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Driving MSME performance: exploring the influence of entrepreneurial orientation and business independence

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ABSTRACT

The problem of the development of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) is the most dominant research topic, especially in developing countries that rely on these sectors in their economy. The purpose of this study was to analyze the effect of entrepreneurial orientation on the performance of MSMEs through the mediation of business independence variables. This type of research is field research and literature which aims to answer the formulation of the research problem. The research location is in Makassar City, South Sulawesi. The population in this study is 16.492 MSMEs. The number of samples in this study was determined by the Slovin formula, so the sample size is 100 SMEs. The sampling method is probability sampling with simple random sampling technique, namely proportional random sampling for each business sector. Data analysis techniques use structural equation model analysis. The results showed that the entrepreneurial orientation variable had a significant effect on the performance of MSMEs, both directly and through the business independence variable. Based on the findings of this study, further research is needed regarding the performance of SMEs to explore other variables.



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Introduction

Academics are interested in exploring MSMEs both from a macro perspective such as the study of Annisa & ER, (2019); Groot et al., (2019); Nurmawati & ER, (2019) which analyzes external factors in developing MSMEs. And from a micro perspective that has been explained by Cosenz & Bivona, (2021) regarding internal determination that contributes to MSME performance. The role of MSMEs in the economy has long been recognized by academics around the world, both contributing to increasing economic growth (Hadi Putra & Santoso, 2020), expanding employment (Bouwman et al., 2019), and other contributions to the economy. Another advantage of MSMEs is that in terms of their number worldwide compared to large and multinational industries.

The contribution of MSMEs to the national economy has not been supported by even distribution of quality of MSMEs from upstream and downstream (Gaganis et al., 2019). Another classic problem faced is low productivity or performance. This situation is triggered by various internal problems faced by MSMEs such as the low quality of human resources in business management, organization, low technology transfer, and marketing problems (Caldera et al., 2019), weak entrepreneurial businesses, and limited information. and markets, and other issues.

Research by D'Angelo & Presutti, (2019) regarding the factors that influence the development of MSMEs can be divided into 2 (two) groups, namely the research group that focuses on business independence and the research group that focuses on entrepreneurial orientation. The business independence factor is used in determining the performance of MSMEs as was done by Ataei et al., (2020) stating that there is a strong influence between business independence and MSME performance. Then entrepreneurial orientation is used in testing the performance of MSMEs according to the results of research by Pittino et al., (2017) and Genc et al., (2019) that entrepreneurial orientation is a key determinant of business success. Entrepreneurial orientation encourages sustainable performance for MSMEs. According to a study by Szambelan et al. (2020), an entrepreneurial orientation that allows MSMEs to create new products and services that can meet customer needs that continue to grow. Genc et al. (2019) emphasize the importance of entrepreneurial orientation, which allows MSMEs to take the initiative in exploring new opportunities.

Business competition certainly creates opportunities and challenges for every MSME actor. The challenges faced by business actors include always trying to find the best way to win and maintain market share (Hermawati, 2020). Business actors try to understand the needs, wants and demands of the target market (Cosenz & Bivona, 2021). Needs are basic human demands. Needs become wants when they are directed at specific objects that might satisfy those needs. The city of Makassar, with the largest number of MSMEs in South Sulawesi Province, is inseparable from various problems and obstacles, especially the performance of MSMEs which tends to be low based on the share of small non-oil and gas MSME exports (Hadi Putra & Santoso, 2020).

Successful entrepreneurs always have leadership, and role models (Santos et al., 2020). Always wanted to be different and more prominent (Hatthakijphong & Ting, 2019). Leadership is the quality of a person's behavior that influences the behavior of other people or a group of people, so that they move towards the realization of a common goal (Donbesuur et al., 2020). An entrepreneur who wants to work with others must have leadership skills (Al-Awlaqi et al., 2021). Successful entrepreneurs always have pioneering, exemplary leadership characteristics. He wants to always be different, first, more prominent (Ma & Jiang, 2018). Leadership is a key factor for an entrepreneur. With excellence in this field, an entrepreneur will pay great attention to orientation towards goals, work or personal relationships and effectiveness. Leaders who are oriented to the three factors above, are always wise, encourage employee career development, are liked by subordinates, and always keep in mind the goals to be achieved (Sabahi & Parast, 2020).

Perrigot et al., (2015) explained that entrepreneurs experience independence, but as a functional need in managing temporary moral demands and is felt as an individual. There is a fundamental difference between wanting independence to pursue a more independent lifestyle and needing independence to fulfill family obligations (Putra & Cho, 2019). Independence for entrepreneurship is an entrepreneurial process that is built over time. Independence for entrepreneurship is defined as an individual's willingness to carry out entrepreneurial activities or actions, to become self-employed, or to start a new business (Ayrancı & Ayrancı, 2015). This usually involves determination, ambition, and a drive to be independent (Tajeddini et al., 2020). Business independence for entrepreneurship is a deliberate action and has high implications for academics (Ekinci et al., 2020).

The increasing number of MSMEs makes the competition more dynamic. This makes the challenge for MSMEs even more difficult to be able to maintain their existence and develop their business. Measuring the development of MSMEs is still not as well established as measuring the development of large companies. The study of Zhao et al., (2020) developed a conceptual framework for measuring progress that can be used by MSMEs. Several important factors are the entrepreneurial aspect, human resource competency, innovation, and sustainability. Szambelan et al., (2020) explained that there are three comprehensive variables, namely entrepreneurial orientation, market orientation, and interaction orientation to describe the general picture of the effect of strategic orientation on MSME performance. The literature review reveals that the study of innovation and its influence on the development of MSMEs has been studied in Western, Eastern and Middle Eastern countries (Ghezzi & Cavallo, 2020; Naidah et al., 2023).

Although there is research on factors such as entrepreneurial orientation and business independence on the performance of MSMEs, there are still several gaps that need to be considered. The first gap, entrepreneurial orientation towards MSME performance through the mediation of business independence is still relatively limited. The second gap, although Szambelan et al. (2020) have identified entrepreneurial orientation, market orientation, and interaction orientation as key variables, but Szambelan's research has not explored in depth the interaction between all these variables on MSME performance. The combination of these variables has a greater synergistic impact than the influence of each individually. This study tries to combine the variables of entrepreneurial orientation and business independence to provide more comprehensive insight into the performance of MSMEs. The novelty of this research lies in several important aspects. First, this research makes a significant contribution by exploring entrepreneurial orientation in the context of MSMEs, providing relevant

insights for local policy makers and business practitioners. Second, with the interaction of entrepreneurial orientation and business independence variables on MSME performance to test more complex interactions. The purpose of this study was to analyze the influence of entrepreneurial orientation on the performance of MSMEs through business independence.

Method

The present study utilizes a quantitative research methodology to investigate the correlation between entrepreneurship approach and the performance of micro, small, and medium-sized firms (MSMEs) with a specific focus on independent business operations. An explanatory survey approach is employed for data collecting. This methodology allows the researchers to collect extensive data in order to elucidate the connections between variables. Surveys are disseminated among owners or managers of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Makassar City, with the objective of capturing their perspectives and encounters pertaining to entrepreneurship orientation and company autonomy.

Table 1. Operational definition

Latent variable	Manifest variable	References	Scale
Entrepreneurial orientation	Autonomy	Szambelan et al. (2020)	Likert
	Aggressive competition		
	Take a risk		
Business independence	Innovative	Ataei et al. (2020)	Likert
	Not easy to give up		
	Dare to take a decision		
MSME performance	Dare to compete	Cosenz & Bivona, (2021)	Likert
	Accept a competitor's advantage		
	Annual sales		
	Earnings per year		
	Net assets		
	Total employees		

Structured questionnaires are used to collect primary data, specifically designed to measure important aspects including entrepreneurship orientation and business independence. In order to ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaires, they have been created using proven scales and frameworks found in the entrepreneurship literature. Primary data is obtained from records or publications pertaining to Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Makassar City. The inclusion of these materials serves to enhance the original data acquired through surveys by offering more context and historical information.

According to the Department of Cooperatives and MSMEs, the population of interest in Makassar City consists of 16,492 Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The determination of the sample size is based on the Slovin formula, with a specified margin of error of 0.10. The computation results in a sample size of 100 small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), which guarantees adequate representation while efficiently managing resources. Probability sampling is used, employing the approach of simple random sampling. This methodology guarantees that each Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSME) within the population has an equitable opportunity of be chosen for the study. Proportional random selection is used to ensure representation across various industries in Makassar City, taking into consideration the diversity of business sectors.

The primary data analysis technique selected for this study is Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) enables the simultaneous analysis of intricate associations among several variables. It allows for the evaluation of both direct and indirect impacts, as well as the effects of mediating and moderating factors, and the inaccuracy in measuring latent variables. The application of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) improves the reliability of the analysis and enables a more comprehensive comprehension of the relationship between entrepreneurship orientation, business independence, and MSME performance.

Results and Discussions

The overview of MSME data in Makassar City shows that in terms of quantity, micro, small and medium enterprises experience a significant increase every year. Likewise, the number of workers in micro, small and medium enterprises increases every year. This shows that the growth potential of micro, small and medium

enterprises is predicted to increase in the future. With creativity, it will produce various types of innovative and value-added products or services that provide various benefits. Makassar City as a metropolitan city has developed various MSME sectors.

In general, men are more active as entrepreneurs than women. Based on the results of data analysis showed that male respondents were more dominant than female respondents. The number of males is more dominant than females. The characteristics of MSME entrepreneur respondents through a gender-based questionnaire showed that there were 72 men and 28 women. The results of this frequency show the low participation of women in the business world. This condition is also supported by data from the Central Bureau of Statistics for the City of Makassar that the number of male workers is greater than that of women, because men are considered to have more abilities than women, especially in work.

Age as a unit of time that measures the existence of an entrepreneur. Age is one indicator of changes that occur, especially describing the experience of an entrepreneur so that he has different levels of business experience based on age. The characteristics of MSME entrepreneur respondents based on age show that MSME entrepreneurs in Makassar City are mostly dominated by entrepreneurs over 41 years of age with 74 people, while the rest are under 40 years of age with 26 people. The number of entrepreneurs over the age of 41 shows more mature business experience, but the results also show low regeneration among small entrepreneurs. The output of Structural Equation Modeling and Confirmatory Factor Analysis on the manifest variables relates to all variable indicators that aim to measure the level of significance of the relationship between variables. Based on the Confirmatory Factor Analysis test, the manifestation variable significantly influences the latent variables in this model.

Table 2. CFA Results

Latent variable	Manifest variable	SLF	t-value
Entrepreneurial orientation	Autonomy (X1.1)	0,698	**
	Aggressive competition (X1.2)	0,820	11,342
	Take a risk (X1.3)	0,919	12,132
	Innovative (X1.4)	0,700	9,800
Business independence	Not easy to give up (Y1.1)	0,702	9,811
	Dare to take a decision (Y1.2)	0,818	11,326
	Dare to compete (Y1.3)	0,918	11,987
	Accept a competitor's advantage (Y1.4)	0,697	**
MSME performance	Annual sales (Y2.1)	0,704	12,185
	Earnings per year (Y2.2)	0,818	11,557
	Net assets (Y2.3)	0,915	9,949
	Total employees (Y2.4)	0,708	**

Note: ** significant at 0,05 level

Table 2 shows all indicators of entrepreneurial orientation that are significantly related and represent the construct of entrepreneurial orientation in the research model. The reliability test for all of these indicators resulted in a loading factor (> 0.60) and t-value (> 1.960). Furthermore, all indicators have been tested on the validity test of the business independence variable, meeting the loading factor requirements (> 0.60) thus all indicators from the business independence construct have met the t-value requirements (> 1.96). The indicators have been tested in the validity test of the MSME performance variable, which has met the loading factor requirement (> 0.60), thus the MSME performance construct has fulfilled the t-value requirement (> 1.96). Next, the results of the structural equation model analysis are presented as follows.

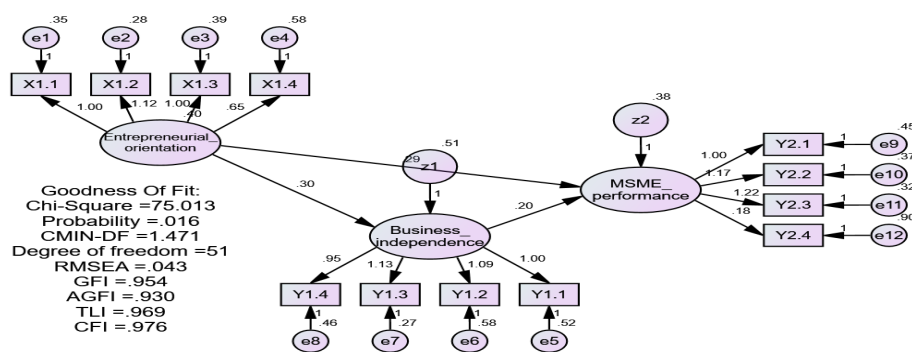


Figure 1. Results of SEM

Table 2. Direct and Indirect Effects

		Direct Effects			
Variable	Variable	Estimate	S.E	Critical Ratio	P-value
Entrepreneurial orientation	→ Business independence	0,298	0,090	3,315	0,000
Business independence	→ MSME performance	0,292	0,085	3,432	0,000
Entrepreneurial orientation	→ MSME performance	0,196	0,070	2,793	0,005
Indirect Effects (Sobel Test)					
Entrepreneurial orientation	→ Business independence → MSME performance				0,042

Table 3. Goodness of Fit Model

Goodness of fit index	Cut off value	Estimate	Decision
X2 Chi-Square	68,669	75,013	Marginal
CMIN/DF	≤ 2.00	1,471	Fit
Probability	≥ 0.05	0,016	Marginal
RMSEA	≤ 0.08	0,043	Fit
GFI	≥ 0.90	0,954	Fit
AGFI	≥ 0.90	0,930	Fit
TLI	≥ 0.95	0,969	Fit
CFI	≥ 0.95	0,976	Fit

The results of the SEM analysis shown in Figure 1, Table 2, and 3 show that H1 proposes a positive influence between entrepreneurial orientation on MSME performance. The statistical results show that the critical ratio is $2.793 > 1.960$ and the probability value is $0.005 < 0.050$ which indicates a positive and significant effect. H2 proposes a positive influence between business independence on MSME performance. Statistical results show that the critical ratio value is $3.432 > 1.960$ and the probability value is $0.000 < 0.050$ which indicates a positive and significant effect. H3 proposes a positive influence between entrepreneurial orientation on MSME performance through business independence. The results of the Sobel test show that the statistical test value is $2.031 > 1.960$ and the probability value is $0.042 < 0.050$ which indicates a positive and significant indirect effect. Overall shows that all hypotheses can be accepted.

The results of this research show that the MSME performance model is based on the interaction between entrepreneurial orientation as an independent variable and business independence as a mediating variable. This finding is supported by D'Angelo & Presutti, (2019) that entrepreneurial orientation contributes to MSME performance through business independence. Previous research such as Pittino et al., (2017); Genc et al., (2019); and Sabahi & Parast, (2020) further strengthen the empirical fact that entrepreneurial orientation has a strong influence on the performance of MSMEs. Likewise the findings of Ataei et al., (2020); Perrigot et al., (2015); (Putra & Cho, 2019); and Ayrancı & Ayrancı (2015) who stated that business independence plays an important role in improving the performance of MSMEs. Psychological factors that support the performance of MSMEs in Makassar City are business independence and entrepreneurial orientation which are manifested through high enthusiasm, perseverance and perseverance in achieving business success, finding innovative techniques in developing business performance with honest principles. Business independence and entrepreneurial orientation possessed by business actors is a courageous attitude to take risks that have been carefully calculated beforehand. Responsibility is an integral part of the personality of MSME entrepreneurs, cultural factors of local wisdom that make them responsible for the business they manage.

Business independence and entrepreneurial orientation are formed from the experience they have since the business was started by the family, making it easier for them to manage the business. This is reflected in the timely completion of work and loyal loyal customers. Business actors already understand the needs and expectations of consumers for the products they want and understand the potential for a good market to market.

MSMEs have succeeded in adopting creativity and innovation in every business activity. The creative and innovative process starts with coming up with new ideas and thoughts to create something new and different. The current era of globalization requires business people to develop operational quality and efficiency. Efficiency is the key to business success. Business independence and entrepreneurial orientation are assumed as business phenomena. Business independence and entrepreneurial orientation play an important role in the MSME performance growth strategy.

Conclusions

There is a significant influence between entrepreneurial orientation on the performance of MSMEs directly or through the business independence variable. The courage to take risks has become an integral part of entrepreneurship because there is a demand to be brave and ready if the efforts made have not produced the results that are expected. Courage in taking risks accompanied by an attitude of full planning, having a vision, mission, hard work and courage to be responsible. Based on the findings of this study, further research is needed regarding the performance of SMEs to explore other variables. The study's results provide insight into the complex interplay between entrepreneurship orientation, business independence, and the performance of micro, small, and medium-sized firms (MSMEs) in Makassar City.

This study employed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis to investigate the direct and indirect impacts of entrepreneurial orientation on the performance of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The analysis explored both the independent effects of entrepreneurship orientation and the mediating role of business independence. The findings unambiguously confirm the premise that entrepreneurial approach has a beneficial impact on the performance of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs). commercial owners or managers that possess a pronounced entrepreneurial orientation demonstrate characteristics such as inventiveness, a predisposition for risk-taking, and proactive conduct, all of which play a crucial role in facilitating the achievement of commercial success. This observation highlights the significance of cultivating an entrepreneurial attitude among micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSME) entrepreneurs in order to improve their performance and competitiveness within the market.

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