

Analysis of Increasing The Competitiveness of MSME Business through Entrepreneurial Competence, Entrepreneurial Orientation, and Customers Relationship Management

Lenny Dermawan Sembiring^a, Amelia Setyawati^b, Kevin Indajang^c, Winda Sri Astuti Doloksaribu^d, Acai Sudirman^{e*}

^aSekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Sultan Agung

^bSTIE Indonesia Malang, Indonesia

^cUniversitas Prima Indonesia

*acaivenly@stiesultanagung.ac.id

Abstract – MSME actors are starting to be concerned about management governance and trying to improve their abilities by participating in several competency-based training held by the central government and regional governments. Even so, only some MSMEs can develop their business competitiveness. This study mainly aims to analyze the increase in the competitiveness of MSME businesses through entrepreneurial competence, entrepreneurial orientation, and customer relationship management. This study used a library and field research design with a causal associative approach. This study used a total sample of 170 samples. Data analysis confirms that entrepreneurial competence, orientation, and customer relationship management significantly affect MSME Competitiveness. The implications of this research highlight the importance of developing entrepreneurial competencies for SMEs. The implication is that MSMEs must invest time and resources in training and developing entrepreneurial skills to increase brand competitiveness. Furthermore, the importance of customer relationship management (CRM) in increasing the competitiveness of MSMEs. Furthermore, MSMEs need to pay attention to relationship management with their customers. They must understand customer needs, provide quality service, and build long-term customer relationships.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Competence, Entrepreneurial Orientation, Customer Relationship Management, MSME Competitiveness

Introduction

Running a business or entrepreneurship cannot avoid uncertainty (Afwaa et al., 2021); (Christa & Kristinae, 2021), so it takes mature entrepreneurial competence to run it (Halim et al., 2021). Entrepreneurial competence is crucial to encourage the competitiveness of MSMEs to be more competitive in the present (Julyanthry, Putri, Lie, et al., 2021). The main problem of this research is the low level of entrepreneurial competence for some MSME groups, especially micro groups, in terms of business development. The lack of core competencies in entrepreneurship, for example, mastery of knowledge, attitudes, and skills related to business governance, makes it difficult for business competitiveness to develop and compete with similar businesses. In addition to the need for entrepreneurial competence to increase competitiveness, aspects of entrepreneurial orientation are also considered essential to encourage business development (Trisnawati & Darsana, 2021). The second problem, namely the lack of initiatives to innovate in business governance, is seen as a trigger for slow business competitiveness to develop. In addition to entrepreneurial competency factors and orientation, in-depth knowledge related to customer relationship management is also needed to increase business competitiveness (Rosalina et al., 2017). This aims to make it easier for novice entrepreneurs to develop business strategies and bring businesses closer to consumers (Mohammed et al., 2017). The next problem is that in micro and small-scale businesses, the opportunity to implement customer relationship management in their business cannot be achieved optimally. This is due to their shared knowledge regarding implementing customer-based business strategies.

Entrepreneurial competence appears in more than prospective entrepreneurs (Dyatmika et al., 2020); (Mohamad & Niode, 2020). Entrepreneurial competence in a person has existed since someone realized that their daily needs must be met (Slamet et al., 2016), thereby enabling the emergence of skills in something like selling goods and services (Butarbutar et al., 2022); (Barney & Hesterly, 2019). Entrepreneurs must be able to create an environment that supports creativity (Dess & Lumpkin, 2005), suitable for themselves (Nguyen & Waring, 2013) or other people in the company (Harjadi & Gunawan, 2022); (Iskamto et al., 2020). Entrepreneurial competence is a person's fundamental nature and is related to the effectiveness of a person in doing work (Dwi et al., 2022); (Man et al., 2002). Building entrepreneurial competence is needed to achieve success and be oriented and consistent to gain competitiveness (Muniarty et al., 2021); (Julyanthry, Putri, & Sudirman, 2021). If entrepreneurial competence is managed optimally, then this will increase the competitiveness of a better business (Tehseen & Ramayah, 2015). Study results (Yustian et al., 2021); (Trisnawati & Darsana, 2021) emphasized that entrepreneurial competence significantly affects the growth and development of business competitiveness. Therefore, based on some of the results of previous studies led to the development of the hypothesis:

H1: Entrepreneurial competence effect on the MSME Competitiveness

Entrepreneurial orientation is processes, practices, and activities that use innovation, risk-taking, and active efforts to win the competition (Herlinawati et al., 2022); (Keh et al., 2007). Some researchers (Kantur, 2016); (Bhegawati & Yuliasuti, 2019), believes that entrepreneurial orientation reflects the company's tendency to be innovative, seek opportunities, dare to take risks, be autonomous, and aggressively have a competitive influence on business competitiveness. Entrepreneurial orientation is related to the search for opportunities and the courage to take risks in decision-making for business governance (Dess & Lumpkin, 2005); (Gupta & Gupta, 2015). In a dynamic business environment, the essence of entrepreneurial orientation is believed to be the foundation for entrepreneurs to develop innovations related to competitiveness (Kadir et al., 2017); (Fitri, 2022). Furthermore, (Novitasari & Zuraida, 2015); (and Sedalia et al., 2020) state that entrepreneurial companies are believed to be pioneers in product innovation and are proactive in supporting increased business competitiveness to be more competitive. Therefore, based on some of the results of previous studies led to the development of the hypothesis:

H2: Entrepreneurial Orientation Effect on the MSME Competitiveness

Applying a CRM-based business strategy is believed to be a pioneer in bringing businesses closer to customers (Özgener & Iraz, 2006). CRM implementation is interpreted as a strategy, system, and technology that will effectively and efficiently manage customer transactions with the company and subsequent relationships with these customers (Saputra Ade, 2022); (Alianto & Santosa Kramadibrata, 2022). In the current digital era, a strategy is urgently needed to establish long-term relationships with customers by utilizing the resources owned by MSME players (Komalasari & Nurmasari, 2020). According to (Mutiana Pratiwi & Widia Marta, 2018); (Supriyanto & Setiyawati, 2021), the primary goal of CRM is to build and maintain a portfolio of profit-maximizing customer relationships. However, the benefits customers receive from the company through this relationship should add value to their service experience beyond that provided by the core product offering (Gil-Gomez et al., 2020). Several previous studies have confirmed that CRM significantly affects business competitiveness (Rosalina et al., 2017); (Guha et al., 2018). Therefore, based on some of the results of previous studies led to the development of the hypothesis:

H3: *Customer relationship management* effect on the MSME Competitiveness

Research on business competitiveness is considered a critical study to provide an overview of how much the MSME players are currently competitive. The state of the art of this research is that the researcher uses variable customer relationship management to strengthen the business competitiveness model to make it more competitive. In addition, this study uses an additional indicator in the form of a service model to strengthen the customer relationship management measurement model for business competitiveness. The author believes in the digital era when, in addition to the required aspects of entrepreneurship knowledge and a mature entrepreneurial orientation, customer relationship management is crucial to realizing business governance ready to compete so that it can develop and survive even in conditions of economic recession. This research has a novelty in terms of its data analysis model, which uses a structural equation model-partial least squares approach, whereas previous research used a linear regression data analysis model with SPSS software and analyzed it in stages. From some of the problems above, the formulation of the research problem is to analyze the model of increasing MSME competitiveness through increasing entrepreneurial competence and managing entrepreneurial orientation and customer relationship management.

Method

This study uses a library and field research design with a causal associative approach to look at the relationship of several uncertain variables. (Sugiyono, 2015), Mentioning causal design helps analyze how a variable affects other variables and is also valuable for experimental research, where the researcher treats the independent variable in a controlled manner to see its impact on the dependent variable directly. The sampling method used in this study is the convenience sampling method; this technique was chosen because it is the fastest method due to time constraints, and anyone who accidentally meets the researcher can be used as a sample if that person is considered suitable as a data source. According to (Hair, 2014), if the population is unknown, the number of samples can be determined from 5-10 times the number of indicators used in a single construct. This study used 17 indicators from 4 variable dimensions, so the number of research samples obtained was $17 \times 10 = 170$. Data collection in this study used the observation method by directly observing the field and documentation derived from secondary data in documents and structured interviews using a questionnaire instrument. The data analysis method used was Partial Least Square (PLS). Data analysis test tool using statistical software Smartpls 3.0. The analysis phase consists of testing the validity and reliability and evaluating the external model with convergent validity. The internal evaluation model reviews the R Square (R²) value with the criterion if the R² value is 0.5-0.6, which means good, 0-0.33, medium, and 0-0.19, which means weak. Finally, testing the hypothesis is the criterion for measuring significance and probability value <0.05 .

Results and Discussions

Table 1. Descriptions of Research Respondents

Categories	Details	amount	Percentage (%)
Gender	Men	65	38.23
	Woman	105	61.77
Age (years)	20-29	45	26.47
	30-39	55	32.35
	40-49	53	31.18
	50-59	17	10
Level of education	high school	122	71.77
	Bachelors	40	23.53
	Masters	8	4.70

Type of business	Culinary	63	37.05
	Fashion	22	12.95
	Automotive	16	9.42
	Agribusiness	9	5.29
	Internet Technology Business	22	12.94
	Beauty Business And Beauty Products	18	10.58
	Event Organizer	6	3.53
	Other Types of Business	14	8.24

Source: Processed Data (2023)

Outer Model Measurement

The results of the data obtained from the research questionnaire were processed using the SmartPLS version 3.2.9 application with processing guidelines (Juliandi, 2018). In measuring the outer model, the validity and reliability tests were conducted. The loading factor determines a convergent validity testing and AVE with the condition that the loading factor is above 0.7 and the AVE value is 0.5(Hair, 2014). The model reliability test, according to(Hair, 2014), is seen from the value of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR), which has a value higher than 0.7. The following will show an explanation of the measurement of the outer model, which is presented in Figure 2 and Table 2 below:

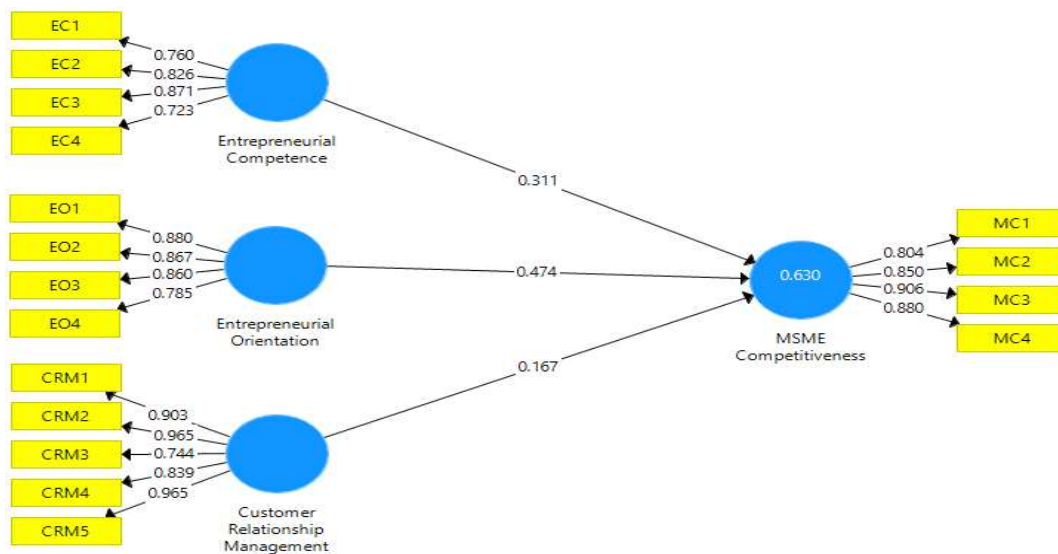


Figure 2. Outer Model Display

Table 2. Outer Model Measurement Results

Constructs/items	code	Outer Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE
Entrepreneurial Competence			0.807	0.874	0.636
Technical Competence	EC1	0.760			
Marketing Competence	EC2	0.826			
Financial Competence	EC3	0.871			
Human Relations Competence	EC4	0.723			
Entrepreneurial Orientation			0.870	0.911	0.720
Innovativeness	EO1	0.880			
Risk Tasking	EO2	0.867			
proactiveness	EO3	0.860			
Competitive Aggressiveness	EO4	0.785			
Customer Relationship Management			0.930	0.948	0.787
Business Models	CRM1	0.903			
System Models	CRM2	0.965			

Technology Models	CRM3	0.774			
Marketing Models	CRM4	0.839			
Service Models	CRM5	0.965			
MSME Competitiveness			0.883	0.919	0.741
Valuable	MC1	0.804			
Rareness	MC2	0.850			
Inimitability	MC3	0.906			
Insubstitutability	MC4	0.880			

Source: Processed Data (2023)

In the validity test presented in Table 2 above, it was obtained that the value of each loading factor on the indicators of the variables of entrepreneurial orientation, information technology adoption, innovation culture, and sustainable competitive advantage was above 0.7 and 0.5 for the average variance extracted (AVE) values. Furthermore, for Cronbach's alpha value and composite reliability, the value for each variable was above 0.7, which showed that all research variables had good reliability values. With these sound values, it can be used as an overview that the condition of the relationship between variables was also good so that further tests can be carried out.

Inner Model Measurement

Inner model measurement was carried out by bootstrapping research data using SmartPLS 3.2.9. There were two results obtained from bootstrapping; the first was the significance of the two related variables and the study's R-square. The value of the R-square is the value that shows the ability of exogenous variables to build endogenous variables. According to (Chin et al., 2008), there are three categories of R-square values; in which if the R-square value is 0.19, the relationship between exogenous variables forming endogenous variables is weak; if it is 0.33, it means that the relationship is moderate, and if the value is 0.67, it means that the relationship is strong. Meanwhile, (Sarwono, 2016) stated that if the R-square value is more than 0.67, the relationship between endogenous and exogenous variables is very strong.

Table 3. Calculation results of the R-Square value

Notes	<i>R Square</i>	<i>R Square Adjusted</i>
MSME Competitiveness	0.630	0.624

Source: Processed Data (2023)

Judging from the R-square value for the MSME Competitiveness endogenous variable, a value of 0.630 is obtained, whose values range from 0.33-0.67; this indicates that the ability of exogenous variables to explain endogenous variables is moderate overall. Furthermore, a significance test was carried out to prove the hypothesis testing, which was used to determine the relationship between the exogenous variables and the endogenous variables. The significant criterion is seen from the p-value. With a significance level of 5%, if the p-value between the exogenous and endogenous variables is less than 0.05, it means that the exogenous variable has a significant effect on the endogenous variable; conversely, if the value is more significant than 0.05, it means that the exogenous variable has no significant effect on building endogenous variable.

Table 4. Hypothesis Test Results

hypothesis	coefficient	t-count	P-Value	Conclusion
Entrepreneurial Competence>>MSME Competitiveness	0.311	4.140	0.000	accepted
Entrepreneurial Orientation>>MSME Competitiveness	0.474	7.173	0.000	accepted
Customer Relationship Management>>MSME Competitiveness	0.167	4.207	0.000	accepted

Source: Processed Data (2023)

Based on the results of the processed data presented in Table 4, it is known that the influence of entrepreneurial competence on MSME competitiveness obtained positive and significant results with the acquisition of a p-value of 0.000 below 0.05. Furthermore, the effect of entrepreneurial orientation on MSME competitiveness obtained positive and significant results with the acquisition of a p-value of 0.000 below 0.05. Likewise, positive and significant results were obtained by acquiring a p-value of 0.000 below 0.05 for the influence of customer relationship management on MSME competitiveness. Overall, from the three hypotheses built to test the direct effect between variables, it was concluded that all hypotheses were declared accepted.

Discussion

The research results developed through the first hypothesis show that entrepreneurial competence positively and significantly affects MSME competitiveness. These results confirm entrepreneurial competence involving thinking creatively, seeing business opportunities, and generating innovative ideas. This capability allows MSMEs to develop products or services that are unique and attractive to consumers. By innovating, MSMEs can differentiate themselves from competitors and attract new customers. Entrepreneurial competence includes managerial skills in managing various business aspects such as finance, marketing, human resources, and operations. With good managerial skills, MSME owners can optimize limited resources and improve operational efficiency (Hasan et al., 2021). This allows MSMEs to compete better in a competitive market. In addition, entrepreneurial competence also includes building networks and establishing mutually beneficial cooperative relationships with other parties, such as business partners, suppliers, or customers. (Basoeky et al., 2021). Through cooperation and partnerships, MSMEs can access new resources, information, and opportunities to increase competitiveness. A strong network also enables MSMEs to expand their market share and reach a broader range of customers.

The research results developed through the second hypothesis show that entrepreneurial orientation positively and significantly affects MSME competitiveness. These results illustrate the importance of managing entrepreneurial orientation to maintain business competitiveness. Entrepreneurial orientation also includes a strong focus on customer needs and satisfaction. MSME owners with a robust entrepreneurial orientation will try to understand the needs of their customers well and provide high-quality products or services (Tiris Sudrartono et al., 2022). They always try to improve the customer experience, listen to feedback, and adapt their business to market demands. This focus on customers allows MSMEs to maintain and expand their market share. Entrepreneurial orientation involves taking the initiative, proactively dealing with market changes, and seeking business opportunities. MSME owners with a solid entrepreneurial orientation will proactively find market information, analyze industry trends, and adjust their business strategy quickly (Irwansyah et al., 2021). They do not just wait for opportunities but actively create new ones. This initiative and proactive attitude enable MSMEs to remain relevant and competitive in rapidly changing markets. With a strong entrepreneurial orientation, MSMEs can develop competitive advantages, survive in fierce business competition, and achieve sustainable growth.

The research results developed through the third hypothesis show that customer relationship management positively and significantly affects MSME competitiveness. Customer relationship management (CRM) helps MSMEs better understand customer needs and preferences. By having complete and structured information about customers, MSMEs can provide products or services that are more relevant and follow customer needs. This increases customer satisfaction and makes them more inclined to choose MSMEs over competitors (Sundulusi et al., 2022). CRM enables MSMEs to build solid and long-term relationships with customers. By monitoring customer interactions and history, MSMEs can provide personalized service, customize communications, and provide good after-sales service. This long-term relationship helps MSMEs retain existing customers and reduce churn rates, thereby reducing the cost of acquiring new customers. In addition, CRM allows MSMEs to personalize interactions with customers. By understanding customer preferences and purchase history, MSMEs can provide special offers, discounts, or loyalty programs that suit their needs (Sherly et al., 2020). This personalization creates a unique customer experience and differentiates MSMEs from competitors, thereby increasing customer attraction and loyalty.

The relationship between Entrepreneurial Competence, Entrepreneurial Orientation, and CRM with the competitive advantages of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) is very important in understanding how MSMEs can succeed and compete in the market. Entrepreneurial competence refers to the skills, knowledge and abilities of individuals or teams within SMEs in running a business effectively. This includes the ability to plan, make decisions, innovate, solve problems, and adapt to market changes. MSMEs that have strong entrepreneurial competencies are better able to overcome challenges and seize opportunities, thus increasing their opportunities to create added value and differentiation in the market. Entrepreneurial orientation reflects how MSMEs perceive opportunity, innovation and risk. MSMEs with a strong entrepreneurial orientation tend to have a tendency to seek new opportunities, innovate in products or services, and are willing to take measured risks. This orientation involves a proactive attitude to market changes, a desire to move the business forward, and an ability to adapt. MSMEs that successfully implement CRM can improve customer retention, increase loyalty, and better understand customer needs and preferences. By maintaining good relationships with customers, MSMEs can create a positive experience that differentiates them from competitors and provides added value to customers. Overall, these three factors complement each other and can mutually reinforce the competitive advantage of SMEs. Combining a strong entrepreneurial approach, social responsibility, innovation and good customer relations can help MSMEs to stay competitive and competitive in an increasingly competitive market.

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study concluded that the competitiveness of MSME businesses could be increased depending on the readiness of MSME business actors to develop their entrepreneurial competencies. Entrepreneurial competence involves adapting to the fast-changing market and business environment. MSMEs with this competency can quickly adjust their business strategy, identify new opportunities, and overcome emerging challenges. In the digital and globalization era, resilience and adaptability are essential factors in maintaining the competitiveness of MSMEs. With solid entrepreneurial competencies, MSMEs can optimize their potential, increase competitiveness, and maintain their business amid intense competition. Entrepreneurial competence also helps MSMEs to continue to grow and develop in the face of ever-changing market dynamics. In addition, entrepreneurial orientation also plays an essential role in increasing the competitiveness of MSMEs in facing these dynamic market dynamics. Entrepreneurial orientation involves high motivation and persistence in

running a business. MSME owners who have a solid entrepreneurial orientation will have the persistence to overcome obstacles and challenges that arise. They have a high desire to achieve success and continue to drive their business in a better direction. This motivation and perseverance help MSMEs survive and compete in a competitive market. Furthermore, Customer relationship management (CRM) helps MSMEs manage sales and marketing processes more effectively. MSMEs can identify cross-selling or upselling opportunities through customer data analysis, map potential market segments, and optimize marketing campaigns. CRM also allows MSMEs to measure the effectiveness of their marketing and sales efforts so that they can take the necessary corrective steps.

The practical implications of this research state that MSMEs need to invest time and resources in training and developing entrepreneurial skills to increase their competitiveness. In this context, the government and related institutions can provide training and mentoring programs to increase entrepreneurial competency among MSME owners. Then in the aspect of entrepreneurial orientation, MSMEs need to adopt an entrepreneurial approach in their business operations and strategies. They need to be innovative, proactive, and willing to take risks to face the increasingly fierce competition. The government can provide policy support encouraging entrepreneurial orientation among MSMEs, such as reducing bureaucracy, funding accessibility, and facilitating the development of business networks. Properly using information and communication technology can help MSMEs manage customer relationships effectively. In addition, the government can provide access to training and resources to assist MSMEs in implementing effective CRM practices. By increasing the competitiveness of MSMEs through entrepreneurial competence, entrepreneurial orientation, and CRM, this research can have positive implications for the sustainability of MSMEs. MSMEs that compete well have more excellent opportunities to survive and grow in a competitive market. This can contribute to local economic growth, job creation, and poverty reduction. Government can provide access to training and resources to assist MSMEs in implementing effective CRM practices.

This research has suggestions to be used as a reference for research and for decision-making for parties who have a relationship with increasing the competitiveness of SMEs. According to survey results, several business actors still need to possess competent entrepreneurial competence and entrepreneurial orientation fully. The government can facilitate the formation of networks and collaboration between entrepreneurs, educational institutions, industry, and other business organizations. This can be done through organizing networking events, business meetings, or online platforms that allow information exchange and collaboration between entrepreneurs. The government can also support the establishment of industrial parks or business incubators that encourage collaboration and business growth. This study also confirms weaknesses in the aspect of the number of samples used, which are still not able to generalize the characteristics of business actors as a whole, therefore for further research, it is necessary to add a more significant number of samples and place several research variables that are not discussed in this study. In addition, on the other hand, for more complex models, data analysis methods with the CB-SEM approach using the Amos application can be used.

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