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Driving Success in the Digital Age: The Role of Emotional Intelligence, Innovation, and Risk-Taking in Culinary MSMEs in South Banjarmasin District, Indonesia

Carroline Vinzentzia Tong¹, Hastin Umi Anisah^{1*}

¹Department of Management, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Lambung Mangkurat, Banjarmasin, Indonesia

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*Corresponding author:

Hastin Umi Anisah

E-mail address:

humianisah@ulm.ac.id

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ABSTRACT

The rapid growth of digital platforms has transformed the business landscape, presenting both challenges and opportunities for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), particularly in the culinary sector. This study investigates the critical factors that drive business success in this dynamic digital age, focusing on the role of emotional intelligence, product innovation, and risk-taking propensity among culinary MSMEs in the South Banjarmasin District, Indonesia. Utilizing a quantitative approach, data were gathered from 40 culinary MSME owners or managers through a structured questionnaire. The research model, grounded in established theoretical frameworks, was tested using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings reveal that while emotional intelligence and product innovation exhibit a positive association with business success, their direct impact was not statistically significant in this specific context. In contrast, risk-taking propensity emerged as a powerful predictor of business success, underscoring the importance of calculated risk-taking in navigating the complexities of the digital marketplace. This research contributes valuable insights into the entrepreneurial dynamics of digital-based culinary MSMEs. It highlights the critical role of risk-taking propensity in achieving success, suggesting that a willingness to embrace calculated risks is essential for thriving in the competitive digital landscape. The study also underscores the need for further research to explore the nuanced interplay of emotional intelligence, product innovation, and other factors in driving business success in this sector.

1. Introduction

In the rapidly evolving digital age, the business landscape has undergone a profound transformation, presenting both unprecedented challenges and opportunities for enterprises of all sizes. This transformation is particularly pronounced for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), which form the backbone of many economies worldwide. The advent of digital technologies has disrupted traditional business models, forcing MSMEs to adapt or risk obsolescence. However, this digital disruption also

offers a plethora of opportunities for MSMEs to expand their reach, enhance their efficiency, and foster innovation. The culinary sector, a vibrant and dynamic industry, has not been immune to this digital revolution. The rise of online food delivery platforms, social media marketing, and e-commerce has fundamentally altered the way culinary businesses operate and interact with their customers. These digital platforms have democratized access to the market, enabling even small, home-based businesses to reach a wider audience and compete with



established players. However, success in this digital era requires more than just technological adoption; it demands a combination of entrepreneurial skills and characteristics that enable businesses to navigate the complexities of the digital landscape (Adeleke, 2024; Afifah, 2018; Akinwale, 2024).

Emotional intelligence, the ability to recognize, understand, and manage one's own and others' emotions, has emerged as a critical factor in entrepreneurial success. It encompasses a range of skills, including self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. These skills enable individuals to build strong relationships, navigate complex social interactions, and make sound decisions under pressure. In the context of digital-based culinary MSMEs, emotional intelligence can play a pivotal role in understanding customer needs, managing online interactions, and fostering a positive brand image. For instance, a culinary entrepreneur with high emotional intelligence can effectively respond to online customer reviews, both positive and negative, and use them as opportunities to improve their products and services. Product innovation, the process of creating and introducing new or improved products or services, is another key driver of business success in the digital age. It allows businesses to differentiate themselves from competitors, attract new customers, and stay ahead of evolving market trends. In the culinary sector, product innovation can take various forms, such as developing unique recipes, offering personalized dining experiences, or utilizing technology to enhance the customer journey. For example, a culinary MSME might leverage social media platforms to gather customer feedback and insights, which can then be used to develop new and innovative dishes that cater to their target audience's preferences (Alam, 2024; Das, 2016; Gupta, 2016).

Risk-taking propensity, the willingness to take calculated risks in pursuit of business goals, is an essential trait for entrepreneurs navigating the uncertainties of the digital landscape. It enables

individuals to seize opportunities, experiment with new ideas, and overcome challenges. In the context of digital-based culinary MSMEs, risk-taking propensity can manifest in various ways, such as adopting new technologies, expanding into new markets, or investing in innovative marketing strategies. For instance, a culinary entrepreneur might decide to partner with an online food delivery platform, even though it involves sharing a portion of their revenue, in order to reach a larger customer base and increase their sales. The Indonesian context provides a particularly interesting setting to explore the interplay of these entrepreneurial characteristics in the digital culinary landscape. Indonesia boasts a thriving culinary scene, with a rich diversity of flavors and traditions. The country also has a rapidly growing digital economy, with increasing internet penetration and smartphone adoption. This confluence of factors has created a fertile ground for the growth of digital-based culinary MSMEs. However, these businesses also face unique challenges, such as intense competition, evolving consumer preferences, and the need to adapt to rapidly changing technologies (Christian, 2015; Harini, 2024; Khurana, 2019). This study aims to investigate the influence of emotional intelligence, product innovation, and risk-taking propensity on the business success of digital-based culinary MSMEs in the South Banjarmasin District, Indonesia.

2. Literature Review

Emotional intelligence, often referred to as EI or EQ, is a multifaceted construct that encompasses the ability to perceive, understand, manage, and utilize emotions effectively. It involves both intrapersonal and interpersonal skills, enabling individuals to navigate complex social interactions, build strong relationships, and make sound decisions under pressure. In the entrepreneurial context, emotional intelligence has been recognized as a critical factor in achieving success. Entrepreneurs with high emotional



intelligence are better equipped to handle the challenges and uncertainties of running a business. They can effectively manage their own emotions, such as stress and anxiety, and motivate themselves to persevere in the face of setbacks. Moreover, they can empathize with their customers, understand their needs and preferences, and build strong relationships with them. This customer-centric approach is particularly crucial in the digital age, where online interactions and reviews can significantly impact a business's reputation and success (Komariah, 2024; Manhas, 2015; Molina-Sánchez, 2022).

In the context of digital-based culinary MSMEs, emotional intelligence can play a vital role in various aspects of business operations. For instance, it can enable entrepreneurs to effectively manage online customer interactions, respond to feedback and complaints constructively, and build a loyal customer base. Furthermore, emotional intelligence can facilitate effective communication and collaboration within the team, fostering a positive work environment and enhancing overall productivity. Product innovation, the process of creating and introducing new or improved products or services, is a cornerstone of business growth and competitiveness. It involves generating novel ideas, developing them into tangible offerings, and successfully launching them in the marketplace. In the digital age, product innovation has become even more critical, as technological advancements and changing consumer preferences necessitate constant adaptation and reinvention. (Ocloo, 2022; Pranata, 2024; Rijal, 2024).

For culinary MSMEs, product innovation can encompass a wide range of activities, from creating unique recipes and menus to developing innovative packaging and delivery solutions. It can also involve leveraging technology to enhance the customer experience, such as offering online ordering and payment options or providing personalized recommendations based on customer preferences. Product innovation can provide several benefits for

culinary MSMEs in the digital landscape. It can help them differentiate themselves from competitors, attract new customers, and increase their market share. Moreover, it can enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty, leading to repeat business and positive word-of-mouth recommendations. In the long run, product innovation can contribute to sustainable business growth and profitability (Setiyo, 2022; Singh, 2022).

Risk-taking propensity, the willingness to take calculated risks in pursuit of business goals, is an inherent characteristic of entrepreneurship. It involves making decisions under uncertainty, embracing challenges, and venturing into the unknown. In the digital age, where the pace of change is accelerating and the competitive landscape is constantly evolving, risk-taking propensity has become even more crucial for business success. For culinary MSMEs, risk-taking propensity can manifest in various ways. It might involve investing in new technologies, such as online ordering systems or social media marketing tools, even though the return on investment is uncertain. It could also entail expanding into new markets or customer segments, despite the potential challenges and risks involved. Furthermore, it might include experimenting with new culinary concepts or business models, even if they deviate from traditional practices. Risk-taking propensity can be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, it can lead to significant rewards, such as increased market share, revenue growth, and competitive advantage. On the other hand, it can also result in losses, setbacks, and even business failure. Therefore, it is essential for culinary entrepreneurs to carefully assess the potential risks and rewards of their decisions and take calculated risks that align with their overall business strategy (Sucahyo, 2024; Sudrajat, 2022).

Business success is a multidimensional concept that encompasses various aspects of a business's performance and achievements. It can be measured through financial indicators, such as profitability,



revenue growth, and market share, as well as non-financial indicators, such as customer satisfaction, employee engagement, and social impact. In the context of digital-based culinary MSMEs, business success might also include online visibility, customer engagement on social media platforms, and positive online reviews. The factors that contribute to business success are numerous and complex, and they can vary depending on the industry, market conditions, and individual business characteristics. However, research has consistently shown that certain entrepreneurial characteristics, such as emotional intelligence, product innovation, and risk-taking propensity, can significantly influence a business's success (Harini, 2024; Molina-Sánchez, 2022; Varma, 2023). In the digital age, where competition is fierce and customer expectations are high, culinary MSMEs need to leverage these entrepreneurial characteristics to achieve sustainable growth and profitability. By cultivating emotional intelligence, fostering product innovation, and embracing calculated risks, they can navigate the challenges and opportunities of the digital landscape and build successful businesses that thrive in the long run.

3. Methods

This research endeavor employed a quantitative methodology, utilizing a survey-based approach to gather pertinent data from a carefully selected sample of participants. The study's focus was on digital-based culinary Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) located within the South Banjarmasin District of Indonesia. The selection of participants was guided by purposive sampling, a technique that ensures the inclusion of individuals who possess specific characteristics or experiences relevant to the research objectives. In this case, the criteria for participation encompassed; Ownership or Management of a Culinary MSME in South Banjarmasin District: This criterion ensured that the participants had firsthand experience and insights

into the challenges and opportunities faced by culinary businesses operating in the digital landscape within the specific geographical context of South Banjarmasin District; Utilization of Digital Platforms for Business Operations: This criterion ensured that the participants were actively engaged in leveraging digital technologies, such as online food delivery platforms, social media marketing, and e-commerce, to conduct their business activities. This focus on digital platforms aligns with the study's overarching aim to investigate the dynamics of entrepreneurship in the digital age; Minimum Operational Duration of One Year: This criterion ensured that the participants had a reasonable level of experience in running their businesses, allowing them to provide meaningful insights into the factors that contribute to success or failure in the digital culinary landscape. It also helped to filter out businesses that might be in their nascent stages and therefore less likely to have encountered the full spectrum of challenges and opportunities associated with operating in the digital realm.

The primary tool for data collection in this study was a structured questionnaire meticulously designed to capture information related to the key constructs under investigation: emotional intelligence, product innovation, risk-taking propensity, and business success. The questionnaire was developed by adapting items from established and validated scales, ensuring the reliability and validity of the measurements; Emotional Intelligence: The measurement of emotional intelligence was facilitated by items adapted from the Wong and Law Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS). This scale has been widely used in research and has demonstrated robust psychometric properties. It assesses various dimensions of emotional intelligence, including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management; Product Innovation: The assessment of product innovation was based on items adapted from the Product Innovation Measurement Scale developed by Jiménez-Jiménez and Cegarra-Navarro. This scale captures the extent to



which businesses engage in activities related to product innovation, such as idea generation, development, and commercialization; Risk-Taking Propensity: The measurement of risk-taking propensity was achieved through items adapted from the DOSPERT scale developed by Weber. This scale assesses an individual's willingness to take risks across various domains, including financial, health, social, and ethical; Business Success: The measurement of business success employed a combination of subjective and objective indicators. Subjective indicators included self-reported business performance, capturing the participants' own perceptions of their success. Objective indicators encompassed online visibility, measured through metrics such as website traffic and social media followers; customer engagement, assessed through online reviews and ratings; and sales growth, reflecting the financial performance of the business. This multi-faceted approach to measuring business success provided a more comprehensive understanding of the outcomes associated with the entrepreneurial characteristics under investigation. The questionnaire items were presented on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This scale allowed participants to express the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with each statement, providing a nuanced assessment of their attitudes and behaviors. Prior to the main data collection phase, the questionnaire underwent rigorous pilot testing to ensure its clarity, comprehensibility, and relevance to the target population.

The data collection process involved administering the structured questionnaire to the selected sample of 40 digital-based culinary MSME owners or managers in South Banjarmasin District. The questionnaires were distributed both online and offline, depending on the participants' preferences and accessibility. Online questionnaires were disseminated through email and social media platforms, while offline questionnaires were administered in person at the participants'

business premises or other convenient locations. Prior to completing the questionnaire, participants were provided with a detailed explanation of the study's purpose, procedures, and ethical considerations. They were assured of the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses and were given the opportunity to ask any questions they might have. Participation in the study was entirely voluntary, and participants were free to withdraw at any time without any repercussions.

The collected data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0 software. PLS-SEM is a powerful statistical technique that is particularly well-suited for analyzing complex relationships between latent variables, especially in exploratory research where the underlying theoretical model might not be fully established. It allows researchers to simultaneously assess the measurement model, which evaluates the reliability and validity of the constructs, and the structural model, which tests the hypothesized relationships between the constructs. In this study, the measurement model was first evaluated to ensure that the constructs were adequately measured by the questionnaire items. This involved assessing the internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of the constructs. Once the measurement model was deemed satisfactory, the structural model was evaluated to test the hypothesized relationships between emotional intelligence, product innovation, risk-taking propensity, and business success. The results of the structural model analysis provided insights into the direct and indirect effects of these entrepreneurial characteristics on business success in the context of digital-based culinary MSMEs. The use of PLS-SEM in this study was justified by several factors. First, it is a robust technique that can handle small sample sizes, which was relevant in this case as the study involved a sample of 40 participants. Second, it can accommodate both reflective and formative



measurement models, providing flexibility in modeling the constructs. Third, it can estimate complex models with multiple latent variables and their interrelationships, allowing for a comprehensive examination of the research questions. Finally, it provides user-friendly software, such as SmartPLS 4.0, that facilitates data analysis and interpretation. By employing a rigorous quantitative methodology and utilizing advanced statistical techniques, this study aimed to provide robust and reliable findings that contribute to the understanding of the factors that drive business success in the digital culinary landscape. The careful selection of participants, the use of validated measurement instruments, and the application of PLS-SEM ensured the scientific rigor and validity of the research.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 1 provides a breakdown of the demographic characteristics of the 40 respondents involved in the study. These characteristics include age, gender, marital status, education level, number of family dependents, length of time in business, role in the business, and business classification. The majority of respondents are between 20 and 30 years old (55%) and female (65%), suggesting a vibrant and youthful demographic actively engaged in the digital culinary MSME sector. Most businesses have been operating for 1-5 years (67.5%), indicating a relatively new entrepreneurial landscape. The vast majority of businesses fall into the micro-enterprise category (97.5%), highlighting the accessibility of digital platforms for small-scale ventures. Over half of the respondents have a senior high school education (52.5%), suggesting that digital platforms enable individuals with diverse educational backgrounds to participate in the culinary MSME sector. 60% of

respondents are married, indicating that many entrepreneurs are balancing business ownership with family commitments. The majority of respondents are business owners (57.5%), demonstrating a direct stake in the success of their ventures.

Table 2 presents the results of the measurement model evaluation, which assesses the reliability and validity of the constructs used in the study. All constructs exhibit Cronbach's alpha values above 0.70, indicating good internal consistency. This suggests that the items within each construct are measuring the same underlying concept reliably. Composite reliability values, also above 0.70, further support the internal consistency of the constructs. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all constructs exceed 0.50, demonstrating adequate convergent validity. This indicates that the constructs effectively explain the variance in their respective indicators.

Table 3 presents the results of the structural model analysis, which examines the relationships between the independent variables (emotional intelligence, product innovation, and risk-taking propensity) and the dependent variable (business success). Both emotional intelligence and product innovation show a positive but insignificant effect on business success. This indicates that while there might be a tendency for these factors to contribute to success, the statistical evidence in this study is not strong enough to confirm a definitive relationship. Risk-taking propensity has a positive and significant effect on business success. This suggests that entrepreneurs who are willing to take calculated risks are more likely to achieve success in their digital-based culinary MSMEs. The p-value of 0.001 further strengthens this finding, indicating a very low probability that this result occurred by chance.



Table 1. Respondent characteristics.

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Age		
20-30 years	22	55%
31-40 years	13	32.5%
> 40 years	5	12.5%
Gender		
Male	14	35%
Female	26	65%
Marital status		
Single	14	35%
Married	24	60%
Divorced	2	5%
Education		
Elementary school	3	7.5%
Junior high school	4	10%
Senior high school	21	52.5%
Associate degree	1	2.5%
Bachelor degree	10	25%
Master degree	1	2.5%
Family dependents		
0	7	17.5%
1	5	12.5%
2	8	20%
3	13	32.5%
4	6	15%
5	1	2.5%
Length of business		
1-5 years	27	67.5%
6-10 years	8	20%
11-15 years	1	2.5%
16-20 years	3	7.5%
> 20 years	1	2.5%
Role in business		
Owner	23	57.5%
Manager	17	42.5%
Business classification		
Micro	39	97.5%
Small	1	2.5%

Table 2. Measurement model.

Construct	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability	AVE
Emotional intelligence	0.75	0.85	0.62
Product innovation	0.82	0.91	0.70
Risk-taking propensity	0.78	0.88	0.65
Business success	0.85	0.92	0.73



Table 3. Structural model.

Path	Path coefficient (β)	T-statistics	p-values	Result
Emotional Intelligence -> Business Success	0.210	0.716	0.474	Insignificant
Product Innovation -> Business Success	0.145	0.816	0.415	Insignificant
Risk-Taking Propensity -> Business Success	0.423	3.224	0.001	Significant

The study's findings indicate a nuanced relationship between emotional intelligence and business success in the context of digital-based culinary MSMEs. While the data analysis revealed a positive correlation, suggesting that emotional intelligence can contribute to business success, this relationship did not reach statistical significance. This observation diverges from some prior research that has established a clear and significant positive link between emotional intelligence and entrepreneurial success (Pranata, 2024; Rijal, 2024; Singh, 2022). This discrepancy underscores the complex and context-dependent nature of the relationship between emotional intelligence and business outcomes. The culinary industry, particularly within the MSME sector, often prioritizes technical skills and product quality. While emotional intelligence undoubtedly plays a role in fostering positive customer relationships and managing online interactions, it might not be perceived as the primary driver of success in this specific domain. The emphasis on tangible culinary expertise and the quality of the food itself might overshadow the perceived importance of emotional intelligence.

Furthermore, the digital nature of these businesses introduces a unique set of demands and challenges. Technological proficiency, digital marketing acumen, and the ability to navigate online platforms might be seen as more immediately critical for success in the digital culinary landscape. These skills, while not necessarily mutually exclusive with emotional intelligence, could potentially overshadow its perceived importance in the eyes of entrepreneurs

operating in this space. However, it is imperative to recognize that the absence of a statistically significant direct effect does not negate the potential value of emotional intelligence in contributing to business success. Emotional intelligence can exert its influence indirectly, through a myriad of mediating factors that are intrinsically linked to business performance. For instance, emotional intelligence has been shown to enhance leadership effectiveness (Harini, 2024). Leaders with high emotional intelligence are adept at inspiring and motivating their teams, fostering a positive and productive work environment, and navigating conflicts with empathy and understanding. In the context of culinary MSMEs, where teamwork and collaboration are often essential, emotionally intelligent leadership can significantly enhance operational efficiency and overall performance.

Moreover, emotional intelligence can facilitate effective communication and collaboration with external stakeholders, such as suppliers, partners, and investors. The ability to build and maintain strong relationships, understand diverse perspectives, and negotiate mutually beneficial agreements can be instrumental in driving business growth and expansion (Das, 2016). Finally, and perhaps most importantly, emotional intelligence can enable entrepreneurs to better understand and respond to customer needs and preferences. In the digital age, where online reviews and social media interactions can significantly impact a business's reputation, the ability to empathize with customers, address their concerns, and provide exceptional service can be a key differentiator (Komariah, 2024).



The study's findings regarding the relationship between product innovation and business success in digital-based culinary MSMEs present an intriguing paradox. While conventional wisdom and a plethora of research suggest that product innovation is a cornerstone of business growth and competitiveness, particularly in the dynamic digital landscape (Alam, 2024), the empirical evidence from this study reveals a more nuanced reality. The results indicate a positive association between product innovation and business success, implying that innovative culinary MSMEs tend to perform better. However, this positive association did not reach statistical significance, suggesting that the direct impact of product innovation on business success might be less pronounced or mediated by other factors in this specific context.

This unexpected finding warrants a deeper exploration of the potential reasons behind the insignificant direct effect of product innovation on business success among digital-based culinary MSMEs in South Banjarmasin District. One plausible explanation lies in the inherent challenges faced by these businesses in developing and implementing innovative products or services. Culinary MSMEs, especially those operating in a traditional setting like South Banjarmasin, might encounter various constraints that hinder their ability to innovate. Financial constraints, lack of access to specialized equipment or technology, and limited human capital can impede the development and implementation of innovative culinary offerings. MSMEs might struggle to allocate sufficient resources to research and development, market testing, and product launch, all of which are crucial stages in the innovation process (Christian, 2015). While digital platforms offer numerous opportunities for culinary businesses, they also require a certain level of technological proficiency. MSMEs that lack the necessary skills or infrastructure to leverage these technologies effectively might find it challenging to innovate and stay ahead of the curve

(Manhas, 2015).

The culinary sector, particularly in a culturally rich region like South Banjarmasin, often involves a delicate balance between innovation and tradition. While consumers might appreciate novel and creative culinary experiences, they also value authenticity and adherence to traditional flavors and techniques. This can create a dilemma for culinary MSMEs, who need to innovate while staying true to their cultural roots (Sudrajat, 2022). Another potential explanation for the insignificant direct effect of product innovation on business success lies in the intensely competitive nature of the digital culinary landscape. The proliferation of online food delivery platforms and social media marketing has lowered the barriers to entry for culinary businesses, resulting in a crowded and fiercely competitive market. Even with innovative products or services, culinary MSMEs might struggle to differentiate themselves from the multitude of competitors and capture a significant market share. This suggests that product innovation alone might not be sufficient to guarantee success in the digital culinary arena, it needs to be complemented by effective marketing, branding, and customer engagement strategies. Furthermore, the measurement of product innovation in this study might have limitations that could have contributed to the insignificant findings. While the adapted scale used in this research assessed various aspects of product innovation, such as idea generation, development, and commercialization, it might not have fully captured the intangible and experiential dimensions of culinary innovation. The creation of unique dining experiences, the use of storytelling to enhance the brand narrative, and the incorporation of local ingredients and flavors are all examples of culinary innovation that might not be adequately reflected in traditional innovation measurement scales. Despite the insignificant direct effect observed in this study, it is crucial to emphasize that product innovation remains a vital component of long-term



success and sustainability for culinary MSMEs. By constantly striving to improve their offerings, adapt to changing consumer preferences, and differentiate themselves from competitors, these businesses can enhance their appeal, attract new customers, and foster loyalty among existing ones. Innovation can also lead to increased efficiency, reduced costs, and improved profitability, all of which are essential for business growth and survival in the digital age.

In contrast to the nuanced findings regarding emotional intelligence and product innovation, the present study unequivocally establishes risk-taking propensity as a significant predictor of business success among digital-based culinary MSMEs. This observation resonates with a wealth of existing literature that underscores the pivotal role of risk-taking in entrepreneurial ventures (Komariah, 2024; Singh, 2022; Sucahyo, 2024). Entrepreneurs who demonstrate a willingness to embrace calculated risks are more likely to seize emerging opportunities, experiment with novel ideas, and navigate the inevitable challenges that arise in the pursuit of their goals. These qualities are particularly crucial in the dynamic and competitive digital landscape, where adaptability and agility are paramount. Within the specific context of digital-based culinary MSMEs, risk-taking propensity can manifest in a variety of strategic decisions and actions. It might involve making substantial investments in new technologies, such as sophisticated online ordering systems or cutting-edge social media marketing tools, despite the inherent uncertainty surrounding the return on investment. It could also entail venturing into uncharted territories by expanding into new markets or targeting novel customer segments, even in the face of potential obstacles and setbacks. Furthermore, it might encompass a willingness to experiment with unconventional culinary concepts or business models that deviate from established norms and practices. The empirical evidence from this study, which reveals a significant positive effect of risk-taking propensity on

business success, lends credence to the notion that culinary MSMEs in the South Banjarmasin District that are inclined towards calculated risk-taking are better positioned to flourish in the digital age. This finding carries profound implications for both aspiring and established entrepreneurs in this sector, as well as for policymakers and institutions tasked with fostering a conducive environment for business growth. For entrepreneurs, this underscores the importance of cultivating a risk-taking mindset. This entails not merely being receptive to new ideas and opportunities but also possessing the courage and conviction to act upon them, even when confronted with ambiguity and uncertainty. It also necessitates a willingness to learn from failures and setbacks, viewing them not as insurmountable obstacles but as invaluable learning experiences that can inform future decision-making. In essence, a risk-taking mindset is not about recklessness but rather about informed and calculated risk-taking that is aligned with the overall business strategy and vision. From a policy perspective, this finding highlights the imperative of creating an enabling environment that encourages and supports risk-taking among entrepreneurs. This could involve a range of initiatives, such as providing financial incentives for innovation, streamlining regulatory processes to reduce barriers to entry, and promoting entrepreneurship education and training programs that equip individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to assess and manage risks effectively. By fostering a culture that celebrates and rewards risk-taking, policymakers can stimulate entrepreneurial activity and contribute to economic growth and development. Furthermore, the positive association between risk-taking propensity and business success in the digital culinary landscape suggests that digital platforms themselves might play a role in facilitating risk-taking behavior. The relative ease of entry, low start-up costs, and potential for rapid scalability offered by digital platforms might embolden entrepreneurs to experiment with new ideas



and business models. The ability to reach a wider audience and gather real-time feedback through online channels might also encourage entrepreneurs to take calculated risks and iterate on their offerings based on customer responses. However, it is important to acknowledge that risk-taking is not a panacea for business success. It is merely one of many factors that contribute to entrepreneurial outcomes. Other factors, such as emotional intelligence, product innovation, market conditions, and access to resources, also play a crucial role. Moreover, the type and degree of risk-taking that is appropriate will vary depending on the specific context and circumstances of each business.

The findings of this study contribute to the growing body of literature on entrepreneurship in the digital age, particularly in the context of developing economies like Indonesia. They provide empirical evidence supporting the notion that entrepreneurship is inherently a risk-taking endeavor, and those who are willing to embrace risks are more likely to reap the rewards. This reinforces the theoretical foundations of entrepreneurship, which emphasize the role of risk-taking in driving innovation, growth, and economic development. Specifically, the study highlights the critical importance of risk-taking propensity for culinary MSMEs operating in a digital environment. This finding aligns with previous research that has demonstrated the positive relationship between risk-taking and business performance in various contexts. In the digital age, where competition is fierce, technological advancements are rapid, and consumer preferences are constantly evolving, the ability to take calculated risks becomes even more crucial for business success (Harini, 2024; Rijal, 2024).

The study's findings also challenge the traditional view that emotional intelligence and product innovation are the primary drivers of entrepreneurial success. While these factors are undoubtedly important, the results suggest that their direct impact on business success might be less pronounced or mediated by other variables in the context of digital-

based culinary MSMEs. This calls for a more nuanced understanding of the entrepreneurial process in the digital age, recognizing the complex interplay of various factors and the context-specific nature of their influence. From a practical standpoint, this study offers valuable insights for culinary MSME owners and managers seeking to thrive in the digital age. It underscores the need to cultivate a risk-taking culture within their organizations, encouraging employees to experiment with new ideas and approaches. This could involve creating a safe space for experimentation, rewarding calculated risk-taking, and celebrating both successes and failures as learning opportunities (Singh, 2022).

Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of investing in digital technologies and marketing strategies, even if the initial outcomes are uncertain. The digital landscape offers a plethora of tools and platforms that can enhance business operations, reach a wider audience, and foster customer engagement. However, adopting and utilizing these technologies often involves a degree of risk, as the return on investment might not be immediately apparent. The findings of this study suggest that culinary MSMEs that are willing to take such risks are more likely to reap the long-term benefits of digital transformation. Moreover, the study highlights the value of continuous learning and adaptation in the digital age. The rapid pace of technological change and evolving consumer preferences necessitate that entrepreneurs remain agile and responsive to market dynamics. This involves staying abreast of the latest trends, acquiring new skills, and being willing to pivot their business models when necessary. The implications of this study extend beyond individual entrepreneurs to policymakers and business support organizations. The findings suggest that fostering a risk-taking culture among entrepreneurs is crucial for promoting economic growth and development. Policymakers can play a pivotal role in creating an enabling environment for risk-taking by providing



financial incentives, reducing regulatory barriers, and promoting entrepreneurship education and training programs. Business support organizations can also contribute by offering mentorship, networking opportunities, and access to resources that can help entrepreneurs assess and manage risks effectively.

5. Conclusion

This study has revealed the nuanced dynamics of entrepreneurial success in the digital culinary MSME sector in South Banjarmasin District, Indonesia. While emotional intelligence and product innovation demonstrated positive but insignificant direct effects on business success, risk-taking propensity emerged as a key driver of performance. This underscores the critical role of calculated risk-taking in navigating the complexities and opportunities of the digital landscape. The findings offer valuable insights for entrepreneurs, policymakers, and business support organizations, emphasizing the need to foster a risk-taking culture, leverage digital technologies, and adapt to the evolving market to achieve sustainable growth and success in the digital age.

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