



ISSN: 0976-3031

Available Online at <http://www.recentscientific.com>

CODEN: IJRSFP (USA)

International Journal of Recent Scientific Research
Vol. 9, Issue, 4(F), pp. 26047-26052, April, 2018

**International Journal of
Recent Scientific
Research**

DOI: 10.24327/IJRSR

Research Article

ROLES OF INNOVATION IN MEDIATING BUSINESS CREATIVITY TO IMPROVE MARKETING PERFORMANCE

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DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.24327/ijrsr.2018.0904.1981>

ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 5th January, 2018

Received in revised form 20th
February, 2018

Accepted 8th March, 2018

Published online 28th April, 2018

Key Words:

Business creativity, product innovation,
process innovation, and marketing
performance.

ABSTRACT

This study examines the effects of business creativity on product and process innovation. Besides, this study also examines the influence of product and process innovation toward marketing performance. The sample of this research is 130 respondents. The analysis used in this research is SEM-PLS. The data are processed using WarpPLS version 6. The results of this study include: (1) business creativity has a positive and significant influence toward the process innovation and product innovation; (2) business creativity has a positive and significant impact on the marketing performance; (3) product innovation has no positive and significant effect on the marketing performance; and (4) process innovation has a positive and significant influence toward the marketing performance. This study also provides managerial implications.

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INTRODUCTION

Creativity is one of competitive benefits must be owned by a company (Shalley, 1995). Colby, *et al* (2011) considered creativity as one of some competencies that must be well-mastered by the leaders and managers. The corporate ability to explore its creativity will significantly influences innovation improvement. The company must always concern about its employees' creativity. It must not also prevent or prohibit creative ideas coming from the outside areas. All companies should be competitive in gathering creative ideas as many as possible to create something new and impact their business performance entirely.

Entrepreneurship, innovation and new companies provide a kind of "fuel" for modern economic machines (Herbig *et al.*, 1994). The importance of those three components cannot be overwhelmed. New small enterprises provide twice more innovation as the big ones for each employee. The small enterprises also bring the innovation faster to the market (Herbig *et al.*, 1994). Therefore, the entrepreneurs are the vital players for the innovation process, and if the local community want to generate some innovation (whether it is for high or low-tech companies), it is for creating conducive environment and to maintain the small enterprises and efforts they have just

begun. Sometimes, the entrepreneurs are not aware of the innovation; they keep looking for opportunities. The opportunities include ignoring, not generating, or not physically creating and producing advanced outputs due to complicate bureaucracy.

The entrepreneurs cannot assure the innovation by themselves. Corporate Research Foundation found that one of success keys for a company is the innovation (Cook, 1998). It must be supported by strong creativity of the human resources. The innovation can create something new which finally strengthen the bargaining position of the company. Strong positioning means that the company is innovative and it is able to improve its performance.

This study aims to examine the influence of business creativity toward the product innovation and process innovation. Besides, this study also examines the influence of product innovation and process innovation toward the marketing performance. The research questions proposed are:

- Q1. How is the influence of business creativity toward product innovation?
- Q2. How is the influence of business creativity toward process innovation?
- Q3. How is the influence of product innovation toward marketing performance?
- Q4. How is the influence of process innovation toward marketing performance?

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Q5. How is the influence of business creativity toward marketing performance?

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

Relationships between Business Creativity and Innovation

There are many approaches can be used to explain the creativity. Creativity is a central material for the innovation, with the last difference consisting of commercialization, and implies the success of the implementation of creative ideas (Shilling, 2006). Amabile (1988) explains creative behavior as one which generate better identification to achieve some goals. Proper creativity management is the most potential challenge faced by current businesses. The creativity is able to generate new and better products, procedural simplification, and reduce residual products so that the resources of the company can be utilized optimally and efficiently. Ignoring the importance of creativity, a company can be far left behind by its competitors.

Innovation is a key of success in entrepreneurial process (Schaper & Volery, 2003). There have been many experts defining the innovation. Basically, innovation focuses on "novelty" atau "newness" (Janssen *et al.*, 2015). Porter (1990) explained the innovation as an effort to create competitive benefits by observing or figuring out new and better ways in competing in an industrial field. Boer and During (2001) saw innovation as the creation of new products, market, technology, and organizations as well as their combinations. West (1990) described innovation from its psychological side as new ideas, process, products or procedures within a unit. Someone who want to be an entrepreneur must have creativity skills (Larsen, 2007), self-knowledge, imagination, practical knowledge, search skill, and commitment (Suryana, 2003). The abilities to hold the creativity is very crucial to be able to compete and survive in current tight and modern competition era.

In this research, we have divided the innovation into product and process innovation. Product innovation is related to the innovation embedded in the generated products. Meanwhile, the process innovation means the innovation occurring during the creation of ideas until the final products. The process innovation can also be seen as the ways or techniques in creating new products. The techniques must be surely new and have not been done yet previously.

Various studies explain that the enhancement of individual creativity is the foundation of organizational creative potential and innovation (Amabile, 1988; Shalley, 1995). Creativity is a prerequisite for the generation of innovation (Hills, 2009). Gosh (2015) explained that creative ideas provide the basis for the creation of innovation. Creative thinking must have a creative mindset that will help solving problems and finding solutions. Creative thinking is able to find new ideas, opportunities and inspirations and find innovative solutions (Hendro, 2011). Creativity is the main foundation to be innovative. Innovation is able to create market segment development, establish good corporate position and increase corporate growth (Keeh, 2007).

Entrepreneurship means the spirit, behavior and ability to take risks, creativity and innovation and management skills (Siagian, 1999). Innovation is the ability to apply creativity in order to solve problems and opportunities to enrich and enhance lives (Suryana, 2003). In this study, we examine the

influence of business creativity toward product and process innovation. Referring to the results of these studies, it can be built some hypothesis for this study as follows:

H1a: Business creativity has a positive and significant impact on product innovation

H1b: Business creativity has a positive and significant influence toward process innovation

Relationship between Innovation and Marketing Performance

Innovation is one of decisive aspects of marketing performance, especially in today's competitive environment. The companies that are able to innovate will keep themselves competitive and gain significant benefits. Innovation is a driver of corporate growth, driving future success and driving the company to be able to survive in the global economic competition. This shows that innovation is important for any commercial companies in the world. Innovation is also an answer to the ever-dynamic business competition conditions, i.e. the conditions where the business environment is changing rapidly. According to Gray, *et.al.* (2002), the capabilities possessed by the company must be superior, therefore, when there is superior business innovation capability, of course this will guarantee the company's ability to compete with others. Therefore, innovation is an important concept to win the competition, especially for the products that require dynamic changes (such as embroidery) to give positive impacts for the success of the company.

Innovation has been recognized as an enabler for the companies to create value and sustain competitive advantages in current increasingly complex and rapidly changing environment (Subramaniam, 2005). In general, innovation can not only make full use of existing resources, improve efficiency and potential value, but also bring new intangible assets into the organization. The companies with greater innovation will be more successful in responding to customers' needs and in developing new capabilities that enable them to achieve better performance or superior profitability (Calantone, Cavusgil, & Zahao, 2002).

The performance assessment of a business should take into account the financial and economic consequences of management decisions that may affect investment, operation and financing (Kuncoro, 2006). Innovative organizations have the ability to improve their individual and organizational performance and competitive advantage (Liao and Wu, 2010). Product and process innovation is able to improve the performance, while market innovation is not. According to Cabral (2010), a company with high level of innovative capability does not only focus on the orientation of high profit levels, but also on the environment and social equity. In this case, the company directs its innovative strategy to focus on sustainable results, in which the dynamic capabilities are central to the development of corporate capabilities, resulting in higher continuous level of creation of new products or services. In contrast, the low level of innovative capability leads to lower level of continuity in the creation of new products and services as well. Therefore, the results of continuous innovation are due to high innovative level, so that there will be only innovative companies that will play important roles in the business world.

According to Chang *et al* (2012), customer-focused companies tend to rearrange their organizational capabilities by innovating their products and services to fit the customers' needs and experiences, and the innovation capabilities of the companies are influenced by the position and flow of previous developments in the industry. The innovation capabilities reflect changes in the ways the organizations produce new products or processes (Cooper, 1998, Utterback, 1994). The process innovation includes the stages of a new product, service or process development, from the conceptualization to acceptance in the marketplace (Perez Bustamante, 1999). According to Cumming (1998), process innovation includes quality function and business process reengineering. Besides, process innovation is a medium for improving the quality as well as cost savings (John, 1999). Referring to these results, it can be written some other hypotheses for this study:

- H2a: Product Innovation has a positive and significant impact on marketing performance
- H2b: Process Innovation has a positive and significant impact on marketing performance

Relationship between Business Creativity and Marketing Performance

To win the competition, the strategies applied in an organization often lead to better changes. The changes in this organization require both managers and entrepreneurs to always keep up with them to achieve organizational correspondence or alignment. To achieve high performance, an entrepreneur or manager must have high sense of innovation, commitment and creativity because he must face complex tasks. In particular, Von Nordenflycht (2007) found simple empirical support for the impact of creativity on income growth rate. In terms of profit growth and asset returns, the creativity may often increase short-term costs within an organization. Implementing new ideas for existing products and services may be expensive and does not generate positive results. However, over times, new ideas have the potential to increase profit growth (Calori and Sarnin, 1991).

Besides, Geroski (2000) suggested that the companies will obtain an increase of their profit growth while encouraging creative behavior. Thus, the organizations that encourage creativity will experience significant profit growth and better performance. Furthermore, Von Nordenflycht (2007) observed the relationship between creativity and performance in 122 U.S. advertising agencies determines, and found linear relationship between the employees' creativity and marketing performance. It is generally argued that the results of creativity in competitive differentiation lead to corporate-level success. If the company does not exploit them, it may cause competitive disadvantage. Exploiting an idea means, first, providing motivation. Without any strong motivation, the potential of employees' creativity may not always equate with better marketing performance.

The managers, for instance, can motivate their employees through transformational leadership that inspires them and puts a premium on creativity (Gong *et.al*, 2009). It also provides relevant creativity activities, initiates creative actions and maintains a truly creative level in the workplace, and the company with exceptional employees' creativity will perform better than those which do not (Tierney and Farmer, 2004).

Thus, the employees' creativity obviously affects the marketing performance. Referring to some of these results, it can be stated a hypothesis for this study:

- H3: The higher the creativity of the business, the higher the marketing performance.

Here is the explanation of the research model:

Research Methods

Sample

The analysis units in this research are the embroidery companies included as the small and medium enterprises (IKM) operating in Central Java. The observation units in this research are the owners or managers of the embroidery companies operating in Central Java. The owner or managers in this research are only focused on the small and medium embroidery enterprises in Central Java which still exist and are having marketing performance problems.

Analysis

The observation process in this study uses cross-sectional time scope. The population in this research is all owners or entrepreneurs or managers of small and medium embroidery companies in Central Java with total number of 1,430 business units. The determination of the size of the sample functions to estimate the structural model developed based on the opinion of Hair in Ghazali (2008) stating that the sample size using Structural Equation Model (SEM) including 200 small and medium embroidery companies which will be proportionated in each district in Java Central. The subject in this study is the enterprises itself, because the owners or managers are the most responsible persons and know much about the management of the embroidery industry thoroughly, concerning both human resources and capital issues.

The data from 130 respondents will be analyzed for the level of validity and reliability. The validity used in this research is by testing loading factor, average variance extracted (AVE) and determinant validity. The instruments are considered valid if the loading factor and AVE values are higher than 0.5 (Hair *et al.*, 2010). Table 1 shows that all the loading factor and AVE values are higher than 0.5, so the instruments is said to be valid. The determinant validity compares the square root value of AVE compared to the correlation between the variables. The square root value of AVE must be higher than the correlation between variables. The reliability test uses composite reliability and Cronbach alpha. The instruments have good reliability of the values of composite reliability and Cronbach alpha are higher than 0.6 (Hair *et al.*, 2010). The table 1 shows that the values of composite reliability and Cronbach alpha are higher than 0.60, thus it can be concluded that the instruments are reliable.

Table 1 Validity and Reliability

	Factor Loading	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach Alpha
Business Creativity		0,577	0,890	0,851
KB1	0,740			
KB2	0,731			
KB3	0,658			
KB4	0,858			
KB5	0,697			
Product Innovation		0,711	0,908	0,864

IP1	0,835			
IP2	0,858			
IP3	0,853			
IP4	0,826			
Process Innovation		0,781	0,934	0,906
IPS1	0,885			
IPS2	0,879			
IPS3	0,881			
IPS4	0,891			
Marketing Performance		0,834	0,938	0,900
KP1	0,866			
Kp2	0,938			
KP3	0,934			

Table 2 Determinant Validity

	Business Creativity	Product Innovation	Process Innovation	Marketing Performance
Business Creativity	(0.760)	0.750	0.755	0.613
Product Innovation	0.750	(0.843)	0.811	0.481
Process Innovation	0.755	0.811	(0.884)	0.543
Marketing Performance	0.613	0.481	0.543	(0.913)

RESULTS

Fit Model

The Fit model is the fitness of the data with the proposed model. There are some measurements used to test the fit model. The following formulas show that the fit model in this research has already been good. Average path coefficient (APC)=0.483, $P < 0.001$; Average R-squared (ARS)=0.592, $P < 0.001$; Average adjusted R-squared (AARS)=0.587, $P < 0.001$; Average block VIF (AVIF)=3.497, acceptable if ≤ 5 , ideally ≤ 3.3 ; Average full collinearity VIF (AFVIF)=3.001, acceptable if ≤ 5 , ideally ≤ 3.3 ; Tenenhaus GoF (GoF)=0.655, small ≥ 0.1 , medium ≥ 0.25 , large ≥ 0.36 ; Sympson's paradox ratio (SPR)=1.000, acceptable if ≥ 0.7 , ideally = 1; R-squared contribution ratio (RSCR)=1.000, acceptable if ≥ 0.9 , ideally = 1; Statistical suppression ratio (SSR)=1.000, acceptable if ≥ 0.7 ; Nonlinear bivariate causality direction ratio (NLBCDR)=1.000, acceptable if ≥ 0.7

Hypotheses Testing

This study proposes several hypotheses. The results of the hypotheses testing can be seen in table 3. This study examines that the business creativity has a positive and significant influence toward the product innovation. The results of this study show that business creativity has a positive and significant influence toward product innovation ($\beta = 0.770$; $p < 0.001$). So, it can be concluded that H1a is accepted.

This study examines that the business creativity has a positive and significant influence toward the process innovation. The results of this study show that the business creativity has a positive and significant influence toward the process innovation ($\beta = 0.775$; $p < 0.001$). So, it can be concluded that H1b is accepted.

This study examines that the product innovation has a positive and significant influence toward the marketing performance. The results of this study indicate that the product innovation has a positive and significant influence toward marketing performance ($\beta = 0.072$; $p = 0.203$). So, it can be concluded that H1b is rejected. This study examines that the process innovation to have a positive and significant influence toward the marketing performance. The results of this research show

that the process innovation has positive and significant influence toward the marketing performance ($\beta = 0,237$; $p = 0,002$). So, it can be concluded that H1b is accepted.

This study examines that the business creativity has a positive and significant influence toward the marketing performance. The results of this study show that the business creativity has a positive and significant influence toward the marketing performance ($\beta = 0,561$; $p < 0.001$). So, it can be concluded that H1a is accepted.

Table 3 Hypotheses testing

Hypotheses		β	p	Note
H1a: Business Creativity \rightarrow Product Innovation		0,770	<0,001	Hypothesis accepted
H1b: Business Creativity \rightarrow Process Innovation		0,775	<0,001	Hypothesis accepted
H2a: Product Innovation \rightarrow Marketing Performance		0,072	0,203	Hypothesis rejected
H2b: Process Innovation \rightarrow Marketing Performance		0,237	0,002	Hypothesis accepted
H3: Business Creativity \rightarrow Marketing Performance		0,561	<0,001	Hypothesis accepted

DISCUSSION

The results of this study explain that the business creativity is able to improve the product innovation and process innovation. This shows that through the optimal business creativity of the entrepreneurs or managers, they will be able to enhance the business innovation capabilities of their embroidery enterprises. A good innovation is shown from the capabilities in superior marketing innovation, superior process innovation capabilities, and superior business system innovation capabilities. Although the innovation is less optimal, it but will be able to be achieved along with the enhancement of business creativity. These findings suggest that the business creativity influences innovation. These findings are in line with previous studies (Adams, 2006), (Keeh, 2007), (Serrat, 2009), (Sousa, Pellissier and Monteiro, 2012), (Nusair, 2012), (Hassan et al, 2015), (Sulaiman, et.al, 2015), (Kalmuk and Pickles, 2015) who suggest that the business creativity influences the innovation, both on the process and product. The business creativity can be seen from the new ideas that always arise (Gurteen, 1998), where the new ideas will have impacts on the innovation, both on the process and product. Many new and innovative ideas will be able to create something new, either on the product or process.

This study also finds that the product innovation has no significant effect on the performance. This result is different from the previous ones, where the product innovation must have strong impact on the marketing performance (Ardyan, 2016, Ardyan et al., 2016; Sugiyarti & Ardyan, 2017). Embroidery is one product that has a high local wisdom, so it is very difficult to change the shape extremely, contrast to the process innovation that has a significant effect on the marketing performance.

These findings suggest that the business creativity influences the marketing performance. These findings are in line with the previous studies (Gong, et.al, 2009), (Wang, Wang, and Agarwal, 2010), (Parjanen, 2012), (Ankass and Christopher, 2012), (Hassan, et.al, 2013), (Hassan, et.al, 2013b), (Mwesigwa and Rogers, 2014) stating that business creativity influences marketing performance. These findings confirm the previous ones as well as support them that in improving the

marketing performance, it is required optimal and sustainable business creativity.

The results of this study are expected to provide suggestions for the development of embroidery enterprises to improve their marketing performance, and both employers/ managers and government should do some following things such as: (1) the entrepreneurs or managers need to develop new ideas, embroidered motifs or designs, enhance the high sense of technological development related to embroidery design software or embroidery motif, improve the readiness and speed in using new technology, be continuously consistent in studying or adapting to new technology related to embroidery machine or the computerized tools, find out more profitable markets, determine changes in consumers' behavior, set promotional goals, identify the intended markets, determine promotional mix, and choose media mix. (2) The government should help to improve the capabilities of embroidery management in terms of knowledge, business management and skills, in the forms of trainings and seminars to provide excellent services, and make latest embroidery design and patterns, (3) This research is based on only one type of small and medium embroidery enterprises in central Java, so it is still possible to do similar studies on other industrial fields. (4) This research is conducted only on the embroidery enterprises in Jepara regency, so that the future researchers should expand their research population.

Research Limitations and Plan in the Future

There are some limitations in this study. First, the research sample is small (130). This is because there are only few small and medium embroidery enterprises. Secondly, the data normality in this study is still very raw, so the researchers change from using covariate-based SEM to SEM PLS. The suggestions for future studies are (1) expanding the research areas and (2) tightening the research sampling.

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How to cite this article:

Solehatul Mustofa M et al. 2018, Roles of Innovation in mediating Business Creativity to Improve marketing Performance. *Int J Recent Sci Res*. 9(4), pp. 26047-26052. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.24327/ijrsr.2018.0904.1981>
