

Determinants of Increasing the Competitive Advantage of SMES in Denpasar City

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ABSTRACT

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play an important role in the development of the Indonesian economy. SMEs contribute to the increase in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), increase exports, absorb labor, and become a source of income for most people. SMEs are a sector that is vulnerable to competition, despite having strong resilience to the crisis. This study aims to determine the effect of entrepreneurial orientation and absorptive ability on competitive advantage. This research was conducted on SME managers throughout Denpasar City using PLS-SEM analysis, with the help of SmartPLS 3.0 Software. The results of the study show that competitive advantage is influenced by entrepreneurial orientation. In addition to having an impact on increasing competitive advantage, entrepreneurial orientation also has an impact on increasing absorptive abilities. Another finding is that absorptive ability does not mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and competitive advantage.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship Orientation; Absorptive Ability; Competitive Advantage.

INTRODUCTION

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play an important role in the development of the Indonesian economy. SMEs contribute to the increase in Gross Domestic Product (GDP), increase exports, absorb labor, and become a source of income for most people. SMEs are a sector that is vulnerable to competition, despite having strong resilience to the crisis (Pramuki and Kusumawati,2021; Pramuki and

Ayu,2020,). The dynamic, innovative, and efficient characteristics of SMEs are able to face a dynamic business environment so that they can survive in difficult situations (Yuliantari and Pramuki,2020)

The study of competitive advantage in SMEs is still a debate and the number of studies is still small compared to the results of studies on large companies (Kartawan et al. 2021). There are at least two pessimistic arguments that can explain this condition. First, the opinion of Mujahidah (2021) who believes that competitive advantage in SMEs often arises as a result of unintentional reasons for certain operating conditions that are of concern to the company. Second, referring to Than.et al. (2019) who found that traditional competitive advantage is not entirely appropriate for small companies because traditional competitive advantage assumes the existence of economies of scale, thus, competitive advantage in SMEs cannot be applied because economies of scale are low. Economies of scale allow large companies to achieve an excellent competitive position. Large companies are also supported by the ability to identify the core skills, resources, and management to achieve a superior position. While on the other hand, small companies usually have the characteristics of lack of resources, facing an uncertain market, and reactive in marketing. Than.et al. (2019) stated that the competitive advantage of SMEs is a unique advantage that distinguishes other similar SMEs so that

it can be used as a way to win the competition. Small companies usually have the characteristics of lack of resources, facing an uncertain market, and reactive in marketing. Than.et al. (2019) stated that the competitive advantage of SMEs is a unique advantage that distinguishes other similar SMEs so that it can be used as a way to win the competition. Small companies usually have the characteristics of lack of resources, facing an uncertain market, and reactive in marketing. Than.et al. (2019) stated that the competitive advantage of SMEs is a unique advantage that distinguishes other similar SMEs so that it can be used as a way to win the competition.

The competitive advantage of SMEs is very important to maintain their competitive position and business continuity (O'Donnell et al., 2020). SMEs must continuously look for new ways to increase their competitive power in order to overcome intense competition, namely by increasing entrepreneurial orientation (Campos & Valenzuela, 2018). Anticipation of changes in the competitive environment can also come from the company's ability to create new ways, generate new knowledge as a result of absorption of external knowledge or their absorptive abilities (Cohen & Levinthal, 2016). The company's ability to use the external knowledge gained in the company's activities is very important in creating a competitive advantage. The resource-based view states that a company can show better performance and achieve competitive advantage, if it has the ability to utilize resources effectively in exploiting business opportunities ahead of competitors (Voola et al., 2018). The company's internal capabilities allow the company to adapt to the external environment. The competitive advantage of SMEs can be formed with the intangible resources of the company concerned.(Pramuki dan Kusumawati, 2020).

Based on this description, this study intends to develop a comprehensive and integrated model of SME competitive advantage with an emphasis on intangible resources that

links the variables of entrepreneurial orientation and competitive advantage with mediating absorptive abilities. This research model is a novelty in research on SMEs, especially on the variable of absorptive ability. Research on absorptive abilities, especially in SMEs, is still rarely done because the attention of SMEs to intangible resources, especially related to organizational learning, is still very lacking. This study argues that SMEs gain a competitive advantage if they effectively apply their unique capabilities and resources such as entrepreneurial orientation and absorptive abilities.

Various phenomena of the sustainability of MSMEs during the pandemic have become the attention of the government and stakeholders. The role of MSMEs in the Indonesian economy is demonstrated by its population as the largest business actor, as well as its contribution to employment, the formation of gross domestic product (GDP), exports and the creation of fixed capital/investment. The performance of MSMEs in general is quite varied from year to year. The contribution and role of MSMEs in the formation of GDP (current prices) is very small. In addition, these conditions also affect the extent to which MSMEs can participate in global production and marketing networks. However, apart from low productivity, MSMEs have better resilience to crises, which is formed because the organizational structure and MSME workforce are more flexible in adapting to market changes.

Given the large contribution of SMEs to the economy, it is important to conduct this research in order to further explore the variables that affect the competitive advantage of medium enterprises. Application of entrepreneurial orientation and absorptive abilities of medium-sized business actors become very important factors to increase the competitive advantage. Every medium-sized business actor in Denpasar is expected to be able to improve these factors. The purpose of this research is targeted to be able to answer the

main problem, namely whether the absorptive ability is able to mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and the competitive advantage of medium-sized enterprises.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Resource-Based View Theory (RBV)

This research is built based on the concept of Resource Based View (RBV) theory. RBV theory was developed by (Barney, 1991), that Resource Based is a reference or framework for examining the strengths and weaknesses of the company by studying the uniqueness of all internal resources owned and controlled by the company. The basic assumptions used from the Resource based View of the Firm include: resource heterogeneity and immobility. First, the company can be considered as a collection of productive resources and varies between companies (assuming resource heterogeneity); second, these resources are very expensive and difficult to imitate and are inelastic in supply (assuming resource immobility).

Entrepreneurial Orientation

Entrepreneurship orientation was originally understood as a decision-making process that affects the company's desire to innovate, act more proactively and aggressively and the courage to take risks than competitors (Miller & Friesen, 2018). Entrepreneurial orientation in SMEs refers to the owner's willingness to be open to new ideas and try new ways to be better (Verhees & Meulenberg, 2017). These new ideas in the context of the craft industry are not always a new breakthrough, but must be relevant for craftsmen. Having an open mind and ready to learn from others enhances their abilities.

Entrepreneurial orientation involves three main aspects, namely being proactive, innovative, and risk taking (Miller, 2018). The resource-based view (RBV) suggests that resource ownership and resource utilization through organizational capabilities can lead to superior business

performance. Entrepreneurial orientation can be considered as one of the organizational capabilities and this ability can distinguish a company from its competitors and achieve superior business performance. Entrepreneurial orientation is the definition of entrepreneurship at the company level and not at the individual level.

Absorptive Capacity

Absorptive ability according to Zahra & George (2020) is defined as a set of organizational routines and processes by which companies acquire, assimilate, transform and exploit knowledge to produce dynamic organizational capabilities. Cohen & Levinthal (2016) explains that absorptive ability is the ability of a company to acquire new value, external information, assimilate, and apply it for commercial purposes and increase innovative capabilities.

Zahra & George (2020) specifically explain that absorptive abilities reflect company capabilities that can affect company performance from learning and using knowledge. Therefore, the company's absorptive ability is determined by the knowledge it already has. Companies have formed their own absorptive abilities before they are involved with an activity of sharing knowledge, where from one company to another there will be different levels of absorptive ability. This will affect their ability to manage their assets and develop other capabilities as a result of their knowledge. Cohen &

The company's absorptive ability is basically the capacity of a company to apply newly acquired knowledge to products or services that can provide financial benefits. Zahra & George (2020) show a series of indicators that can be used to measure absorptive abilities, namely: 1) knowledge acquisition ability, namely the intensity of the company's effort and speed in identifying and obtaining the knowledge needed for its operating activities obtained from the external environment. 2) the ability to assimilate knowledge, namely the

company's ability to examine or review previous knowledge possessed, synthesize knowledge, and combine knowledge obtained from external sources. 3) knowledge transformation ability, namely the company's ability to develop and improve routines that facilitate the merging of existing knowledge with newly acquired knowledge. 4) the ability to exploit knowledge, namely the company's ability to improve, expand, and elevate existing competencies or create new ones by combining the knowledge that has been obtained.

Competitive Advantages of SMEs

Competitive advantage was first introduced as a concept in 1985 by Michael E. Porter in his writing entitled "Competitive Advantage: Creating and Sustaining Superior Performance." According to Porter (1985) competitive advantage is the ability to generate profits or higher performance than other companies in the same industry or market. Competitive advantage refers to a position of advantage in the market that leads a company to outperform its competitors. Competitive advantage is obtained through the characteristics and resources of a company. For example, a company can achieve a cost advantage when it operates at a lower cost than its

competitors but offers a comparable product. Besides that,

Competitive advantage is very important because it is the capacity of a company to be able to create a strong position in the market (Li et al., 2016; Yuliantari and Pramuki, 2022). The real competitive advantage lies in integrating operational activities with the aim of achieving quality goals or to meet customer needs. Competitive advantage arises when a relationship is created between capabilities and attributes that are valuable to the market. Competitive advantage not only shows better performance than competitors but also must provide true value to consumers (Agha et al., 2019).

Porter (1990) argues that firms can create competitive advantage because they have to make difficult choices about what to do and not to do. Barney (1991) more specifically argues that competitive advantage can be achieved if the company implements a value creation strategy that is not the same as the implementation of current and other potential competitors. Competitive advantage is an internal control, thus competitive advantage in the view of the resource base depends on the valuable, rare, and difficult to imitate resources owned by an organization (Kamukama et al., 2019). When a firm's capabilities are scarce, tenable, or difficult to imitate.

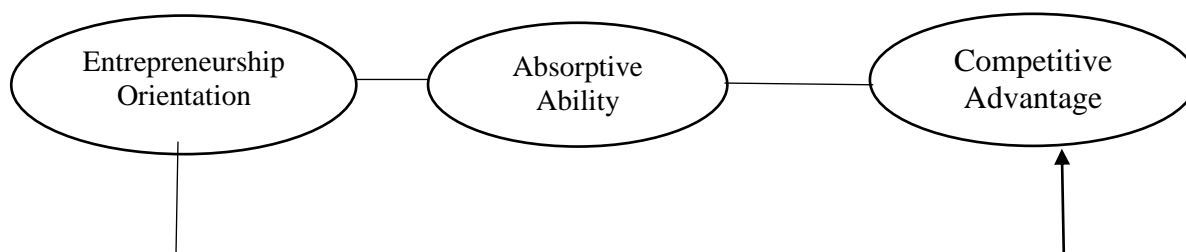


Figure 1. Research Conceptual Framework

METHODS

This study uses quantitative methods. This study aims to analyze the causal relationship used to explain the effect of entrepreneurial orientation on competitive advantage through absorptive ability. This research was conducted in Denpasar City. The

research population is the managers of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) registered at the Department of Cooperatives and SMEs in Denpasar City. The number of the population is not known with certainty, so the sample is determined

based on the non-probability method using the convenience sampling method.

Measurement of entrepreneurial orientation using a 5-point Likert scale. Using three dimensions from Miller's (1983) research, namely: innovativeness, risk taking, and proactiveness, a total of 9 question items, Absorptive ability adopts 3 dimensions from Liu et al. (2011), namely customer orientation, competitor orientation, and coordination between functions using a 5-point Likert scale, a total of 6 question items. The dimensions of competitive advantage adopt Porter's (1980) study, namely cost leadership, differentiation and focus with a total of 10 question items. A Likert scale was used, ranging from 1 (not important as a competitive advantage) to 5 (very important as a competitive advantage). Statistical techniques in this study include descriptive statistical techniques and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistical techniques assist researchers in explaining and interpreting the results of data analysis. The most commonly used descriptive statistical techniques according to Abdillah and Hartono (2015) are central tendency and variability. The central tendency in this study is the mean or average, while the variability includes min, max, and standard deviation. Descriptive statistical analysis in this study utilizes the help of SPSS 26 statistical software. Furthermore, this study uses a testing tool that thoroughly looks at the overall relationship of the research variables. The tool used is a variant-based Structural Equation Model (SEM) or commonly called Partial Least Square which will be tested using Smart PLS 3.2.9 software. SEM (Structural Equation Modeling) is a statistical technique that is able to analyze the pattern of relationships between latent constructs and their indicators. , latent constructs with each other, as well as direct

measurement error. SEM allows analysis between several dependent and independent variables directly (Hair et al, 2006). explaining and interpreting the results of data analysis. The most commonly used descriptive statistical techniques according to Abdillah and Hartono (2015) are central tendency and variability. The central tendency in this study is the mean or average, while the variability includes min, max, and standard deviation. Descriptive statistical analysis in this study utilizes the help of SPSS 26 statistical software.

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RESULT

Questionnaires were given and distributed to SMEs in 4 sub-districts in Denpasar City which were easy to find by researchers, amounting to 80 respondents. Furthermore, from the results of respondents' answers regarding the concept of social capital variables, entrepreneurial leadership and innovation capabilities, a recapitulation table is made so that further testing can be carried out.

This study uses PLS (Partial Least Square) to analyze the effect between exogenous variables and endogenous variables in this study which consists of the stages that tea is determined.

Table 1 Outer Loading Value Estimation Results Before Execution

Variable	Indicator	Correlation Value
Entrepreneurship Orientation	OK1.1	0.606
	OK1.2	0.614
	OK1.3	0.669
	OK1.4	0.451
	OK1.5	0.712
	OK1.6	0.722
	OK1.7	0.702
	OK1.8	0.628
	OK1.9	0.652
Absorptive Ability (Mediation)	KA1	0.867
	KA2	0.807
	KA3	0.754
Competitive Advantage	KB1	0.598
	KB2	0.764
	KB3	0.734
	KB4	0.826
	KB5	0.693
	KB6	-0.149
	KB7	-0.109
	KB8	-0.173
	KB9	-0.244
	KB10	-0.083

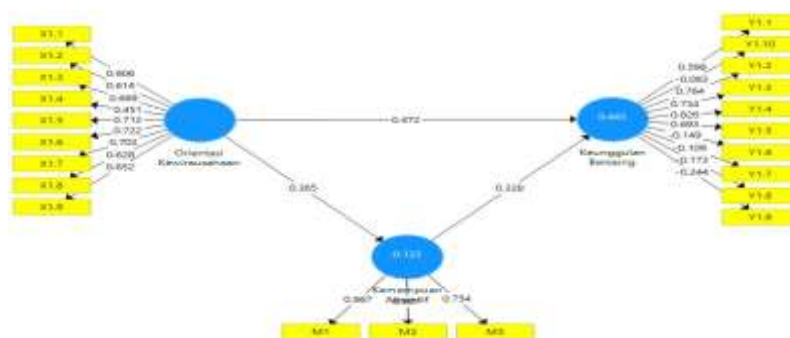


Fig.2 Structural Model

The results of calculations regarding the value of outer loading in Table 1 show that there are several indicators that do not meet the valid requirements based on the convergent validity criteria, namely the value of outer loading is less than 0.60 so it must be removed from the model. The indicators that are removed from the model

based on table 4.1 are OK1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6 indicators on the entrepreneurial orientation variable. Indicators KB1, KB6, KB7, KB8, KB9, KB10 Thus the value of the outer loading of the structural model after several indicators have been removed is as follows:

Table 2. After Outer Loading Value Estimation Results After Execution

Variable	Indicator	Correlation Value
Entrepreneurship Orientation	OK1.7	0.784
	OK1.8	0.875
	OK1.9	0.852
Absorptive Ability (Mediation)	KA1	0.893
	KA2	0.804
	KA3	0.718
Competitive Advantage	KB2	0.760
	KB3	0.791
	KB4	0.811
	KB5	0.804

The results of calculations regarding the outer loading value in Table 2 and Figure 3 show that all indicators have met the valid requirements based on the discriminant validity criteria, namely the outer loading value is above 0.60 and is statistically significant.

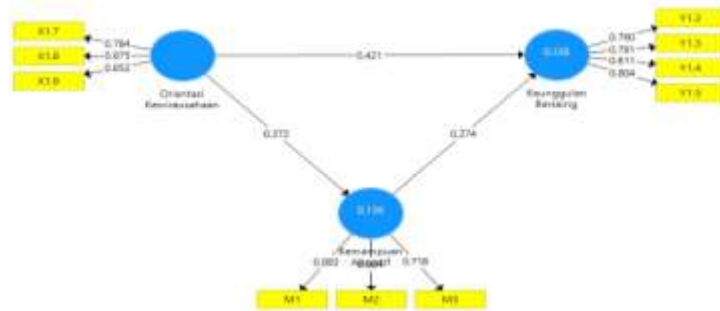


Figure 3. Outer Loading Structural Model After Execution

Table 1 Discriminant Validity Test

Variable	AVE	AVE	Entrepreneurship Orientation	Absorptive ability
Entrepreneurship Orientation	0.702	0.838		
Absorptive Ability	0.653	0.808	0.372	
Competitive Advantage	0.627	0.792	0.523	0.431

Table 3 shows that the AVE value of all constructs is > 0.50 and the value of The AVE of each construct ranges from 0.792 to 0.838, which is greater than the correlation value, which is between 0.372 to 0.523 so that it meets the valid requirements based on the discriminant validity criteria.

Table 2 Composite Reliability Test and Cronbach Alpha

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Entrepreneurship Orientation	0.787	0.876
Absorptive Ability	0.739	0.849
Competitive Advantage	0.802	0.870

Table 4 shows that the value of composite reliability and Cronbach Alpha of each construct has shown a value greater than 0.60 so that it meets the reliable requirements based on the composite reliability criteria.

Table 3 Evaluation of the Inner Structural Model

Construct	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Absorptive Ability	0.139	0.128
Competitive Advantage	0.338	0.321

Table 5 shows that the R2 value of absorptive ability has an r-square value of 0.139 based on Chin's criteria (Ghozali, 2021), then the model includes the criteria of a weak model, while competitive advantage has an r-square value of 0.338 based on Chin's criteria (Ghozali, 2021), then The model includes the criteria of a moderate model.

Table 6 Path Analysis and Statistical Testing

	Coefficient	T Statistics	P Values	Information
Entrepreneurship Orientation -> Absorptive Ability	0.372	2,958	0.003	Significant
Absorptive Ability -> Competitive Advantage	0.274	1,852	0.065	Not significant
Entrepreneurship Orientation -> Competitive Advantage	0.421	3,152	0.002	Significant

Based on table 6 it can be explained that 1) Entrepreneurial orientation has a positive effect of 0.372 on absorptive ability and the relationship is significant at the 0.05 level with a statistical t value of 2.958 which is greater than the t-table value of 1.96., 2) Absorptive ability has a positive effect of 0.274 on competitive advantage and the relationship is not significant at the 0.05

level with a statistical t value of 1.852 which is smaller than the t-table value of 1.96, 3) Entrepreneurial orientation has a positive effect of 0.421 on competitive advantage and the relationship is significant at the 0.05 level with the t-statistic value of 3.152 which is greater than the t-table value of 1.96.

DISCUSSION

Questionnaires were given and distributed to SMEs in 4 sub-districts in Denpasar City which were easy to find by researchers, amounting to 80 respondents. Furthermore, from the results of respondents' answers regarding the concept of social capital variables, entrepreneurial leadership and innovation capabilities, a recapitulation table is made so that further testing can be carried out.

This study uses PLS (Partial Least Square) to analyze the effect between exogenous variables and endogenous variables in this study which consists of the stages that tea is determined.

CONCLUSION

Based on the discussion in the previous chapter, it can be concluded that competitive advantage is influenced by entrepreneurial orientation. In addition to having an impact on increasing competitive advantage, entrepreneurial orientation also has an impact on increasing absorptive abilities. Another finding is that absorptive ability does not mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and competitive advantage. This study tries or aims to reveal how the application of resource theory in competitive advantage, namely Resource Based Theory and Resource Excellence Theory. However, the results of this study have not found a relationship between absorptive ability and competitive advantage. because basically competitive advantage aims for the company to continue to grow and maintain survival in the competition. Therefore, Further research can investigate and explain the relationship between strategies to increase the competitive advantage of the MSME sector in order to improve its business performance. Taking into account the sensitive nature of research related to business performance, future research can be carried out using different methods such as qualitative and experimental methods. Future research can also be done by adding samples and expanding the research location

Conflict of Interest: None

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