

Market Sensing Capability and Catering Product Innovation: The Role of Knowledge Creation and Entrepreneurship Orientation

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ABSTRACT

Catering industry stakeholders must possess effective market sensing capabilities to thrive in the competitive market landscape. This study aims to scrutinize how these capabilities impact the innovation of catering products. Additionally, it delves into the pivotal roles played by the knowledge creation process as a mediating factor and entrepreneurial orientation as a moderating factor. The research model is meticulously crafted to mirror the real-world dynamics experienced in the catering sector. For this study, the focal point of analysis is the managers and employees (specifically chefs) of 27 small and medium-sized catering enterprises in Makassar City, known for their proficiency in providing pertinent insights into the research questions. The data is subjected to rigorous examination through a structural equation model, utilizing WarpPLS 7.0 software. The findings unveil that while market sensing capability does not wield a significant direct impact on product innovation, it does exert a positive and notable direct influence on the knowledge creation process. Moreover, the knowledge creation process emerges as a positive and substantial driver of product innovation. The relationship between market sensing capability and product innovation is further strengthened by the intermediary role of the knowledge creation process. This dynamic is further refined by the moderating influence of entrepreneurial orientation

ABSTRAK

Para pemangku kepentingan industri catering harus memiliki kemampuan penginderaan pasar yang efektif agar dapat berkembang dalam lanskap pasar yang kompetitif. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meneliti bagaimana kemampuan ini berdampak pada inovasi produk catering. Selain itu, penelitian ini juga mempelajari peran penting yang dimainkan oleh proses penciptaan pengetahuan sebagai faktor mediasi dan orientasi kewirausahaan sebagai faktor moderasi. Model penelitian ini dibuat dengan cermat untuk mencerminkan dinamika dunia nyata yang dialami di sektor catering. Dalam penelitian ini, titik fokus analisis adalah para manajer dan karyawan (khususnya koki) dari 27 perusahaan catering kecil dan menengah di Kota Makassar, yang dikenal karena kemahiran mereka dalam memberikan wawasan yang relevan dengan pertanyaan penelitian. Data yang diperoleh kemudian dianalisis dengan menggunakan model persamaan struktural dengan menggunakan perangkat lunak WarpPLS 7.0. Temuan ini mengungkap bahwa meskipun kemampuan penginderaan pasar tidak memiliki dampak langsung yang signifikan terhadap inovasi produk, namun memiliki pengaruh langsung yang positif dan penting terhadap proses penciptaan pengetahuan. Selain itu, proses penciptaan pengetahuan muncul sebagai pendorong yang positif dan substansial terhadap inovasi produk. Hubungan antara kemampuan penginderaan pasar dan inovasi produk semakin diperkuat oleh peran perantara proses penciptaan pengetahuan. Dinamika ini semakin disempurnakan oleh pengaruh moderasi dari orientasi kewirausahaan.

1. INTRODUCTION

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) operating in Makassar City are quite diverse, one of which is the catering business. This business dominates MSEs in Makassar because it is very promising and

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easy to run (Abdullah, 2021). The bustle of city dwellers is the reason this business is growing rapidly. Some of them did not have time to cook or did not want to be bothered to cook in the kitchen. Even though this business is currently the *prima donna* and tends to grow, the reality is that in the past some of these business actors failed to offer their catering products and were not responded to by the market. Why? Because at that time they did not have market sensing capability. Business actors are required to have market sensing capabilities to prevent market failure. They need to study, understand, feel and respond to market needs as a manifestation of the market sensing capabilities. According to Alshanty et al. (2019) and Babyghomog Likoum et al. (2018), market sensing capability is a skill in studying, understanding, feeling, and responding to the dynamics of market needs such as technological advances, tastes, customer demands, and competitor innovations.

With the ability to sense the market, catering business actors can offer product innovations that are unique and in demand by customers, such as adjusting to customer tastes, offering new ideas, offering new benefits, and introducing new features. This business is full of risks, so they must be prepared to accept market facts and be motivated to offer unique product innovations that are in demand by customers. The results of research conducted by Alshanty et al. (2019), Alshanty & Emeagwali (2018), and Ardyan (2016) show that SMEs with market sensing capabilities are more innovative than SMEs without market sensing capabilities. One of the main difficulties faced by SMEs is knowledge creation (Solek-Borowska, 2017). However, when catering business actors have good market sensing abilities, the knowledge creation process will be better and able to produce quality and new market knowledge.

According to Elrehail et al. (2018), knowledge is a strategic tool in increasing innovation and company operational performance. Businesses that need knowledge will always produce up-to-date knowledge reserves and are needed by the market to produce unique products that are sought after by customers and offer new benefits (Mahr et al., 2014). The results of research conducted by Figueiredo et al. (2019) and Papa et al. (2018) show that the knowledge creation process can drive product innovation. In the dynamic capability view (DCV) theory, knowledge creation is a pioneer in product reconfiguration so that it produces products according to market dynamics. Therefore, it is reasonable that this study places the knowledge creation process as a mediating variable to contribute to the marketing literature.

The distinctiveness and appeal of product innovation hinge on the mediating influence of entrepreneurial orientation between the knowledge creation process and the actual innovation (Chahal et al., 2019 and Genc et al., 2019). In essence, entrepreneurial orientation signifies a company's inclination and readiness to actively seek, embrace, and implement novel opportunities within the market (Rofiaty et al., 2022 and Sutanto et al., 2021). Cowden et al. (2016) assert that entrepreneurial orientation serves as a distinguishing factor that sets a company apart from its competitors. Knowledge, in turn, gains significance when it serves as a tool to fortify the construction of innovation and seize market openings. The findings from the research of Chahal et al. (2019) and Genc et al. (2019) underscore the pivotal role played by entrepreneurial orientation in fortifying both the knowledge creation process and the subsequent product innovation. SMEs equipped with a robust and strategic entrepreneurial orientation tend to be more proactive in scouting and capitalizing on opportunities within the market (Cho & Lee, 2018). Additionally, as highlighted by Doulani et al. (2020), a robust entrepreneurial orientation often translates into a sustained culture of productive learning, achieved through the pursuit and exploration of value-added prospects. This, in turn, bestows upon companies a distinctive edge that proves exceedingly challenging for competitors to emulate. Hence, this study situates entrepreneurial orientation as a pivotal moderating variable, constituting a significant addition to the existing body of literature on this subject.

This research model is structured according to reality (Sumail & Hasbiyadi, 2020), where the indicators used are different from those used in previous research and are the novelty of this research. The indicators are designed based on theory and reality by avoiding a causal relationship between indicators and variables. The unit of analysis in this research is managers and employees (chefs). They always innovate products based on customer tastes or according to market needs (Abdullah, 2021; Sumail & Abdullah, 2019). This study attempts to investigate the market sensing capability of catering business actors by using entrepreneurial orientation as a mediating variable.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES

Dynamic Capabilities View (DCV) Theory

Dynamic capabilities empower companies to generate, deploy, and safeguard intangible assets that underpin sustained, exceptional business performance (Bayighomog Likoum et al., 2020). The goal is for companies to be able to read the market and understand market dynamics quickly (Jiang et al., 2020) and the resulting products are superior in the market and become the customer's top choice (Wang & Chen, 2018). Therefore, business actors must be able to seize market opportunities, which means that companies have dynamic capabilities to easily create new products that are not yet available on the market. For example, a company is able to create a new product that is unique and in demand by customers because it has new benefits and complex characteristics for competitors to imitate.

Market Sensing Capability and Product Innovation

Market sensing abilities encompass proficiency in analyzing, comprehending, and adapting to the ever-changing dynamics of the market (Alshanty et al., 2019). These capabilities empower companies to discern the precise products that cater to customer needs. With a keen market sense, companies find it more straightforward to embark on product innovation. Product innovation, in essence, involves the unveiling of new offerings through the refinement and enhancement of existing products. These improvements are characterized by a personalized touch to align with customer preferences, the introduction of novel concepts, the provision of fresh advantages, and the incorporation of innovative features. It's evident that product innovation mirrors the keen receptiveness of business professionals to novel ideas and the delivery of added value through inventive processes. This signifies a readiness among business leaders to adapt, integrating the latest technologies and market trends. Market sensing capabilities serve as a catalyst, compelling companies to not only acknowledge market realities but also to operate in harmony with the ever-evolving demands of the market. These fosters heightened competitiveness, the establishment of amicable customer relations, and the harnessing of internal resources in response to external conditions (Alshanty & Emeagwali, 2018). Extensive research by Alshanty et al. (2019), Alshanty & Emeagwali (2018), and Ardyan (2016) conclusively demonstrate that companies equipped with robust market sensing capabilities exhibit a higher propensity for innovation compared to those lacking this proficiency. Therefore, we posit the initial hypothesis:

H₁: Market sensing capability exerts a positive influence on product innovation.

Past knowledge forms the foundation for discerning novel information values, integrating them, and leveraging them to generate fresh value (Bouguerra et al., 2020). This initial knowledge stems from the process of market sensing, serving as its wellspring. From this wellspring emerges the process of knowledge creation. Effective market sensing capabilities have the capacity to yield high-quality and innovative market insights (Bayighomog et al., 2018). As business professionals introduce new knowledge, they gain insights into customer needs. As indicated by Alshanty et al. (2019), Alshanty & Emeagwali (2018), and Ardyan (2016), in situations where market awareness is prominent, business actors are often driven not solely by profits or company expansion, but rather by the pursuit of fresh knowledge that caters directly to customer needs. The process of knowledge creation can be seen as a manifestation of conceptual metaphors, the inception of valuable new concepts, and the dissemination of innovative ideas. The strength of market awareness directly correlates with the efficacy of the knowledge creation process. Therefore, we propose the following as our second hypothesis:

H₂: Market sensing capability exerts a positive influence on knowledge creation process.

Knowledge Creation Process and Product Innovation

Knowledge forms the bedrock of assumptions in the innovation development process (Lichtenthaler, 2016). Innovation itself is predicated on a foundation of knowledge, signifying its substantial role in the generation, integration, application, and dissemination of information both internally and externally within a company. Consequently, an organization serves as a conduit for the flow of knowledge (Abubakar et al., 2019). Moreover, knowledge serves as a pivotal strategic instrument in elevating both innovation and operational performance within a company (Elrehail et al., 2018). Companies endowed with the capacity to cultivate knowledge continually amass contemporary reservoirs, which are imperative in crafting distinctive products that resonate with customers, providing fresh advantages (Mahr et al., 2014). Knowledge empowers enter-

prises to bolster productivity, trim expenses, and advance product innovation. The findings of studies conducted by Figueiredo et al. (2019) and Papa et al. (2018) substantiate that the knowledge creation process is a driving force behind product innovation. Hence, we posit the third hypothesis:

H₃: Knowledge creation process exerts a positive influence on product innovation.

The Role of Knowledge Creation Process as a Mediating Variable

Market sensing capability presents a robust competency and distinctive value proposition, acting as a potent source for attaining a sustainable competitive edge in the market. These competencies are not easily replicable, substitutable, or attainable in a competitive market environment. They serve as the bedrock for garnering paramount value from customers (Bayighomog et al., 2018). Research by Endres et al. (2020) affirms that market sensing capability serves as a means to acquire up-to-date market insights, vital for making strategic decisions. This implies that companies equipped with market sensing capabilities can pinpoint opportunities, refine customer interactions, and enhance their expertise. Success in innovation stems from effectively internalizing current knowledge derived from external sources (Osakwe et al., 2016). Al-Omoush et al. (2020) posit that heightened proficiency in knowledge creation corresponds to more adept management of market requirements, leading to a more proactive approach to innovation. Consequently, a company's market sensing capability holds a positive correlation with the knowledge creation process, which in turn, exerts a positive influence on the firm's product innovation. As such, we propose the fourth hypothesis:

H₄: Knowledge creation process mediates the effect of market sensing capabilities on product innovation

The Role of Entrepreneurial Orientation as a Moderating Variable

Entrepreneurial orientation denotes a company's readiness to actively seek, embrace, and implement new market opportunities. This trait serves as a distinctive characteristic setting a company apart from its competitors (Cowden et al., 2016). It often acts as a bridge between the processes of knowledge creation and innovation. The dissemination and exchange of knowledge within companies are inherently dynamic, subject to constant evolution. Consequently, knowledge serves as a potent tool for fostering innovation and capitalizing on market openings. As affirmed by Chahal et al. (2019) and Genc et al. (2019), entrepreneurial orientation assumes a pivotal role in fortifying the connection between the knowledge creation process and subsequent product innovation. Markovic & Bagherzadeh (2018) propose that there exists a reciprocal interaction between entrepreneurial orientation and knowledge development. A well-crafted, strategic entrepreneurial orientation empowers companies to take a more proactive stance in identifying and capitalizing on market opportunities (Cho & Lee, 2018). With a robust entrepreneurial orientation, companies tend to engage in continuous, productive learning, actively seeking and exploring value-added opportunities. This practice cultivates a distinctiveness that proves exceedingly challenging for competitors to replicate (Doulani et al., 2020). Hence, we posit the fifth hypothesis:

H₅: Strategic entrepreneurial orientation moderates the effect of the knowledge creation process on product innovation.

Figure 1 shows the research framework based on the discussion above.

3. RESEARCH METHOD

This study centers on operational catering SMEs in Makassar City, totaling 27 companies. These enterprises prioritize developing product innovations based on customer preferences rather than personal inclinations (Abdullah, 2021; Sumail & Abdullah, 2019). To cater to these demands, these businesses typically employ local chefs, who possess both experience and a penchant for innovation. The managers and employees, particularly the chefs, serve as the primary sources of insights into market needs and product innovation. A purposive sampling technique was employed, selecting four respondents from each catering company, comprising one manager and three chefs. This method yielded a total of 108 respondents for the study.

Data collection took place in January 2021, utilizing a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) for variable measurement. Before distribution, a validity test ($r > 0.30$) and reliability assessment ($> \alpha 0.60$) were conducted to ensure the questionnaire's effectiveness (Solimun et al., 2017). Over a span of ten days, questionnaires were directly distributed to the 108 respondents, with 80

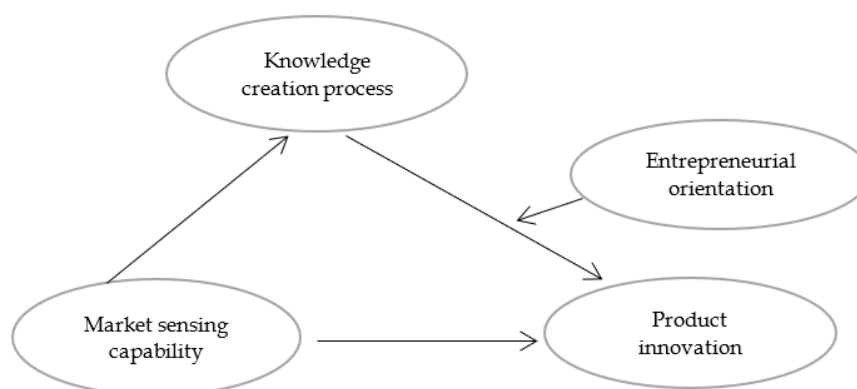


Figure 1. Research framework

questionnaires (74.07%) successfully collected within a week. Post-assessment, four questionnaires (3.70%) were identified as flawed or incomplete, leaving 76 questionnaires (70.37%) deemed complete and suitable for analysis. Subsequently, data analysis was performed using WarpPLS 7.0 software, and the findings were interpreted accordingly. The choice of WarpPLS 7.0 was influenced by the relatively small sample size, which falls below 100 respondents, as advised by Solimun et al. (2017).

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The respondent demographics reveal a predominance of female business actors (76%), with the remaining being male (24%). In terms of age distribution, the majority fall between 25-40 years old (64%), while those over 40 years old make up the remaining 36%. Notably, these individuals possess substantial experience, particularly in managing business risks, which are inherent in this industry due to factors like perishability and susceptibility to damage. Regarding educational background, a significant majority are high school graduates (97%), with a small minority holding bachelor's degrees (3%). It is worth noting that a solid education often serves as a catalyst for generating innovative and astute ideas, thereby contributing to improved company performance (Bhardwaj, 2014).

Table 1 provides an overview of the outer loadings and cross-loadings of the indicators. Each indicator exhibits a robust outer loading value (highlighted in bold), surpassing the 0.60 threshold, affirming their validity. Furthermore, the outer loading value of each construct surpasses its respective cross-loading value with other constructs. This confirms that the indicators meet the requirements for discriminant validity, as stipulated by Hair et al. (2021).

Table 1. Combined loadings and cross-loadings

Indicator	Market sensing capability	Knowledge creation process	Entrepreneurial orientation	Product innovation	P-value
Learning from the business environment	0.665	-0.453	-0.047	-0.266	<0.001
Tracking competitor strategy	0.798	-0.058	-0.826	0.275	<0.001
Understanding market trends	0.786	-0.276	-0.111	-0.024	<0.001
Responsive	0.754	0.752	0.056	-0.027	<0.001
Metaphors to concepts	-0.077	0.934	-0.057	-0.066	<0.001
New and valuable concept	-0.116	0.928	0.228	-0.050	<0.001
New concept transmission	0.221	0.808	-0.195	0.134	<0.001
Ability to look for	-0.191	-0.147	0.723	0.128	<0.001
Ability to accept	0.143	-0.118	0.781	-0.185	<0.001
Applying opportunities	0.031	0.232	0.857	0.060	<0.001
Adjusted to the customer's taste	-0.131	0.099	0.340	0.882	<0.001
Offering new ideas	-0.009	0.056	0.285	0.853	<0.001
Offering new benefits	0.143	-0.119	-0.406	0.762	<0.001
Introducing new features	0.055	-0.167	-0.879	0.765	<0.001

Source: processed primary data

Table 2. Reliability

Variable	Reliability	
	Composite reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
Market sensing capability	0.839	0.743
Knowledge creation process	0.921	0.870
Entrepreneurial orientation	0.831	0.794
Product innovation	0.805	0.776

Sources: processed primary data

Table 3. Model goodness and quality indices

No.	Indicator	Fit Criteria	Analysis result	Description
1	APC	$\rho < 0.05$	0.446, ($\rho < 0.001$)	Feasible
2	ARS	$\rho < 0.05$	0.497, ($\rho < 0.001$)	Feasible
3	AARS	$\rho < 0.05$	0.474, ($\rho < 0.001$)	Feasible

Note: significance level *p-value* α 005

Source: processed primary data

The results of reliability testing show that all indicators reflecting the variables are declared to have met the composite reliability (Table 2). The Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values are higher than 0.70 (Hair et al., 2021).

Testing the goodness of the model and quality of indices can be analyzed through the indicators of the average path coefficient (APC), the average R-squared/ ARS, and the adjusted average R-squared/ AARS. The APC value is 0.446, or close to 50% (see Table 3), so it can be stated that the explanatory (independent variable) can respond to the dependent variable. The ARS value is 0.497, or close to 50%. Therefore, the variables are stated to have a correlation.

Furthermore, the correlation value of several independent variables is close to 50%, as evidenced by the Average adjusted R-squared (AARS) = 0.474. The three indicators of the goodness of this model have a *p-value* of $\rho < 0.001$. Therefore, the model can explain the data, so hypothesis testing is feasible for analysis (Sumail & Hasbiyadi, 2020).

Linearity of the Model (Correlation)

The linearity of the correlation model aims to find out how closely related the variables are. The standard direction ranges from -1 (perfect negative correlation), 0 (no correlation) to +1 (perfect positive correlation). The correlation coefficient results in Table 4 show that market sensing capability has a positive relationship with the knowledge creation process ($r = 0.695$; < 0.000), entrepreneurial orientation ($r = 0.774$; < 0.000), and product innovation ($r = 0.546$; < 0.000). The knowledge creation process has a positive relationship with entrepreneurial orientation ($r = 0.643$; < 0.000), and product innovation ($r = 0.650$; < 0.000). Entrepreneurial orientation has a positive relationship with product innovation ($r = 0.699$; < 0.020). The average score is relatively high or good with market sensing ability (mean = 4.005, SD = 0.837), knowledge creation process (mean = 4.080, SD = 0.755), entrepreneurial orientation (mean = 4.102, SD = 0.863), and followed by product innovation (mean = 4.059, SD = 0.882).

Table 5 and Figure 2 show information on the effect between variables. **The first is for the direct effect.** Market sensing capability has no significant direct effect on product innovation ($\beta = 0.100$, $p > 0.185$), so the first hypothesis (H_1) is not supported. Market sensing capability has a positive and significant direct effect on the knowledge creation process ($\beta = 0.777$, $p < 0.001$), so the second hypothesis (H_2) is supported.

Table 4. Mean, standard deviation, and correlation

Variable	Average (Mean)	Standard deviation	Market sensing ability	Knowledge creation process	Entrepreneurial orientation
Market sensing capability	4.005	0.837			
Knowledge creation process	4.080	0.755	0.695***		
Entrepreneurial orientation	4.102	0.863	0.774***	0.643***	
Product innovation	4.059	0.882	0.546***	0.650***	0.699**

Note: *** = significant at $\alpha = 0.01$; ** = significant at $\alpha = 0.05$.

Source: processed primary data

The knowledge creation process has a positive and significant direct effect on product innovation ($\beta = 0.416$, $p < 0.001$), so the third hypothesis (H_3) is supported. **The second is for the indirect effect.** Market sensing capability has a positive and significant effect on product innovation mediated by the knowledge creation process ($\beta = 0.323$, $p < 0.001$), so the fourth hypothesis (H_4) is supported. **The third is for the role of moderating variable.** The knowledge creation process has a positive and significant effect on product innovation moderated by entrepreneurial orientation ($\beta = 0.491$, $p < 0.001$), so the fifth hypothesis (H_5) is supported. Therefore, it can be stated that entrepreneurial orientation plays a role in strengthening the relationship between the knowledge creation process and product innovation.

The results of this study indicate that market sensing capabilities are not able to increase catering product innovation. This means that market sensing capabilities are not the main factor in driving product innovation. Based on deeper observation, it turns out that there are no signs of ability to exercise market sense, as reflected in learning from the business environment, tracking competitors' strategies, understanding market trends, and being responsive. In other words, catering business managers and chefs still lack market sensing capabilities. Therefore, they fail to understand the dynamics of market needs. As a result, it cannot encourage product innovation. This is because they are still weak in using the main idea of market sensing instruments related to product innovation.

Although it has been stated that SMEs with market sensing capabilities will be more innovative than SMEs without market sensing capabilities (Alshanty et al., 2019; Alshanty & Emeagwali, 2018; Ardyan, 2016), the findings of this study are different.

Table 5. Path coefficient values

Relationship between Variables			Direct Influence	p-value	Information
Independent Variable	Dependent Variable				
Market sensing capability	Product innovation		0.100	0.185	Not significant
Market sensing capability	Knowledge creation process		0.777***	<0.001	Significant
Knowledge creation process	Product innovation		0.416***	<0.001	Significant
Independent Variable	Mediation Variable	Dependent Variable	Indirect influence	p-value	Information
Market Sensing Capability	Knowledge Creation Process	Product Innovation	0.323***	<0.001	Complete Mediation
Independent Variable	Moderating Variables	Dependent Variable	Moderation Interaction	p-value	Information
Knowledge Creation Process	Entrepreneurial Orientation	Product Innovation	0.491***	<0.001	Quasi Moderation

Note: *** = significant at $\alpha = 0.01$; ** = significant at $\alpha = 0.05$; * = significant at $\alpha = 0.10$.

Source: processed primary data

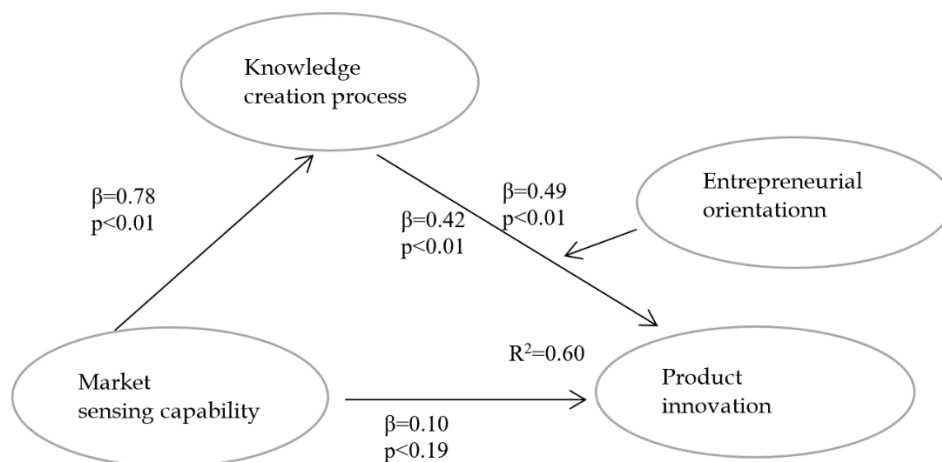


Figure 2. Model of research results

This is suspected to be due to differences in object characteristics, the market needs dynamics, and indicators. The previous research focused on established SMEs in Jordan's manufacturing and service sectors, while this research focused on catering SMEs. The catering business actors still use local raw materials and are concocted by local employees (chefs) who prioritize the customer's taste to capture market needs. Market sensing indicators according to the reality of the catering business include learning from the business environment, tracking competitors' strategies, understanding market trends, and being responsive.

When catering business actors can sense the market by learning from the business environment, such as understanding, tasting, smelling, hearing, and seeing market needs, the potential for product innovation tends to be large (Zhang et al., 2021). The business environment always brings changes and even the movement of change is quite agile and dynamic. Many SMEs have lower business performance because they misinterpret business scenarios and business atmosphere. They have experience in managing a business and are mature in preparing a business plan, but this is not a guarantee for achieving excellent and quality performance. Many SME actors learn from their business environment. They have presented various business opportunities and conveniences in developing product innovations and producing good performance. Therefore, these SME actors will be able to sense the market if they have a willingness to learn from their dynamic business environment.

Identifying and analyzing competitors by tracking competitors' strategies in a healthy manner can create a successful marketing strategy. Tracking competitors' strategies is the ability to sense the market and can encourage product innovation (Ardyan, 2016). Tracking results can be used as a basis for building a strategy to capture customers in the market. If the catering business actors understand competitors' strategies, they are more likely to gain a competitive advantage because they can sense the market well. Catering businesses that have a competitive advantage will succeed in innovating products characterized by concoctions according to customer tastes, offering new ideas, offering new benefits, and introducing new features to gain customer value.

Understanding market trends is one of the characteristics of market sensing capability. When market sensing capability is weak, it is difficult for business people to win the market. Understanding market trends is very important for business people if they want to know the actual condition of market behavior. In general, customers will make this business their first choice if this business is focused, serious, and always keeps up with the rhythm of new trends, such as offering flavors that match customer tastes, offering new benefits, and introducing new product features. In addition, these business people can also find out the interests or tastes of current customers.

Regarding market trends, customers hope that catering business actors can present unique and distinctive products. These business actors need to update ideas and offer new ideas in the products they offer so that customers will increasingly look at this business and become the customer's first choice. Because these business actors are committed to presenting unique and valuable products, they always construct new ideas, follow market trends, and hire employees (chefs) who are experienced and talented in serving food. Therefore, offering new ideas and having qualified talent can produce new products that are in demand by customers.

Market sensing capability can be seen from how responsive these business actors are to market needs. Market needs are always dynamic and require business actors to make changes, from a rigid pattern to a flexible pattern, in response to market demands. Currently, sensitivity to market needs is needed in the hope that the company will get leading value for the customer. Therefore, by taking quick steps to adapt and respond to market needs, these business players will avoid the risk of market failure.

This empirical finding is interesting when examined using the dynamic capability view (DCV) theory. From the perspective of DCV theory, failure to understand the dynamics of market needs cannot directly drive product innovation. This disappointment stems from the inability of business actors to understand the main ideas of market sensing. Therefore, this study finds a new concept and theoretical contribution that poor market sensing capability will not be able to drive product innovation, especially in the catering business.

Catering business actors who have good market sensing capabilities will be able to create knowledge. This is because the orientation of these business actors is to prioritize new skills, so they can understand what customers need. In this case, they do not prioritize profit and asset growth. According to Alshanty et al. (2019); Alshanty & Emeagwali (2018); and Ardyan (2016), when SME actors look at the market, their main goal is not for profit or company growth but to have new knowledge about what their customers need. In

addition, they use this knowledge to offer products and services that meet customer needs. For them, knowledge creation is interpreted as a resource in improving performance. Knowledge creation reflects metaphor, valuable new concepts, and the transmission of new concepts. Therefore, the better the market sensing capabilities, the better the knowledge creation process.

Information from customers becomes a source of new knowledge creation because employees (chefs) present new designs that are difficult for competitors to imitate because they are made according to the customer's taste, not the manager's taste. Adams & Graham (2017) state that knowledge creation replaces current knowledge with new knowledge (metaphor) to gain an advantage over competitors and produce a good performance. One of the strengths of knowledge creation is reflected in conceptual metaphors. In the same vein, Lofsten (2016) states that conceptual metaphor combines various types of explicit knowledge by sorting, re-categorizing, and adding other detailed knowledge to give birth to new knowledge. A new concept can detect market dynamics and find out the reasons for market dynamics so that these business people can explore customer behavior. Long before, Nonaka stated that the future would be in the hands of rich knowledge (Dufva & Ahlqvist, 2015). In a knowledge-based society, as a valuable asset, employees (chefs) can allocate their ability to produce unique, valuable products and be sought after by customers.

Many business people fail in the market because they tend to apply old concepts that do not even have value or seem to lose substance. Catering business people always present valuable new concepts, for example by making food that has a unique taste, aroma, and texture that is difficult for competitors to imitate, so that this product becomes the top of mind in the customer's head and the customer's first choice (Abdullah, 2021; Pargaonkar, 2016). They can manage the concept of value properly and well. Of course, they can easily find new ways to produce innovative products and their downstream performance is good. This is because the concept of new and valuable knowledge is the lifeblood of creating innovation (Wang et al., 2014). It is a source of innovation and improvement. The concept of value reflects the company's ability to face the dynamics of current market needs. Therefore, a valuable concept is needed to get customer value because a new concept can strengthen the emotional connection between a company and its customers.

The good knowledge creation process cannot be separated from the ability of business managers to present new concept transmission channels. The message they spread is a message of hope for customers. The better the concept transmission channel, the better the knowledge possessed by catering business actors. Through this new concept transmission channel, catering business actors can detect the causes of market dynamics. Catering business actors should be able to build trust and familiarity so that this business becomes the customer's first choice. New concept transmission channels can be used as a means of inner connection with customers. Therefore, customers feel valued and invested in the business. This channel can assist companies in improving customer service needs while providing differentiated services. In addition, the new concept transmission channel is free from blockages because this new concept transmission channel is believed to be able to help catering business actors educate customers about the company's products and services so that this business has good performance.

The new concept transmission channel is a form of knowledge in experiencing market dynamics carried out by catering business actors. Based on the perspective of the DCV theory, there are strong indications that catering business actors tend to have smart and up-to-date minds to be able to sense and understand the needs of market dynamics easily. Only those with good market sensing capabilities can create intelligent and up-to-date knowledge, especially in capturing the dynamics of market needs.

From the research model, it is known that the knowledge creation process can explain product innovation. Knowledge creation can drive product innovation. Business people who have good knowledge creation can display product improvement or development, which is reflected in their efforts to create products according to customer tastes, offer new ideas, offer new benefits, and introduce new features to customers. Therefore, innovation in catering products is defined as an effort to display improvement and development of existing products which are characterized by concoctions tailored to customer tastes, offering new ideas, offering new benefits, and introducing new features. This is in line with the opinion of Figueiredo et al. (2019) and Papa et al. (2018) that the knowledge creation process can drive product innovation.

Unique product innovations are packaged by displaying blends that are tailored to customer tastes and are difficult for competitors to imitate. Therefore, to measure whether the food to be sold is delicious or not, the food must be adjusted to the taste of the customer, not the taste of the business manager. In order for the product to last a long time, the raw materials used must be of high quality. Therefore, caution is needed in selecting or purchasing materials that meet standards to avoid market risks (Abdullah, 2021). The catering

business has high risks, such as the risk of rotting and stale quickly, so it requires a reliable employee (chef). Carelessness of employees (chefs) is one of the problems in this business. Thus, employees (chefs) must have good knowledge and always look for new knowledge to accept product innovations produced in the market.

Markets can be maintained by offering new ideas or innovating products that are tailored to the needs or tastes of customers. At first potential consumers tend not to respond to new products, but after they feel the new benefits attached to these products, they are moved to respond. Sometimes, new ideas are not immediately responded to by the market. However, catering business people always maintain the normative values that customers are looking for. The market will not be aware of new ideas embodied in creative values if they conflict with existing values. New ideas presented by catering business people can produce product innovations according to market needs and gain strategic positions. According to Liu et al. (2014), creating product innovation gets a strategic position in the market through new ideas. Loyal customers and new customers will come because they feel and get different values from other companies.

Catering business actors do not only prioritize taste, aroma and texture, but also offer new benefits from product innovation. Various foods with unique tastes, aromas and textures are commonplace for customers in the market. However, offering new benefits from these products is still very rare. Offering new benefits is a differentiator from competing products. Intense competition encourages catering business actors to innovate and increase their creativity. However, they often get caught up in sales growth and forget to offer new benefits that are currently being sought and hits. By providing contemporary and unique product that has new benefits, customers will be curious to try it. The catering business offers short-term (exaptive) and long-term (adaptive) benefits. According to Keskin et al. (2020), successful markets offer long-term value benefits. New benefits will be obtained if supported by the ability to create new or current knowledge. Marvel et al. (2020) highlight how previous knowledge specifically constrains product innovation. The ability to train, seek, consider and integrate feedback regarding the use of product innovation will give birth to new concepts in product innovation.

Product innovation displayed by the catering business is product innovation that introduces new features in the market. Features can be interpreted as special characteristics attached to a food and beverage product. Flavors, aromas, shapes, accessories, and others are new characteristics with the aim of answering the dynamics of market needs. Customer needs can be interpreted as something that customers are looking for, including new features. Therefore, these business actors often display products that have new features according to market needs. According to Zhang et al. (2021), innovative ideas are creative thoughts or concepts about how to meet customer needs. Deshpande (2018) explains that product innovation is related to the maximum use of new ideas. In addition, product innovation is related to the ability to develop new product features. Apart from introducing new features, they also update old features because old features still provide an advantage to retain loyal customers.

Based on the DCV theory, business people who like to seek or create new knowledge will be able to follow the dynamics of market needs. Brilliant minds are the driving force for product innovation. In other words, the better the knowledge creation process, the better product innovation will be. The quality of product innovation can be seen from the ability to make concoctions according to customer tastes, offer new ideas, offer new benefits, and introduce new features to customers.

From this fact, it is found that market sensing capabilities can drive knowledge creation and product innovation. This is because market sensing capabilities are the main key to increasing product innovation if the knowledge creation process is carried out properly and generates new knowledge. The knowledge creation process will work well if there is support from good market sensing capabilities. Market sensing ability can be interpreted as the ability of catering business people to feel, see, hear, and smell customer needs. This is reflected in learning from the business environment, tracking competitors' strategies, understanding market trends, and responding to market needs. Therefore, it is only natural that good market sensing skills can produce new and quality knowledge. The process of creating knowledge that is displayed by catering business people is always colored by concept metaphors, new and valuable concepts, transmission of new concepts, and can give birth to unique product innovations that are much sought after by customers. The process of creating quality and new knowledge can encourage product innovation that is unique and tends to be in demand by customers. Product innovations sold in the market are product innovations that are not easily imitated by competitors because the products produced are products that are characterized by concoctions that are tailored to customer tastes, offer new ideas, offer new benefits, and introduce new features.

The knowledge creation process has an important role to play in the relationship between market sensing capabilities and product innovation. The better the knowledge creation process, the better the management of market needs and the more proactive in innovating (Al-Omoush et al., 2020). The knowledge creation process will be very meaningful if it is supported by good or qualified market sensing capabilities. This is in line with the statement made by Lin & Wang (2015) that market sensing is a type of sensing ability. The interaction between the ability to capture and market sensing has an effect on product innovation.

The results of this study indicate that the knowledge creation process has a role as a complete mediation. It is said to be complete mediation because market sensing capabilities cannot directly affect product innovation. However, market sensing capabilities have an effect on product innovation mediated by the knowledge creation process. Based on the DCV theory, these empirical facts indicate that the knowledge creation process will be meaningful if there is market sensing capability so that catering business actors can read or feel the dynamics of market needs which will then produce product innovations that are unique, up-to-date, and in demand by customers.

The study's findings establish a clear correlation between the processes of knowledge creation, entrepreneurial orientation, and the innovation of products. According to Luiz et al. (2018), these elements - knowledge creation, entrepreneurial orientation, and product innovation - are intricately connected. Notably, our results demonstrate that entrepreneurial orientation amplifies the impact of the knowledge creation process on product innovation. This aligns with the conclusions drawn from the investigations conducted by Chahal et al. (2019) and Genc et al. (2019), both of which underscore the pivotal role of entrepreneurial orientation in fortifying the knowledge creation process and subsequently driving product innovation. In essence, entrepreneurial orientation signifies a company's readiness to actively pursue, welcome, and implement new opportunities within the market.

The willingness to seek new markets is a reflection of an entrepreneurial orientation in encouraging innovation in catering products. Information obtained from respondents shows that catering business actors like to seek new markets. They even try to get out of their comfort zone by offering new benefits and introducing new features to customers. Previously, they only targeted the middle to upper economic class market. But now they are also targeting the lower economy class market with innovative products that are in demand by the grassroots market. According to Singh et al. (2021), an entrepreneurial orientation that is driven by innovation on grassroots needs has a substantial influence on entrepreneurial success in India.

Referring to the DCV theory, if an entrepreneurial orientation can support the knowledge creation process, it will certainly produce unique and up-to-date product innovations and provide benefits. Therefore, this research has found a new concept that the stronger the role of entrepreneurial orientation, the better the knowledge creation process, and the resulting product innovations are unique and up-to-date and provide benefits.

5. CONCLUSION, IMPLICATION, SUGGESTION, AND LIMITATIONS

After reviewing the findings and subsequent discussion, it can be deduced that the capacity for market sensing does not exert a noteworthy, direct influence on product innovation. This is attributed to a deficiency in the proficiency of catering business practitioners in employing market sensing capabilities pertaining to product innovation. Furthermore, there appears to be a shortfall in their comprehension of the dynamic nature of market demands. Drawing on the DCV theory, it is evident that a failure to grasp the evolving market needs does not serve as a direct catalyst for product innovation. This deficiency arises from the incapacity of catering business practitioners to grasp the core tenets of market sensing. Hence, this study posits a novel concept and theoretical contribution: the deficiency in market sensing capabilities impedes catering business practitioners from propelling innovations in catering products. Market sensing capability, however, does yield a favorable and substantial direct impact on the process of knowledge creation. Likewise, the knowledge creation process exerts a constructive and notable direct influence on product innovation. Moreover, market sensing capability exerts a positive and considerable impact on product innovation, a relationship mediated by the knowledge creation process. The influence of the knowledge creation process on product innovation is further enhanced by entrepreneurial orientation, indicating that entrepreneurial orientation bolsters the connection between knowledge creation and product innovation.

The unit of analysis of this research only focuses on managers and employees (chefs) of the catering SMEs in Makasar City, so the results cannot be generalized to non-catering SMEs. Specifically, the findings

have not revealed the practical implications of improving existing practices in managing the catering business. This research is associated only with the DCV theory which tends to focus more on the dynamics of market needs. Therefore, further research needs to compare competitive advantages using the resource-based view (RBV) theory.

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