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The Effects of Entrepreneurial Marketing on Business Performance through Competitive Advantage and Product Innovation

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Abstract

MSMEs play a crucial role in Indonesia's economy, with batik representing a culturally and economically significant sector that contributes to growth, employment, and regional industrial competitiveness. The objective of this study is to analyze the effect of entrepreneurial marketing on business performance, competitive advantage, and product innovation, as well as to examine the mediating roles of competitive advantage and product innovation. This research employs a quantitative approach using the SEM-PLS method. Data were collected through questionnaires. The results indicate that entrepreneurial marketing has a positive and significant effect on business performance, competitive advantage, and product innovation. However, both product innovation and competitive advantage do not have a significant effect on business performance. Furthermore, competitive advantage and product innovation are not proven to mediate the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing and business performance. These findings highlight that entrepreneurial marketing significantly improves MSME performance through direct effects, while its indirect effects via competitive advantage and innovation are not supported. This study suggests that innovation and competitive positioning alone are insufficient without strong market alignment, emphasizing the importance of customer-oriented and adaptive entrepreneurial marketing for sustainable growth.

Keywords

Business Performance, Competitive Advantage, Entrepreneurial Marketing, Product Innovation.

1. Introduction

Micro, Small, and Medium-Sized Enterprises (MSMEs) are essential to the Indonesian economy because they promote economic fairness and are major forces behind the country's economic growth, unemployment reduction, and poverty alleviation (Sinha et al., 2024). In March 2021, the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises reported that there were 64.2 million MSMEs, accounting for 61.07 percent of the GDP, or IDR 8,573.89 trillion. Furthermore, MSMEs account for 60.42 percent of all investments in Indonesia and employ 97 percent of the country's workers. The batik business, which has both cultural and commercial significance, is one sector that has made a substantial contribution to this rise.

Batik and Indonesia are inseparable entities, deeply embedded in the nation's identity (Al Mushowwiru & Fitria, 2019). On October 2, 2009, the United Nations recognized batik as a Masterpiece of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity through UNESCO. The Indonesian government declared October 2 to be National Batik Day by Presidential Decree Number 33 of 2009. Beyond its cultural significance, batik also represents a promising economic opportunity. Data from the Center for Crafts and Batik show that the number of batik industries in Indonesia has reached 2,951 units (Annur, 2022). In East Java, particularly on Madura Island, the batik industry continues to grow, driven by increasing competitiveness and market expansion.

Based on data from the Indonesian Batik Artisans and Entrepreneurs Association (*Asosiasi Perajin dan Pengusaha Batik Indonesia/APPBI*), Madura, particularly Pamekasan Regency, has been recognized as the largest traditional written batik market in Indonesia since 2019, highlighting its strong market potential. Despite this, batik MSMEs face increasing competition and dynamic market demands, requiring more adaptive strategies. Entrepreneurial marketing is considered a suitable approach, as it integrates entrepreneurial orientation with marketing practices and emphasizes proactiveness, innovativeness, opportunity recognition, and customer focus to enhance business performance (Collinson & Shaw, 2001; Krissanto, 2021).

Empirical evidence supports the importance of entrepreneurial marketing in improving MSME performance. Astuti et al. (2018) identified five typologies of marketers based on seven dimensions of marketing expertise. Similarly, Becherer et al. (2012) found that dimensions of entrepreneurial marketing, such as proactiveness, opportunity focus, leveraging, innovativeness, risk-taking, value creation, and customer intensity, are positively correlated with both quantitative and qualitative performance outcomes. In line with these findings, Hacıoglu et al. (2012) reported that dimensions such as proactiveness, innovativeness, customer intensity, and resource leveraging significantly influence innovative performance, although other dimensions, including opportunity focus, calculated risk, and value creation, do not show significant effects.

Entrepreneurial marketing is also closely associated with innovation and competitive advantage. Baron and Shane (2007) and Suardhika and Suryani (2016) argue that product innovation and organizational processes are key determinants of a firm's ability to survive in competitive and technologically dynamic environments, as well as primary sources of competitive advantage. Wahyono (2001) further explains that sustainable innovation is a fundamental requirement for achieving competitive advantage, as companies must continuously generate new ideas and develop innovative products to remain competitive.

Competitive advantage refers to a firm's ability to deliver superior value to customers compared to its competitors (Ghosh & John, 1999). It is not determined solely by organizational size or assets, but rather by the firm's ability to utilize

technology, knowledge, and experience to create and offer unique value to the market (Barney, 1991). In this context, entrepreneurial marketing provides a more flexible and dynamic approach than conventional marketing, which still relies on traditional techniques.

However, prior studies by Elgarhy and Abou-Shouk (2023) show inconsistent results on the relationships among entrepreneurial marketing, product innovation, competitive advantage, and business performance. While Krissanto (2021) reports significant effects, others find certain dimensions insignificant. Moreover, the role of product innovation in MSME performance remains unclear, and limited studies have examined the direct and indirect effects of entrepreneurial marketing through competitive advantage and product innovation, particularly in Batik MSMEs in Madura. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the effect of entrepreneurial marketing on business performance, as well as its influence on competitive advantage and product innovation, including their roles as mediating variables, in Batik MSMEs in Madura.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1. The Effect of Entrepreneurial Marketing

Marketing plays a crucial role in ensuring a company's survival and profitability by fulfilling customer needs and wants through value creation and exchange (Kotler, 2009; Kotler et al., 2012). Entrepreneurial marketing represents the integration of marketing and entrepreneurship, emphasizing innovation, proactiveness, risk management, and effective resource utilization to create customer value (Stokes, 2000; Morris et al., 2002). This approach enables MSMEs to adapt to market changes and develop differentiation through creative strategies. In a competitive environment, firms achieve competitive advantage by delivering superior value and customer satisfaction through quality products or services at competitive prices (Tjiptono, 1995). Empirical studies by Arfanly et al. (2016) and Al Mushowwiru and Fitria (2019) support this relationship, showing that entrepreneurial marketing significantly enhances MSME competitiveness and strengthens competitive advantage through innovative and adaptive strategies.

Entrepreneurial marketing emphasizes proactively identifying and exploiting opportunities through innovative approaches in risk management, resource utilization, and value creation (Morris et al., 2002). This concept is in line with product innovation, which is defined as an effort to modify or create a new product to increase value and provide a competitive advantage for the company. Through a strong entrepreneurial orientation, the company is encouraged to continuously develop products that are relevant to the needs of the dynamic market. Research by Al Mushowwir and Fitria (2019) shows that the implementation of entrepreneurial marketing encourages the development of new products and improves the performance of MSMEs. These findings are strengthened by Arfanly et al. (2016), who stated that creative and innovative marketing strategies are closely related to the company's ability to produce superior products and are different from competitors.

H1: Entrepreneurial marketing has a positive effect on competitive advantage.

H2: Entrepreneurial marketing has a positive effect on product innovation.

2.2. The Effect on Business Performance

Entrepreneurial marketing plays an important role in helping companies gain a competitive advantage through innovative, proactive, and customer-oriented marketing strategies (Stokes, 2000; Morris et al., 2002). Business performance itself is a measure of marketing success, which is reflected in increasing sales value, sales

growth, and market share control (Permadi, 1998). With an adaptive and creative marketing approach, the company is able to respond effectively to market changes and improve overall business performance.

Arfanly et al. (2016) found that entrepreneurial marketing improves the marketing performance of the home industry through innovation and creative marketing strategies. The results of research by Al Mushowwir and Fitria (2019) also show that entrepreneurial marketing has a significant effect on the performance of MSMEs in Garut skin centers, which is shown through increased sales and customer satisfaction. Competitive advantage refers to a firm's ability to create superior value through product quality, competitive pricing, excellent service, and effective marketing strategies (Darmawan & Grenier, 2021). In the context of entrepreneurial marketing, it is achieved through proactive opportunity exploitation, innovative resource management, and meaningful differentiation (Hidayatullah et al., 2019). Empirical evidence by Amin et al. (2016) shows that competitive advantage significantly improves business performance, reflected in increased revenue, profit, market share, and customer satisfaction.

Sarkar et al. (2024) define product innovation as a firm's effort to create or modify products to add value and gain a competitive advantage. This is consistent with Morris et al. (2002), who emphasize that entrepreneurial marketing focuses on innovative opportunity exploitation, particularly in product development. Furthermore, studies by Dhamera et al. (2021), Sari et al. (2023), and Mutianto and Hidayati (2024) show that product innovation significantly improves business performance through enhanced competitiveness, market share, and customer satisfaction, leading to higher growth and profitability.

H3: Entrepreneurial marketing has a positive effect on business performance.

H4: Competitive advantage has a positive business performance.

H5: Product innovation has a positive effect on business performance.

2.3. Competitive Advantage and Product Innovation as a Mediating Variable

Entrepreneurial marketing integrates innovation, proactivity, and risk-taking into marketing strategies to create value and exploit market opportunities, while competitive advantage reflects a firm's ability to deliver superior value, and business performance indicates success in terms of growth and profitability (Stokes, 2000; Morris et al., 2002; Tjiptono, 2008). Entrepreneurial marketing creates a competitive advantage by increasing responsiveness and differentiation, which in turn boosts corporate performance. Empirical evidence by Amin et al. (2016), Arfanly et al. (2016), and Al-Lawati (2017) supports that it significantly influences competitive advantage, and competitive advantage positively affects business performance, indicating its mediating role in the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing and business performance.

Entrepreneurial marketing is an entrepreneurship-based marketing strategy that emphasizes innovation, opportunity exploitation, and creative use of resources (Morris et al., 2002). Product innovation is the capacity of a business to develop or alter goods to make them more valuable and distinctive in the marketplace. The performance of the business itself is shown through increased revenue, market growth, and operational effectiveness.

Entrepreneurial marketing encourages companies to continue to innovate products to be able to meet the needs of a dynamic market. Research by Purba (2018), Dhamera et al. (2021), and Aftab et al. (2021) shows that product innovation contributes significantly to improving business performance. Therefore, product innovation serves as a mediator that explains how entrepreneurial marketing can enhance business performance by producing more competitive and valued products.

H6: Competitive advantage mediates the effect of entrepreneurial marketing on business performance.

H7: Product innovation mediates the effect of entrepreneurial marketing on business performance.

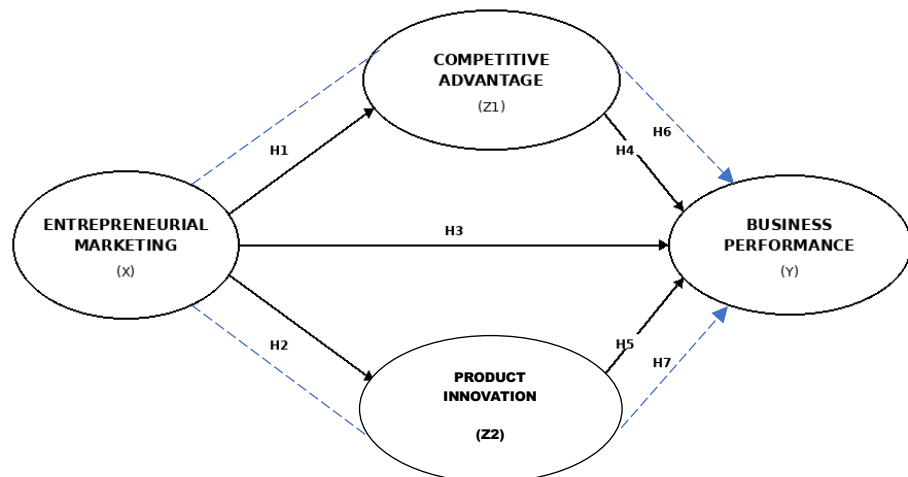


Figure 1. Research Framework

The study's conceptual framework is shown in Figure 1, where entrepreneurial marketing promotes competitive advantage and product innovation, which may mitigate its impact, in addition to having a direct impact on business performance. According to the concept, the primary factor influencing success is entrepreneurial marketing, which may be strengthened by product innovation and competitive advantage.

3. Methods

This study was conducted on batik MSMEs located in the Madura region, which includes Bangkalan, Sampang, Pamekasan, and Sumenep. This area was selected because batik MSMEs in Madura have unique characteristics and have demonstrated strong potential, including recognition at the international level. The unit of analysis in this research is the owner or manager of batik MSMEs, as they are directly involved in managing business activities and decision-making.

The study's population comprises all of Madura's batik MSMEs. A purposive sample was the method employed, with the requirement that respondents be active batik MSME actors. The guideline, which recommends employing a minimum of five to ten times the number of indicators, was used to estimate the sample size. A minimum sample size of 115 respondents. Consequently, 115 respondents were included in this study, which is deemed adequate to represent the population and satisfies the minimum criteria.

This study uses an explanatory design and a quantitative technique to investigate the correlations between variables and test the hypotheses put forth. The explanatory design was chosen because it enables the researcher to examine causal relationships among variables and provide a clear understanding of how independent variables influence the dependent variable. Structured questionnaires were used to gather primary data from batik MSME actors in Madura (Ferdinand, 2006). Furthermore, secondary data on entrepreneurial marketing, competitive advantage, product innovation, and business performance were gathered from pertinent sources, including books, scholarly journals, and other publications.

The variables in this study are measured using several relevant indicators that reflect each construct. Entrepreneurial marketing is represented by dimensions such

as proactiveness, opportunity focus, customer intensity, innovation, risk management, resource utilization, and value creation, which describe how firms actively identify and exploit market opportunities. Business performance is measured through indicators including increased sales, customer growth, and product success, reflecting the overall achievement of the business. Competitive advantage is captured through competitive pricing, market coverage, timely product delivery and service, and product uniqueness, indicating the firm’s ability to outperform competitors. Meanwhile, product innovation is measured through product quality and innovation, which show the firm’s capability to develop and improve products to meet market demands.

A Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) is used in the study tool. 23 questionnaire items were created once all study variables were converted into quantifiable indicators. The Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach was used to analyze the data. The measuring model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model) are the two primary steps in the evaluation process. Validity and reliability, including composite reliability, Cronbach’s alpha, convergent validity, and discriminant validity, are evaluated using the outer model. In the meantime, the coefficient of determination and the significance of the path coefficients are examined in order to analyze the relationships between variables using the inner model. To ascertain if competitive advantage and product innovation serve as mediating factors in the connection between entrepreneurial marketing and business performance, mediation analysis was also carried out.

4. Results

The findings of the data analysis done to look at the connections between the research variables, such as entrepreneurial marketing, competitive advantage, product innovation, and business performance, are presented in this section. The measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model) are both evaluated as part of the Partial Least Squares (PLS) approach. The findings are given in a methodical manner, beginning with the validity and reliability assessment and continuing with the structural model evaluation, which includes mediation analysis and hypothesis testing.

Table 1. Validity & Reliability Test

Variable	Item	Loading Factor	Cronbach Alpha	Rho-a	AVE	Remarks
Entrepreneur Marketing	X1.1	0.700	0.503	0.898	0.503	Valid & Reliable
	X1.2	0.609				
	X1.3	0.674				
	X1.4	0.624				
	X1.5	0.733				
	X1.6	0.711				
	X1.7	0.757				
	X1.8	0.701				
	X1.9	0.771				
	X1.10	0.788				
Business Performance	Y1.1	0.863	0.681	0.778	0.681	Valid & Reliable
	Y1.2	0.858				
	Y1.3	0.749				
Competitive Advantage	Z1.1	0.640	0.632	0.815	0.632	Valid & Reliable
	Z1.2	0.870				
	Z1.3	0.811				
	Z1.4	0.839				
Product Innovation	Z2.1	0.876	0.783	0.726	0.783	Valid & Reliable
	Z2.2	0.894				

According to Table 1, every indicator of the variables entrepreneurial marketing, business success, competitive advantage, and product innovation has loading values more than 0.50, indicating that they meet the criteria for convergent validity. This indicates that no indicators need to be eliminated from the model because they are all legitimate and accurately reflect the corresponding structures. Each construct's Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values surpass the 0.50 threshold; entrepreneurial marketing, business performance, competitive advantage, and product innovation all meet the necessary criteria, demonstrating the constructs' strong convergent validity.

In addition to validity testing, reliability testing was conducted to determine the internal consistency of the evaluation instrument using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. The findings demonstrate that all variables have reliability values more than 0.70, demonstrating the constructs' consistency and dependability in measuring the desired variables. As a result, the measurement model is deemed appropriate for additional study since both validity and reliability requirements have been met.

Table 2. R-Squared Value

Variable	R Square	Adjusted R-Square
Business Performance	0.715	0.707
Competitive Advantage	0.599	0.596
Product Innovation	0.581	0.577

Table 2 shows that the R-square value for business performance is 0.715, meaning that product innovation, competitive advantage, and entrepreneurial marketing account for 71.5% of its variation, with other factors outside the model influencing the remaining 28.5%. Competitive advantage's R-square value is 0.599, which indicates that the variables in the model account for 59.9% of its variation, with other factors influencing the remaining portion. Similarly, the R-square value for product innovation is 0.581, indicating that the model can account for 58.1% of its variation, with the remaining portion being controlled by factors not covered in this study.

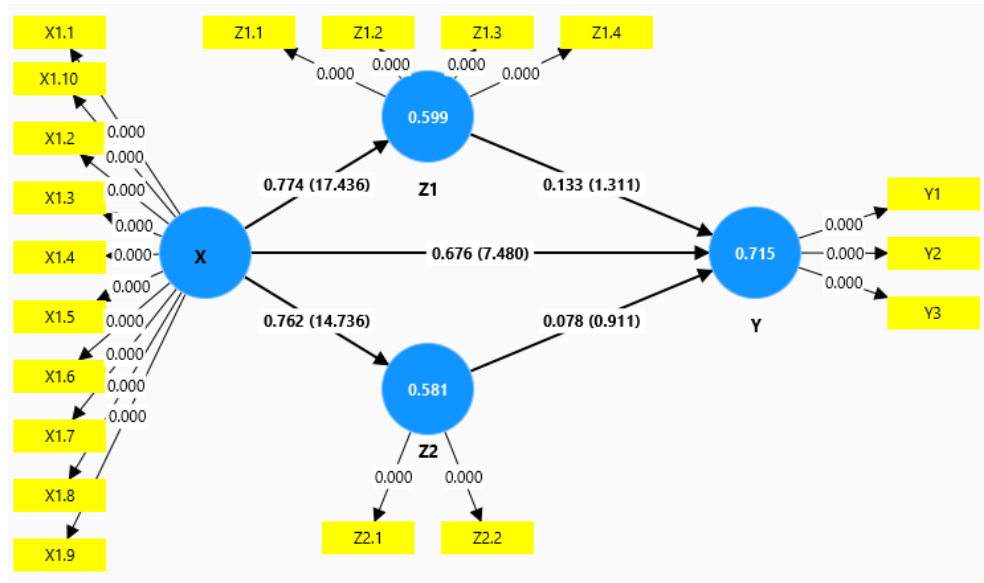


Figure 2. Structural Model Test

The findings of this study's structural model testing are shown in Figure 2. To ascertain the significance of the correlations between variables, hypothesis testing

was performed using the path coefficient values. Each path's importance was assessed using the associated t-statistic and p-value. For a two-tailed hypothesis, the t-statistic must be greater than 1.96, and for a one-tailed hypothesis, it must be greater than 1.64. The p-value must be less than 0.05. Using the particular indirect effect technique in SmartPLS 4.0, mediation effects were investigated, and the robustness of the indirect paths was evaluated using the bootstrapping method. These findings offer a thorough summary of the direct and indirect connections between product innovation, business success, competitive advantage, and entrepreneurial marketing.

Table 3. Direct Effect

Relationship	Path Coefficient	t-statistic	p-value	Result
Entrepreneurial Marketing → Business Performance	0.676	7.480	0.001	Supported
Entrepreneurial Marketing → Competitive Advantage	0.774	17.436	0.015	Supported
Entrepreneurial Marketing → Product Innovation	0.762	14.736	0.013	Supported
Competitive Advantage → Business Performance	0.133	1.331	0.190	Not Supported
Product Innovation → Business Performance	0.078	0.911	0.362	Not Supported

The results of the direct effects between the research variables are shown in Table 3, providing a thorough understanding of the relationship between product innovation, competitive advantage, and entrepreneurial marketing and business performance. The results show that all three outcome variables, business performance, competitive advantage, and product innovation, are positively and statistically significantly impacted by entrepreneurial marketing. This implies that firms that actively apply entrepreneurial marketing principles, such as being proactive in pursuing market opportunities, taking calculated risks, fostering customer-centric innovation, and leveraging internal resources, tend to perform better overall. These firms are likely to develop stronger competitive positioning within their industry and demonstrate higher levels of product innovation.

In contrast, the direct effects of competitive advantage and product innovation on business performance, while positive, are not statistically significant in this study. This suggests that, although having a competitive edge or introducing innovative products may be beneficial, these factors alone do not substantially drive business performance unless accompanied by strong entrepreneurial marketing practices. Therefore, entrepreneurial marketing appears to play a more crucial and immediate role in enhancing firm outcomes, while competitive advantage and product innovation may act as supportive elements whose impact is more indirect or contingent on other strategic initiatives.

Table 4. Indirect Effect

Relationship	Path Coefficient	t-statistic	p-value	Result
Entrepreneurial Marketing → Competitive Advantage → Business Performance	0.059	0.829	0.373	Not Supported
Entrepreneurial Marketing → Product Innovation → Business Performance	0.103	1.290	0.197	Not Supported

The results of the indirect effects, which investigate whether product innovation and competitive advantage moderate the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing and firm performance, are shown in Table 4. The results indicate that the indirect effect of entrepreneurial marketing through product innovation is 0.103, with a t-statistic of 1.290 and a p-value of 0.197, whereas the indirect effect through competitive advantage is 0.059, with a t-statistic of 0.829 and a p-value of 0.373. Neither pathway is statistically significant because both p-values are higher than the traditional significance threshold of 0.05.

Although the path coefficients are positive, suggesting a trend in the expected direction, the results imply that these variables do not significantly transmit the effect of entrepreneurial marketing on business performance. This indicates that the impact of entrepreneurial marketing occurs primarily through direct mechanisms, rather than indirectly through competitive advantage or product innovation. In essence, while competitive positioning and product innovation may enhance overall strategic capabilities, their role in mediating the effect of entrepreneurial marketing on firm performance is limited in this study's context, highlighting the predominant importance of direct entrepreneurial marketing practices in driving measurable business outcomes.

5. Discussion

The study's findings suggest that entrepreneurial marketing has a significant and favorable impact on product innovation and competitive advantage, both of which enhance company success. Businesses that actively use entrepreneurial marketing strategies that prioritize creativity, initiative, risk-taking, and adaptability to market shifts typically improve their competitive posture and produce more inventive goods. These findings support the theoretical foundations of entrepreneurial marketing, which posit that integrating marketing with entrepreneurial behaviors can serve as a source of sustainable competitive advantage. Prior research has similarly emphasized the benefits of entrepreneurial marketing on firm performance. For instance, Gunawan (2021), Syahputra (2023), and Kurniawati et al. (2023) highlight that proactive strategies, innovation initiatives, and market adaptation significantly enhance business outcomes, particularly within MSMEs. Al Mushowwir and Fitria (2019) and Lestari and Widagdo (2021) further support the notion that entrepreneurial marketing fosters competitive advantage by encouraging firms to continuously innovate and respond to market dynamics.

Despite these positive effects, the study found that neither competitive advantage nor product innovation alone has a significant direct impact on business performance. This suggests that while these factors are valuable for shaping strategic positioning and introducing new products, they do not automatically translate into improved performance outcomes. These results align with findings by Aftab et al. (2021), who observed that competitive advantage may not directly drive performance, and that organizational results often depend on a combination of internal management practices, resource availability, and contextual factors. Similarly, product innovation does not guarantee performance improvements unless innovations are aligned with market needs and effectively implemented, as noted by Diniastri (2018) and Lestari and Widagdo (2021). These observations underscore the complexity of translating strategic capabilities and innovative efforts into measurable business results, highlighting the importance of integrating marketing initiatives with broader organizational strategies.

In examining the mediating roles of competitive advantage and product innovation, the study found that neither variable significantly mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial marketing and business performance. Although entrepreneurial marketing drives both competitive advantage and innovation, these pathways do not meaningfully transmit their impact to

performance outcomes. This indicates that the influence of entrepreneurial marketing is largely direct, emphasizing that firms' market-oriented, innovative, and proactive strategies themselves are the primary drivers of performance improvements. These findings resonate with Amin et al. (2016) and Al-Lawati (2017), who argue that the mediating effects of competitive advantage or innovation may not always be significant, depending on industry context, resource readiness, and the implementation of strategies. Some studies, such as Pertiwi and Siswoyo (2016), have found significant mediation effects, highlighting that the efficacy of indirect pathways may vary across sectors and firm conditions.

The study demonstrates that entrepreneurial marketing is a critical determinant of firm success, with its direct effects on performance outweighing indirect mechanisms through competitive advantage and product innovation. While competitive positioning and innovation remain important for strategic development, their influence on performance is contingent upon the effectiveness of entrepreneurial marketing practices and the alignment of innovations with market and organizational needs. These results reinforce the importance of adopting a proactive, innovative, and customer-focused marketing approach to drive sustainable business growth.

6. Conclusion

This study confirms that entrepreneurial marketing has a positive and significant impact on the business performance of Madura Batik MSMEs. Strategies that are innovative, proactive, and responsive to market needs play a key role in enhancing firm performance. In contrast, competitive advantage and product innovation were not found to significantly influence business performance, either directly or indirectly, indicating that these factors alone are insufficient without effective management and alignment with consumer demands.

The findings have important practical implications. Madura batik MSMEs should prioritize entrepreneurial marketing by fostering innovation, anticipating market trends, and responding quickly to consumer preferences. Strengthening managerial skills and integrating marketing with operational strategies can enhance the effectiveness of innovation and competitive initiatives. Policymakers and stakeholders can support MSMEs through programs that facilitate marketing, resource access, and skill development, creating an environment that enables firms to fully leverage entrepreneurial marketing.

This study has several limitations. It is cross-sectional, limiting the ability to capture long-term or causal effects. The focus on Madura batik SMEs may also restrict generalizability to other industries or regions, and external factors such as policy support or market dynamics were not deeply explored. Future research is recommended to adopt longitudinal designs, include MSMEs from diverse industries, and examine the role of external environmental factors in shaping the impact of entrepreneurial marketing. Such studies would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how entrepreneurial marketing, innovation, and competitive strategies collectively influence business performance, offering valuable insights for both scholars and practitioners.

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Data Disclosure Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.



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