results. The p-values that form the role of marketing public relations (MPR) in moderating the relationship between price strategy and customer awareness are 0.032 and the t-statistic value is 2.147, so this result is in accordance with the rule of thumb where p-values < 0.05 and T statistic < 1.96 . Thus, it can be stated that marketing public relations can increase customer awareness, but marketing public relations as moderation has a role in weakening the relationship between price strategy and customer awareness in the gerakan pangan murah (GPM) activities in Jambi City. This means that H3 is accepted because marketing public relations (MPR) moderates the relationship between price strategy and customer awareness on cheap food movement activities (GPM) in Jambi City significantly. There are research findings that are in line with this research, namely by Rosmaniar et al., (2021)

Conclusion

The results showed that the price strategy has a positive and significant influence on customer awareness in the gerakan pangan murah (GPM) activities in Jambi City. This strategy includes price compatibility with product quality, clear price lists, special discounts, and the perception of affordable prices. This provides added value for consumers, attracts people to buy, and forms awareness of the importance of the existence of the gerakan pangan murah (GPM) program.

On the other hand, Marketing Public Relations (MPR) also plays an important role in increasing customer awareness. Through social media, public service announcements, promotions in special events, and program publications, Marketing public relations is able to expand the reach of information and create a positive image of gerakan pangan murah (GPM). This effective communication approach helps people understand the purpose and benefits of the gerakan pangan murah (GPM) program, and strengthens the emotional connection between the program and consumers.

However, the study also found that the role of marketing public relations as a moderating variable weakened the relationship between price strategy and customer awareness. Consumers were more influenced by the attraction of low prices than the promotion of a positive image brought by marketing public relations. This means that although marketing public relations is important in building public perception, consumers still make price a major factor in their decision.

Recommendations

Based on the research findings and conclusions above, the researcher provides suggestions that may be useful for all parties involved in the research. Namely, in Gerakan Pangan Murah (GPM), it is recommended to improve the pricing strategy through more attractive discounts such as seasonal discounts, loyalty programs, and product bundling to encourage buying interest. In the aspect of marketing public relations, active involvement through sponsorship can strengthen relationships with the community. To increase customer awareness, clearer product publications and improved staff services are important to increase consumer understanding and satisfaction. In addition, future researchers are advised to explore other variables that have not been studied in order to gain a more thorough understanding of the factors that influence consumer awareness.

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