

A Model of Creativity for Regional Culinary MSMEs: Developing Innovative Strategies

Puspa Dewi Yulianty*¹, Muhammad Taufik Aziz²

^{1,2} Faculty of economics and Business, Universitas Muhammadiyah Cirebon, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

In tight business competition and disruptive environmental conditions, the performance of Culinary MSMEs is the main support for economic growth. This research analyzes the influence of emotional intelligence and cognitive abilities on the creativity and business performance of Culinary MSMEs. This is quantitative research using the structural equation modeling method with Smart-PLS software. The data in this research is primary data obtained through distributing questionnaires to respondents consisting of 190 Muhammadiyah Culinary MSEs in the Cirebon. The results of the analysis show that intelligence and creativity of employees influence the business performance of Culinary MSMEs, while cognitive ability does not influence the performance of Culinary MSMEs. Furthermore, this research finds that emotional intelligence and cognitive ability influence the creativity of Culinary MSMEs.

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Corresponding Author:

Puspa Dewi Yulianty

Faculty of economics and Business, Universitas Muhammadiyah Cirebon, Indonesia

Jl. Tuparev No.70, Kedungjaya, Kec. Kedawung, Kabupaten Cirebon, Jawa Barat 45153

Email: *puspadewi@umc.ac.id

Introduction

Cirebon is known as one of the largest MSME centers in West Java Province. Currently, Cirebon Culinary UMKM is facing several problems such as very tight business competition, lack of knowledge about food safety and good food processing practices and limited human resource capabilities in innovating, limited UMKM thinking systems, and



limited ability to prepare capital. Currently, the creativity and performance of Culinary MSMEs are an interesting issue to study. This is because most of the creativity of culinary UMKM in Cirebon still follows the origin of the establishment of culinary, especially typical culinary in Cirebon and, lack of innovation, especially derivative products. To achieve good culinary business performance, MSMEs must optimize human resource potential

The rapid development of technology also encourages the culinary MSME industry to be required to have high creativity to keep pace with developments over time. The creativity that is owned is an advantage for creative UMKM companies that are able to solve various problems faced. Creativity is also very suitable in dynamic business conditions because culinary MSME actors are required to be more flexible and more adaptive in various conditions and work challenges stating that the more creative, the better employee performance will be. One thing that can foster creativity is the role of emotional intelligence. The application of good emotional intelligence means that MSME actors will be more active in working, more confident and have more motivation in working, therefore the performance of MSME actors will be better. Emotional intelligence must be developed and maintained by minimizing conflict in the organization or company, and the role of leaders must also be optimized. Several studies state that the application of emotional intelligence can improve performance [17]. The findings of the same study provide an overview of the differences in emotional intelligence between men and women. [19] found that in the analysis of Bank employees, emotional intelligence had no effect on employee performance. Meanwhile, [20] that emotional intelligence had no effect on self-assessed relationship performance (employee and buyer relationships). In addition to emotional intelligence, aspects that can increase creativity are cognitive ability [11].; [12]. Cognitive ability is a step to optimize potential, so that MSME actors with good cognitive abilities will be more creative [11]. and better at doing their work. Previous research findings [16] stated that cognitive ability affects emotional intelligence but does not affect creativity. Likewise, regarding the relationship between creativity and employee performance, there is also an inconsistency in research results as found by [32] which states that creativity-related conflict does not directly affect



employee performance but has an indirect effect through relationship conflict. Therefore, the relationship between these variables needs to be analyzed in more depth.

The difference in research results provides an illustration that the discussion related to cognitive ability and emotional intelligence simultaneously in increasing employee creativity and performance is still rarely discussed and is still limited in the context of Culinary MSME actors. This makes it original and at the same time to fill research gaps and provide new theoretical contributions in producing Models. On the other hand, to fill the existing research gap, this study also analyzes the role of creativity on performance and also the role of emotional intelligence and cognitive ability in improving the performance of culinary MSME businesses. The objectives of this research are to 1) Test the influence of emotional intelligence and cognitive ability in fostering creativity in Culinary MSMEs in Cirebon, 2) Test the mediating role of creativity on emotional intelligence and cognitive ability in improving the business performance of Culinary MSMEs in Cirebon. The urgency is a) Able to contribute to the development of HR literature and in company practices related to the development of culinary MSME business performance

Emotional intelligence is the ability to manage emotions well and place emotions at the right time and place and the ability to maintain other people's emotions [26] Several previous studies have found the role of emotional intelligence and cognitive ability on employee performance. [20] found the influence of emotional intelligence in improving employee performance. It is emphasized in the findings that both male and female employees, the influence of emotional intelligence remains strong and there is no difference. [1] also found the influence of emotional intelligence on employee performance and also found no difference between male and female HR. However, inconsistencies in research results were found in the analysis of the influence of emotional intelligence on employee performance. [7] found that in the analysis of bank employees, emotional intelligence had no effect on employee performance. [24] found that emotional intelligence had no effect on self-assessed relationship performance (employee and buyer relationships). Therefore, this research formulates the hypothesis as follows:

H1: Emotional intelligence has an effect on employee performance

[32] stated that emotional intelligence possessed by employees will have a positive impact on both individual employees themselves, teams and companies, because emotional intelligence can foster creativity and an entrepreneurial spirit for employees. Emotional intelligence includes four aspects, namely Problem solving skills, Interpersonal relations, Emotional self-awareness and Impulse control [32] The role of emotional intelligence in fostering employee creativity is also stated by [26]. With good emotional intelligence, employees will be more active in working, more confident and have more motivation in working, therefore employee performance will be better [21]. Emotional intelligence must be developed and maintained by minimizing conflict in organizations or companies, and the role of leaders must also be [30]. So the following hypothesis is formulated:

H2: Emotional intelligence has an effect on creativity

Cognitive ability is a brain-based skill needed to perform a task [3] Several previous studies have stated that cognitive ability has an effect on employee performance [29] On the other hand, the effect of cognitive ability on employee performance has also been found to have inconsistent results. cognitive ability has an effect on dimensions of job performance but has no effect on one dimension, namely task performance. [15] showed that cognitive skills are essential in improving team performance. Balanced skills are very necessary in a team and mixing team members with different skills will be able to improve performance if the skills are evenly distributed. The role of cognitive ability is also emphasized by [28] which shows that cognitive ability and motivation have a significant effect on performance. Therefore, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H3: Cognitive ability has an effect on pada employee performance

Apart from emotional intelligence, the aspect of employees that is able to increase creativity is cognitive ability [3];[5]. Cognitive ability is essential for employees and managers [8]. Optimizing cognitive ability is a step to optimize potential, so that employees

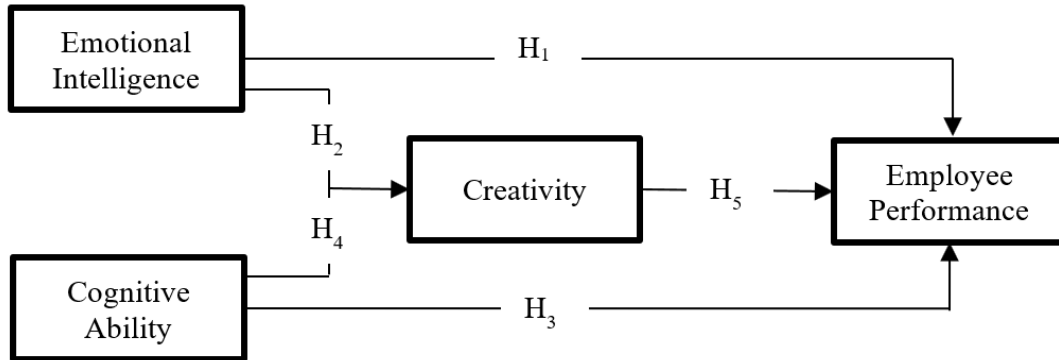


with good cognitive ability will be more creative [21];[3] and better at doing their jobs [14]. Several previous studies have indeed mostly found the influence of cognitive ability and creativity, but there is inconsistency in the research results as found by [9] which states that cognitive ability has an effect on emotional intelligence but does not affect creativity. Likewise, related to the relationship between creativity and employee performance, there is also inconsistency in research results as found by [17] which states that creativity-related conflict does not directly affect employee performance but has an indirect effect through relationship conflict. Therefore, the relationship between these variables needs to be analyzed more deeply. So the following hypothesis is formulated:

H4: Cognitive ability has an effect on creativity

Referring to post-pandemic conditions and rapid technological developments, companies need employees with high creativity to be able to keep up with the times. Creativity possessed by employees is an advantage for the company [27] With creative employees, the company will be able to solve various problems faced. Creativity is also very suitable in this dynamic business condition because employees are currently required to be more flexible and more adaptive in various work conditions and challenges [31];[22]. [16] state that the more creative the employee's performance will be better. [23] employee engagement affects creativity and task performance, creativity is also found. So the following hypothesis is formulated:

H5: Creativity has an effect on Employee Performance



Source: results processed by researchers

Figure 1. Theorithical Framework

Method

The analysis in this study uses quantitative methods. The population in this research is Cirebon Culinary MSME business actors. The sample was drawn using a purposive sampling method and obtained 190 research respondents. The data in this study are primary data collected through questionnaires. This study consists of 2 exogenous variables and 2 endogenous variables. The exogenous variables in this study are emotional intelligence and cognitive ability. The endogenous variables in this study are creativity and employee performance. The operational definition of the variables in this study is as follows:

Table 1. Construct Development

<p>The performance of culinary MSME businesses is analyzed through several measurements, including the measurements used by Alonazi (2020) as follows:</p>	<p>Passion Confidence in Being Able to Handle Work Trust of colleagues and superiors Enthusiasm in working Understanding SOPs and performance standards Discipline</p>
<p>Measurement of emotional intelligence Alonazi (2020) measures with several measurements, as follow:</p>	<p>Understanding personal emotions Understanding personal feelings Knowing what can make you happy Understanding the emotions of colleagues</p>

Measurement of cognitive ability using 3 main measurements, namely (Costa et al. 1976):

Always trying to work optimally
 Self-confidence
 Information Processing Ability (IPA): The ability to process information received and what to do to utilize the information
 Manual Dexterity (MD): Basic abilities or skills in work such as computer skills, administrative skills, communication skills
 Pattern Analysis Capability (PAC): The ability to analyze problems and find solutions

Measurement of the creativity of culinary MSMEs is shown by Ximenes et al. (2019) as follows

Finding new methods in achieving work goals
 Initiating new methods in developing products
 Not afraid to take risks
 critical in the organization
 Having solutions to various company problems

Source: results processed by researchers

The analysis in this study uses the structural equation model method with Smart-PLS software.

Result and Discussion

Before carrying out further analysis, this sub-chapter explains the characteristics of respondents in the research. This study analyzed 190 respondents who were culinary UMKM actors of Muhammadiyah residents of Cirebon Regency. Of the total respondents analyzed, if grouped by gender, it was found that 74% of respondents in this study were male and the remaining 26% were female. So that the respondents in this study were dominated by men. Furthermore, based on the last education, it was found that 87% of respondents in this study had a high school education and the remaining 13% had a bachelor's degree. The analysis of characteristics based on the length of business found that 64% of respondents had worked for 5 years and 21% had worked for 3 years and 15% had worked for more than 1 year. The

analysis in this study used the structural equation model method with Smart-PLS software. The analysis consists of 2 main steps, namely outer model analysis and inner model analysis. Outer model analysis is used to determine the validity of the indicators, the validity of the variables and the reliability of the variables analyzed. This analysis shows whether the data in this study is good and able to represent the variables analyzed. Furthermore, the inner model analysis is used to test the influence between variables so that it can show the results of hypothesis testing in the research.

Outer Model Analysis

Futhermore, outer model analysis, there are several testing steps, namely convergent validity, discriminant validity, construct validity and construct reliability. The first test is convergent validity which aims to analyze the validity of the research indicators. This test is carried out using the algorithm method in smart-PLS. The results of the indicator validity test are seen from the outer loading value with the valid criteria of the outer loading value > 0.7. The results of the convergent validity analysis show that there are 2 invalid indicators, namely EI1 with a factor loading value of 0.552 and CR1 with a factor loading value of 0.691. Invalid indicators must be dropped from the analysis and convergent validity testing is carried out again. The results of the second convergent validity test after dropping invalid indicators show that all indicators have a factor loading value > 0.7 so that all indicators are valid [13] as shown in table 1.

Table 2. Convergent Validity

Construct	Loading Factor	Validity Results
CA1	0.893	Valid
CA2	0.947	Valid
CA3	0.921	Valid
CR2	0.830	Valid
CR3	0.814	Valid

CR4	0.803	Valid
CR5	0.847	Valid
EI2	0.843	Valid
EI3	0.827	Valid
EI4	0.803	Valid
EI5	0.867	Valid
EI6	0.702	Valid
EP1	0.868	Valid
EP2	0.755	Valid
EP3	0.881	Valid
EP4	0.871	Valid
EP5	0.880	Valid
EP6	0.877	Valid
EP7	0.826	Valid

Source: SmartPLS 3.0 Output Results

The next outer model test is discriminant validity which aims to test whether an indicator has explained its variable correctly or not. Discriminant validity testing refers to the Fornell Larcker Criterion table with the criteria that the AVE root value on a variable must be higher than the correlation value of the variable to other variables [13]. The results of the discriminant validity analysis are shown in table 3.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity

	Cognitive Ability	Emotional Intelligence	Employee Performance	Creativity
Cognitive_Ability	0.921			
Emotional_Intelligence	0.681	0.810		
Employee_Performance	0.626	0.688	0.852	
Creativity	0.659	0.687	0.757	0.824

Source: SmartPLS 3.0 Output Results

Table 3 shows the Fornell Larcker criterion value where all the Average Variable Extracted root values on each variable are greater than the correlation values on other

variables. These results indicate that the variables in this study have good discriminant validity values. The next test is the analysis of validity and reliability on each variable. Validity is tested with the AVE value and is required > 0.5 . While reliability is tested with the composite reliability value with the requirement > 0.7 [13]. The results of the analysis are shown in table 4.

Tabel 4. Realibility and Validity Measurement

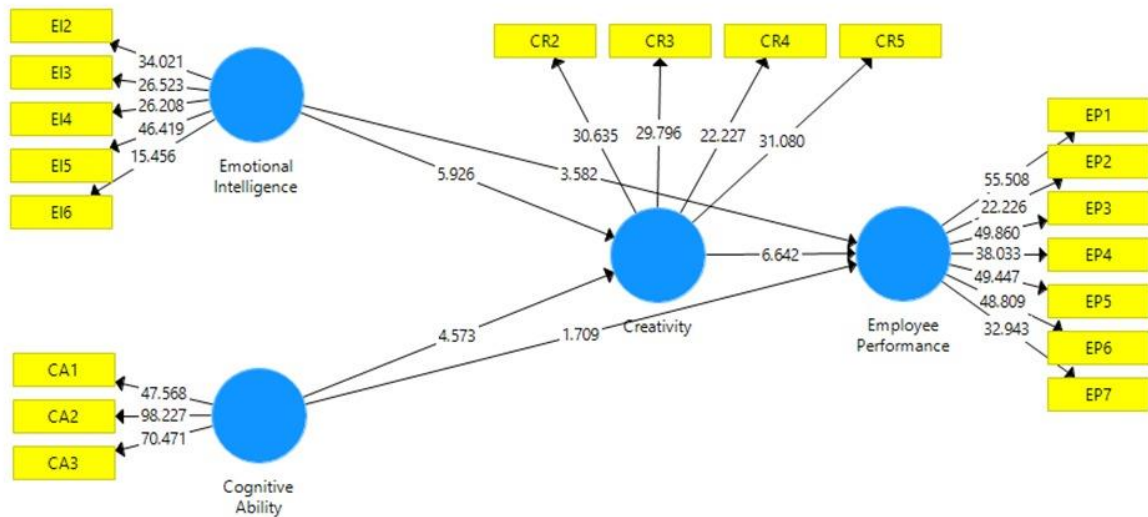
	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (Ave)
Cognitive_Ability	0.944	0.848
Emotional_Intelligence	0.905	0.657
Employee_Performance	0.949	0.726
Creativity	0.894	0.678

Source: SmartPLS 3.0 Output Results

Table 4 shows that the AVE value on all variables analyzed has shown a value > 0.5 so that the variables are declared valid. The composite reliability value on all variables also has a value > 0.7 so that it is declared reliable. The results of the analysis show that all variables have met the validity and reliability requirements well.

Inner Model Analysis

Inner model analysis is conducted to test the influence and relationship between variables. This analysis is conducted to test the hypothesis formulated in this study which consists of 5 hypotheses from 4 variables, namely emotional intelligence and cognitive ability as exogenous variables and creativity and employee performance as endogenous variables. In the inner model analysis there are two types of analysis, namely determination coefficient analysis and hypothesis analysis. The output of the inner model analysis with Smart-PLS bootstrap is as follows:



Source: SmartPLS 3.0 Output Results

Figure 2. Inner Model Analysis

The first analysis is the coefficient of determination or R Square test. The test is conducted to determine the magnitude of the influence given by the exogenous variable to the endogenous variable. The results of the determination coefficient analysis are shown in table 5.

Table 5. Coffecient Determination

	R Square
Employee_Performance	0.633
Creativity	0.540

Source: SmartPLS 3.0 Output Results

Table 5 shows the determination coefficient values of the 2 endogenous variables in this study. In the creativity variable, it has a determination coefficient value of 0.540 which indicates that the creativity variable is influenced by other variables in this study by 54%.

Furthermore, the employee performance variable has a determination coefficient value of 0.633 which indicates that employee performance is influenced by other variables in the study by 63.3%. The next test is hypothesis testing, testing the influence of a variable on another variable. The influence described in the analysis results is the type of influence identified by the original sample value. If the original sample value is positive, the influence shown is a positive influence and if the original sample value is negative, the influence on the variable is negative. Furthermore, the significance of the influence is seen from the t-statistic and P-Value values. A significant influence requires a T-Statistic value > 1.96 and a P Value < 0.05. The results of the analysis are shown in table 6.

Table 6. Hypothesis Test

	Original Sample	T Statistics	P Values
Emotional_Intelligence -> Employee Performance	0.318	4,245	0.000
Emotional_Intelligence -> Creativity	0.442	6.228	0.000
Cognitive_Ability -> Employee Performance	0.088	1.218	0.224
Cognitive_Ability -> Creativity	0.367	4.841	0.000
Creativity -> Employee Performance	0.465	5,974	0.000

Source: SmartPLS 3.0 Output Results

The analysis of the relationship between emotional intelligence, cognitive ability, creativity, and employee performance yielded significant findings. The path coefficient for the relationship between emotional intelligence and employee performance was 0.318, with a T-statistic of 4.245 and a P-value of 0.000, indicating a significant positive relationship. This suggests that employees with higher emotional intelligence tend to have better performance due to their ability to improve interpersonal relationships, stress management, and decision-making. Additionally, the relationship between emotional intelligence and creativity is also significant, with a path coefficient of 0.442, a T-statistic of 6.228, and a P value of 0.000, highlighting that employees who have emotional intelligence are more likely



to be creative, thus facilitating innovative ideas and problem solving . However, the analysis showed an insignificant relationship between cognitive ability and employee performance, with a path coefficient of 0.088, a T-statistic of 1.218, and a P-value of 0.224, indicating that cognitive ability alone does not directly impact performance. In contrast, the relationship between cognitive ability and creativity is significant, with a path coefficient of 0.367, a T-statistic of 4.841, and a P value of 0.000, indicating that higher cognitive ability enhances creativity through better cognitive processes. Finally, the significant positive relationship between creativity and employee performance, with a path coefficient of 0.465, a T-statistic of 5.974, and a P-value of 0.000, emphasizes the importance of creativity in enhancing performance, as creative employees develop innovative solutions, increase efficiency, and adapt to changing circumstances. These findings indicate that organizations should focus on developing emotional intelligence and creativity to improve overall performance, as these factors play an important role in enhancing employee effectiveness and innovation. This study tested 5 hypotheses formulated from 4 variables, namely emotional intelligence and cognitive ability as exogenous variables and creativity and employee performance as endogenous variables. The analysis was carried out using the structural equation model method with Smart-PLS and resulted in H1, H2, H4 and H5 in this study being supported while H3 in this study was not supported.

The first hypothesis test found that emotional intelligence has a positive effect and has a significant impact on employee performance. These results indicate that the emotional intelligence possessed by employees can significantly help improve their performance. These results are in line with the research findings [21] found the effect of emotional intelligence in improving employee performance. It is emphasized in these findings that both male and female employees, the influence of emotional intelligence remains strong and there is no difference. [1] also found the effect of emotional intelligence on employee performance and also found no difference between male and female HR, although there is literature that reveals different results, namely [7] found that in the analysis of Bank employees, emotional



intelligence had no effect on employee performance. [24] found that emotional intelligence had no effect on self-assessed relationship performance (employee and buyer relationships).

The results of this study confirm the important role of emotional intelligence in improving employee performance. So the Marketing Department should pay attention to the emotional intelligence of employees. Emotional intelligence is the ability to manage emotions well and place emotions at the right time and place and the ability to maintain the emotions of others [26]. The results of testing the second hypothesis show that emotional intelligence can have a positive and significant effect on employee creativity. The results of this analysis are supported by several previous studies by [26]; [25]. [32] stated that emotional intelligence possessed by employees will have a positive impact on both individual employees themselves, teams and companies, because emotional intelligence can foster creativity and an entrepreneurial spirit for employees. Emotional intelligence includes four aspects, namely Problem solving skills, Interpersonal relations, Emotional self-awareness and Impulse control [32]. With good emotional intelligence, employees will be more active in working, more confident and have more motivation in working, therefore employee performance will be [21]. Emotional intelligence must be developed and maintained by minimizing conflict in the organization or company, and the role of leaders must also be optimized [30].

Furthermore, the analysis in this study shows that hypothesis three is not supported, which means that cognitive ability does not affect employee performance. These results contradict the findings by [29]. which state that cognitive ability affects employee performance. So the results of this study provide different findings from most previous literature. However, the absence of an effect of cognitive ability on performance who found that cognitive ability affects the dimensions of job performance but does not affect one dimension, namely task performance. These findings provide an illustration that in certain cases cognitive ability does not have a significant impact on employee performance. Analysis of hypothesis four shows that cognitive ability has a positive effect and has a significant impact on employee creativity in the Marketing Department in Jakarta. Cognitive

ability is essential for employees and managers [8] Optimizing cognitive ability is a step to optimize potential, so that employees with good cognitive ability will be more creative [29] and better at doing their jobs [14].

Conclusion

This study tested 5 hypotheses formulated from 4 variables, namely emotional intelligence and cognitive ability as exogenous variables and employee creativity and performance as endogenous variables. emotional intelligence and employee creativity affect employee performance while cognitive ability does not affect employee performance. Furthermore, this study found that emotional intelligence and cognitive ability affect employee creativity. This study provides findings that there are several aspects that must be considered by companies, especially in the Marketing Division, in order to create good employee performance, namely emotional intelligence and employee creativity. Therefore, it is hoped that companies will be able to optimize and grow employee emotional intelligence and creativity in order to create good performance. Furthermore, to improve employee creativity, companies should train employee emotional intelligence and cognitive ability. Overall, these findings emphasize the importance of emotional intelligence and creativity in improving employee performance. While cognitive ability plays a role in supporting creativity, its impact on employee performance occurs through the creativity pathway. Therefore, organizations should focus on developing emotional intelligence and creativity among employees to improve effectiveness and innovation in the workplace.

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BIOGRAPHIES OF AUTHORS



Puspa Dewi Yulianty    was born in Bandung on July 8, 1991. She obtained her Bachelor's degree in Business Management Education from Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI) in 2013, and her Master's degree in Management with a concentration in Human Resource Management from the Master of Management program at Universitas Pasundan in 2016. She is currently a permanent lecturer at Muhammadiyah University of Cirebon. She can be contacted at her email: puspadewi@umc.ac.id



Mohammad Taufik Azis    was born in Cirebon on June 16, 1979. He obtained his Bachelor's degree in Accounting from the Indonesia Islamic University in 2004, and his Master's degree in Accounting with a Syariah Accounting from the Soudirman General University in 2016. He is currently a permanent lecturer at the Muhammadiyah University of Cirebon. He can be contacted at email: taufik.azis@umc.ac.id