Journal of Innovative and Creativity
Journal Homepage: https://joecy.org/index.php/joecy
e-mail: journaljoecy@gmail.com

Faculty of Education
University of Pahlawan Tuanku Tambusai
ISSN 2775-771X (Online)
ISSN 2962-570X **(Printed)**
5 (2) 2025, Page: 3623-3633

The Influence of Entrepreneurial Characteristics and Product Innovation on Business Performance in Culinary SMEs in Bandar Lampung

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Published: May , 2021

Abstract

This study aims to examine the influence of entrepreneurial characteristics and product innovation on business performance in culinary MSMEs in Bandar Lampung. Culinary MSMEs are a sector that continues to grow and is a major driver of economic growth. However, the performance of a business is not only determined by external factors, but is also greatly influenced by the characteristics of business actors and their ability to innovate products. This study uses a quantitative approach with a questionnaire distribution method analyzed using SPSS with the object of research being the owners of MSMEs in the culinary sector in Bandar Lampung. The source of research data is primary data, data collection is carried out by distributing questionnaires distributed to 120 owners of MSMEs in the culinary sector in Bandar Lampung, the sampling technique used in this study is Convenience sampling. Data collection used The analysis technique used is simple linear regression to determine how much influence each independent variable, namely entrepreneurial characteristics and product innovation, separately has on the dependent variable, namely business performance. The results of the study show that entrepreneurial characteristics partially have a significant effect on business performance. Then the product innovation variable partially has a significant effect on business performance.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial Characteristics, Product Innovation, and Business Performance

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INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship involves the proactive pursuit of opportunities without being limited by current resources, aimed at developing goods and services in the future. Entrepreneurs typically exhibit innovation, risk-taking, and forward-thinking, making entrepreneurial characteristics critical to individual and business success (Barringer & Ireland, 2016). Micro, small, and medium enterprises (SMEs), particularly in the culinary sector, play a vital role in Indonesia's economic development. These enterprises include street vendors, cafes, catering services, and snack producers offering diverse food and beverage products tailored to consumer preferences. As food is a primary human need, the culinary sector holds considerable potential despite requiring relatively small capital to initiate operations. Product uniqueness, quality ingredients, and excellent service are key to capturing consumer interest and ensuring loyalty (Rifda, 2024).

Culinary SMEs in Bandar Lampung have experienced growth, supported by increased creativity and innovation in responding to market demands. Many SMEs utilize digital platforms such as Instagram and Facebook to promote products, thereby improving visibility and consumer engagement (Anisa, 2023). However, they face intense competition from similar businesses, ranging from modern restaurants to street food stalls (Yuliani et al., 2024). To remain competitive, SMEs must differentiate themselves through innovation and distinctive entrepreneurial characteristics. Product innovation provides added value, while entrepreneurial traits such as perseverance, creativity, and adaptability help business owners navigate challenges and seize new opportunities (St. Rukaiyah & Bidol, 2024).

Entrepreneurial characteristics encompass individual, social, and environmental dimensions. These include personal attributes like self-confidence and risk tolerance, social influences such as family background, and external conditions including market opportunities and government support (Hsieh et al., 2019). According to Che Embi et al. (2019), six key traits—internal locus of control, need for achievement, risk-taking, innovativeness, self-confidence, and tolerance for ambiguity—can shape an individual's intention to pursue entrepreneurship.

In addition to entrepreneurial traits, product innovation is crucial for enhancing SME performance. Innovation involves developing new products or improving existing ones to meet changing consumer preferences (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). For SMEs, product innovation is essential not only for differentiation but also for survival in increasingly competitive markets (Sutapa et al., 2017). Innovative practices such as introducing health-conscious menu items, sustainable packaging, or integrating local ingredients can improve customer satisfaction and brand loyalty (Kraus et al., 2021). Empirical data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs show that in 2023, Lampung Province had over 490,000 SMEs (Diskominfotik, 2024). Nationally, SMEs represent 99% of business units and absorb more than 90% of the labor force, contributing significantly to economic growth (Yulita et al., 2021). Given this substantial contribution, improving the performance of SMEs—measured through profitability, customer satisfaction, and market growth—is a strategic priority.

Business performance reflects a company's ability to achieve its goals, particularly profit generation and market expansion. Performance is influenced by how well entrepreneurs utilize resources, apply innovations, and respond to market trends (Exposito & Sanchis-Llopis, 2018). Innovation is especially critical for maintaining competitiveness, as it can drive operational efficiency and increase consumer value (Al-Ansari et al., 2013). Despite widespread acknowledgment of the importance of innovation and entrepreneurship, empirical findings remain inconsistent. Some studies report positive impacts on growth and competitiveness, while others suggest innovation may introduce operational risks, especially in small-scale businesses (Fiorentino et al., 2020; Olivari, 2016). These disparities suggest a research gap in understanding the conditions under which entrepreneurial

characteristics and innovation enhance SME performance. Thus, this study aims to examine the influence of entrepreneurial characteristics and product innovation on the business performance of culinary SMEs in Bandar Lampung. The research seeks to address existing gaps and offer insights for enhancing competitiveness and sustainability in the SME sector.

METHOD

Research Design

A research design is a structured and systematic process of investigating a particular issue with the goal of finding solutions or answers based on reliable, objective, and critical data (Ferdinand, 2014). This study adopts a quantitative approach, which involves examining the relationship between variables through numerical measurements and statistical analysis to determine the validity of theoretical predictions (Creswell, 2014). Specifically, this research seeks to assess how entrepreneurial characteristics and product innovation influence the business performance of culinary MSMEs in Bandar Lampung using quantitative data collected via questionnaires as the primary research instrument.

Sampling Design

The population in this study consists of culinary MSME owners in Bandar Lampung who operate food and beverage businesses. Due to the lack of comprehensive data, the total population size is unknown, necessitating the use of sampling techniques to obtain a representative subset (Ferdinand, 2014). A non-probability sampling method, specifically convenience sampling, was employed, as it allows researchers to select participants based on accessibility and willingness to participate (Hair Jr. et al., 2019; Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). This approach is effective for reaching active culinary MSME owners. Based on the number of questionnaire indicators, 120 respondents were included (Hair Jr. et al., 2019).

Types and Sources of Data

This study employs primary data, which are collected directly from original sources, namely the research participants (Sugiyono, 2017). The data are gathered using a structured questionnaire distributed to culinary MSME owners in Bandar Lampung who sell food and beverages. The questionnaire is designed to capture responses on entrepreneurial characteristics, product innovation, and business performance. Primary data were chosen for their ability to provide real-time, context-specific insights, enabling the researcher to directly access the experiences and perceptions of business owners in managing and developing their culinary enterprises.

Operational Definition of Variables and Measurement

The operational definition in this study provides clarity on how each variable is conceptualized and measured. The first independent variable, entrepreneurial characteristics (X1), refers to specific personality traits or behavioral patterns inherent in business owners that influence how they manage

their enterprises to achieve desired goals. This variable is measured using five indicators: risk-taking propensity, locus of control, need for achievement, self-confidence, and tolerance for ambiguity. Each indicator is assessed using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree), allowing for quantifiable evaluation of respondent perceptions (Anwar & Saleem, 2019).

The second independent variable is product innovation (X2), defined as the efforts of business actors in the manufacturing sector to improve, enhance, and develop products to achieve superior quality. The indicators used to measure this variable include product trend alignment, product quality, uniqueness of product features, and functional utility. Meanwhile, the dependent variable is business performance (Y), representing the level of success achieved through business activities that generate profit. Business performance is assessed using indicators such as sales volume, business growth, and profitability. Both variables X2 and Y are also measured using the same five-point Likert scale (Christa & Kristinae, 2021).

Data Testing and Hypothesis Testing

The research instrument used in this study is a questionnaire adapted from previous studies to suit the research context. Some adjustments were made, including a reduction in the number of statements to minimize respondent fatigue while maintaining measurement validity. The entrepreneurial characteristics questionnaire (X1) was adapted from Anwar and Saleem (2019) and consists of 7 items. The product innovation questionnaire (X2) includes 6 items, adapted from Christa and Kristinae (2021). Similarly, the business performance questionnaire (Y) contains 7 items and was also adapted from Christa and Kristinae (2021). All instruments were measured using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly agree) to 5 (strongly disagree).

Instrument testing includes validity and reliability tests. Validity testing assesses the extent to which a measuring instrument accurately captures the intended construct. A questionnaire is considered valid when the items reflect the concepts they are meant to measure objectively. According to Ghozali (2016), an item is valid if the significance value is less than 0.05. Meanwhile, reliability testing determines the consistency of the instrument. A questionnaire is deemed reliable if it yields stable and consistent results over time. Based on Ghozali (2016) and Taherdoost (2018), an instrument is considered reliable when the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient exceeds 0.60.

For data testing, normality tests and descriptive statistical analysis were employed. The normality test, specifically the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method using SPSS, determines whether the data follow a normal distribution, which is a key assumption in many statistical analyses (Hair Jr. et al., 2019). If the p-value exceeds 0.05, the data are considered normally distributed; otherwise, they are not (Yazici & Yolacan, 2007). Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data through means, medians, and standard deviations, as well as graphical tools such as histograms and boxplots, to identify patterns or outliers (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013; Hair Jr. et al., 2019). Hypothesis testing was

conducted using simple linear regression and t-tests to evaluate the significance of the relationship between independent and dependent variables (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013; Ghozali, 2016).

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Characteristics

The respondents in this study comprised owners of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) operating in the culinary sector, specifically in food and beverage businesses. Data collection was conducted online using a Google Form, which was distributed from December 13, 2024, to February 4, 2025. A total of 120 questionnaires were collected, all of which were deemed valid and suitable for further analysis, resulting in a 100% response rate.

Table 1. Respondent Demographics

No	Demographics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Gender	Male	71	59.2%
		Female	49	40.8%
2	Age	15–20 years	9	7.25%
		21–30 years	52	43.3%
		31–40 years	34	28.3%
		41–50 years	18	15%
		51–60 years	7	5.8%
3	Business Type	Food	81	67.5%
		Beverage	39	32.5%
4	Length of Operation	Less than 1 year	13	10.8%
		1–2 years	16	13.3%
		2–3 years	33	27.5%
		3–4 years	19	15.8%
		4–5 years	16	13.3%
		More than 5 years	23	19.2%

The demographic profile of the 120 respondents is summarized in Table 1. The majority of participants were male, representing 59.2% of the total sample. The largest age group consisted of individuals aged 21–30 years, accounting for 43.3% of respondents. In terms of business type, most respondents were engaged in food-related ventures, comprising 67.5%, while 32.5% operated beverage-based businesses. Regarding the length of business operation, the highest proportion of respondents (27.5%) had been in business for 2–3 years. These findings suggest that the sample predominantly consisted of young, male culinary entrepreneurs with a primary focus on food products and relatively early-stage business experience, providing a relevant foundation for analyzing the influence of entrepreneurial characteristics and product innovation on business performance.

Validity, Reliability, and Normality Test

The validity test was conducted using the loading factor method with a minimum value of 0.5 (Ghozali, 2016). Items with loading factors below this threshold were excluded from the analysis. For

the entrepreneurial characteristics variable, the valid items were 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6. In the product innovation variable, the valid items were 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Finally, for the business performance variable, the valid items included 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7.

Table 2. Validity Result

No	Item	Loading Factor	Conclusion
1.	X1.2	0,543	Valid
2.	X1.3	0,744	Valid
3.	X1.4	0,741	Valid
4.	X1.5	0,538	Valid
5.	X1.6	0,598	Valid
6.	X1.7	0,532	Valid
7.	X2.1	0,789	Valid
8.	X2.2	0,639	Valid
9.	X2.3	0,582	Valid
10.	X2.4	0,717	Valid
11.	X2.5	0,540	Valid
12.	Y1.1	0,623	Valid
13.	Y1.2	0,598	Valid
14.	Y1.3	0,706	Valid
15.	Y1.4	0,724	Valid
16.	Y1.5	0,501	Valid
17.	Y1.6	0,662	Valid
18.	Y1.7	0,551	Valid

Following the validity test, a reliability test was conducted on the valid items. The reliability was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha with a minimum value of 0.60 (Taherdoost, 2018). The reliability results showed that the Cronbach's Alpha for the entrepreneurial characteristics variable was 0.735, for product innovation was 0.633, and for business performance was 0.792. These values indicate that all variables had acceptable reliability, as shown in Table 3.

Table 3. Reliability Test

No.	Variable	**Cronbach's Alpha**
1.	Entrepreneurial Characteristics	0.735
2.	Product Innovation	0.633
3.	Business Performance	0.792

A normality test was performed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov method to determine whether the data followed a normal distribution. The significance value or p-value should be greater than 0.05 for normal distribution (Hair Jr. et al., 2019). The normality test results revealed that the data did not follow a normal distribution, with a significance value of < 0.001. This non-normality could be attributed to the presence of outliers and extreme values in the dataset, as well as the relatively small sample size, which may not fully represent the population.

Description of Respondent Statements

In the **entrepreneurial characteristics** variable, respondents expressed high agreement with statements related to their traits. For example, the mean response for risk-taking tendencies was 4.30, while the belief that success depends on their own abilities (locus of control) had a mean of 4.40. The need for achievement scored 4.47, indicating a strong motivation for improvement. Respondents also showed confidence in achieving their goals, with a mean of 4.23 for the statement on self-efficacy. In terms of ambiguity tolerance, the statement "almost every problem has a solution" received a mean of 4.46. For the **product innovation** variable, respondents generally agreed with the innovation in their businesses. The statement on product trends, showing that products follow the latest market trends, had a mean of 4.23. Respondents also affirmed their active pursuit of product innovation (mean 4.29) and the high quality of their products, with a mean of 4.42 for product quality. In the **business performance** category, respondents were confident about their sales and growth. For instance, the statement regarding achieving sales targets had a mean of 4.10, and belief in consistent sales growth had a mean of 4.32. The average scores for growth strategies and profitability were also high, indicating positive perceptions about their business performance.

Descriptive Statistical Analysis

The results of the descriptive statistical analysis are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	1	2	3
X1	30.41	3.216			
X2	26.05	2.394	0.601**		
Y	29.95	3.112	0.539**	0.703**	

Note: **p<0.01; *p<0.05

Based on Table 4, The results of the descriptive statistical analysis, presented in Table 4, reveal key insights into the variables studied. The Entrepreneurial Characteristics (X1) had a mean score of 30.41 with a standard deviation of 3.216, indicating moderate variation among respondents' entrepreneurial traits. Product Innovation (X2) had a mean of 26.05 and a standard deviation of 2.394, suggesting active involvement in product innovation with relatively less variation. Business Performance (Y) showed a mean of 29.95 and a standard deviation of 3.112, reflecting respondents' confidence in their business performance with moderate variability in responses. Additionally, the significant correlations between these variables, as indicated by the p-value thresholds, show strong positive relationships, suggesting that entrepreneurial characteristics and product innovation positively influence business performance.

Hypothesis Test

The hypothesis testing was conducted using simple regression analysis, and the results are presented in Table 5. The analysis shows that both **Entrepreneurial Characteristics (X1)** and **Product Innovation (X2)** have a significant positive impact on **Business Performance (Y)**. For **H1**, the correlation coefficient is 0.496 with a t-value of 6.2054 and a p-value of <0.001, indicating that entrepreneurial characteristics significantly influence business performance. This relationship is moderate, meaning that stronger entrepreneurial traits lead to better business performance. For **H2**, the correlation coefficient is 0.705 with a t-value of 10.795 and a p-value of <0.001, demonstrating a strong positive relationship between product innovation and business performance. This suggests that higher levels of innovation in products directly contribute to improved business performance. Both hypotheses were supported, as the t-values and p-values confirm the statistical significance of the relationships. In conclusion, the results highlight the importance of both entrepreneurial characteristics and product innovation in driving business success.

Table 5. Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis	Correlation	Coefficient	t-value	Significance	Result
H1	Entrepreneurial Characteristics > Business Performance	0.496	6.2054	<0.001	Supported
H2	Product Innovation > Business Performance	0.705	10.795	<0.001	Supported

DISCUSSION

The Influence of Entrepreneurial Characteristics on Business Performance

The findings of this study demonstrate that entrepreneurial characteristics (X1) have a partially positive and significant effect on business performance (Y) among culinary MSMEs in Bandar Lampung. This indicates that individual traits such as risk-taking propensity, innovation, locus of control, need for achievement, self-confidence, and tolerance for ambiguity (Anwar & Saleem, 2019) substantially contribute to enhanced business outcomes. Entrepreneurs who embody these attributes are better equipped to manage business challenges, make strategic decisions, and sustain competitiveness within the dynamic culinary sector. This result aligns with Barinua and Chiedozie (2022), who observed a significant correlation between entrepreneurial traits and SME performance. Similarly, Troise and Tani (2020) emphasized that proactive behavior and risk orientation are pivotal for business growth and competitiveness. Zhang et al. (2008) also found that strong entrepreneurial characteristics facilitate rapid growth through innovation and strategic risk-taking. Further support is provided by Hsieh et al. (2019), who noted that creativity and managerial competence among entrepreneurs enhance opportunity recognition and business performance. Descriptive analysis

reveals that the highest mean score (4.47) corresponds to the need for achievement indicator, categorized as very high, underscoring its critical role in influencing MSME performance. Thus, fostering entrepreneurial characteristics is imperative for sustained growth and competitive advantage in the culinary industry.

The Influence of Product Innovation on Business Performance

This study also finds that product innovation (X2) exerts a partially positive and significant impact on business performance (Y) among culinary MSMEs in Bandar Lampung. This suggests that the extent of product innovation—through adaptation to evolving market demands, improved product quality, and added value—substantially enhances business outcomes. Continuous innovation strengthens competitiveness, broadens customer base, and cultivates consumer loyalty. These findings are consistent with Christa and Kristinae (2021), who asserted that innovation improves product appeal and sustains businesses amid intense competition. Babina et al. (2024) further affirmed that product innovation stimulates demand and supports business expansion through diversification. Kotler and Armstrong (2018) emphasized that innovation is central to achieving competitive advantage by offering distinctive and attractive culinary products. Ramadani et al. (2019) also highlighted innovation's role in boosting operational efficiency and cost-effectiveness. Descriptive statistics indicate the highest mean score (4.42) relates to product quality, classified as very high, emphasizing its strong influence on business performance. Collectively, these findings reinforce the importance of continuous product innovation—spanning trend adaptation, quality enhancement, and marketing creativity—as a vital strategy for maintaining relevance and ensuring the sustainable growth of culinary MSMEs in highly competitive environments.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, it can be concluded that entrepreneurial characteristics significantly influence business performance, thereby confirming the first hypothesis. This indicates that attributes such as risk-taking propensity, innovation, locus of control, need for achievement, self-confidence, and tolerance for ambiguity positively contribute to the improvement of business performance among culinary MSMEs in Bandar Lampung. Entrepreneurs possessing these characteristics are better equipped to face business challenges, make strategic decisions, and adapt to market demands. Likewise, the second hypothesis is also supported, demonstrating that product innovation has a significant and positive impact on business performance. Continuous innovation, encompassing product trends, quality, uniqueness, and functional aspects such as menu development, enables MSME owners to enhance customer satisfaction, differentiate their offerings from competitors, and increase overall performance outcomes. Hence, both entrepreneurial traits and

product innovation are critical elements that foster the growth and sustainability of culinary MSMEs in the region.

Considering the limitations of this study, several recommendations are proposed to enhance future research. Firstly, future studies are encouraged to expand the research scope beyond culinary MSMEs in Bandar Lampung, including diverse business sectors and broader geographical areas, to improve the generalizability of results. Secondly, data collection should employ a combination of methods, such as in-depth interviews or direct observations, to reduce response bias and enrich data quality. Employing qualitative or mixed-methods approaches can provide a deeper understanding of external influences—such as economic conditions, government regulations, and market competition—on business performance. Moreover, future research should increase the sample size to ensure broader representativeness and more accurate conclusions. These enhancements would contribute to a more comprehensive analysis of the factors affecting MSME business performance, offering practical implications for policy-makers and business practitioners aiming to support the development of the MSME sector.

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