

# Competitive Advantage: Mediating of Supply Chain Management Practices on Company Performance

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**ABSTRACT**

The implementation of supply chain management practices will be the main indicator for MSMEs in creating a competitive advantage to increase business performance. This research shows the impact of supply chain management practices on the business performance of snack food MSMEs in Padang City through competitive advantage. The research data was collected from 130 snack food MSMEs assisted by the Cooperative and MSMEs Department of Padang City. SEM approach using SmartPLS will be used to data analyzed. The result of the research indicates that improving MSME's business performance can be achieved through the creation of a competitive advantage achieved by implementing supply chain management practices. Competitive advantage has a positive and direct impact on MSMEs' business performance.

**Keywords:** *Business performance, competitive advantage, supply chain management practices*

**1. INTRODUCTION**

One form of productive economic business is micro, small, and medium enterprises. MSMEs are businesses easily formed with individual ownership or business entities based on Law no. 20 of 2008. In 2019, MSMEs played an active role in increasing Gross Domestic Product (GDP). In terms of workforce, the member of MSMEs actors reaches around 60 million units of business, which absorb 97% of the total national workforce. Based on the data, it is evidence that MSMEs

have an essential and strategic role in Indonesia's economic development.

The city of Padang as the center of the province of West Sumatra has a relatively rapid development of MSMEs. Through the cooperatives and MSMEs office as well as other relevant agencies, the government of Padang City is trying to improve and develop MSMEs business. In Padang City, MSMEs are around 80,000 business units. Table 1 shows the number of micros, small and medium enterprises in Padang City.

**Table 1. The Number of MSMEs in Padang City**

Year	The Number of MSMEs in Padang City
2013	38.770
2014	74.062
2015	76.236
2016	78.306
2017	81.182

*Source: Cooperatives and MSMEs Office of Padang City, 2019*

There are several types of SMEs in the city of Padang. Some received a direct coaching program from the government through the Padang City Cooperatives and UMKM Service. MSMEs that are getting attention to be developed are packaged culinary SMEs or the snack food industry. One type of MSME that has become superior and has received more attention to be developed is the type of packaged culinary MSME, or the snack

food industry as support for tourism development so that the intensity of visitors or tourists continues to increase.

Business performance is the result of the company's activities at a certain time. Assessing business performance can be used as a reference to comparison with competitors [1]. Financial performance, operational performance, marketing performance, and human

resource performance are aspects that can be used in measuring business performance. In measuring the company's performance, it is necessary to consider all aspects, such as financial and non-financial aspects [2]. In MSMEs, the expansion of market share and increasing the productivity of operational activities are the main concerns, deciding the general problems in MSMEs, namely the low ability of human resources owned by MSMEs [3].

Currently, there are various measurement tools that can be used to measure company performance. The measurement tool that is suitable for measuring MSME performance is Dynamic Multidimensional Performance (DMP). DMP is a measurement of human resource performance which- is one of the important factors in MSMEs' business development. To have a good business performance during today's rapid industrial growth, every MSME is required to increase its competitive advantage to survive in the long term. The company's business performance is a significant concern to ensure sustainability and competitive advantage by utilizing existing resources [4]. Competitive advantage implies a unique advantage over competitors. Competitive advantage is defined as "the ability of an organization to create a defensive position against competitors". Organizations must develop appropriate strategies that can create competitive advantages for the organization. A competitive advantage allows a company or group of businesses in an industry to achieve optimal business performance. Competitive advantage is expressed as "the ability of an organization to create a defensive position against competitors" [7]. Competitive advantage enables a firm or a group of businesses in an industry to achieve optimal business performance.

To be able to create a competitive advantage, companies can carry out various strategies such as (1) a differentiation strategy, where MSMEs can produce products that have unique characteristics and are different from competitors' products; (2) a low-cost strategy, where MSMEs can produce products that have a lower selling value than their competitors while maintaining product quality; (3) a quick response strategy, which means that MSMEs are quick to respond and fulfill what consumers need [8]. To achieve a good business performance for MSMEs, it is essential for MSMEs to be able to solve the problems ranging from problems that come from upstream, such as raw material problems, down to the downstream of MSME business activities such as consumer satisfaction with products produced by MSMEs. Therefore, a solution is needed to

increase the productivity of MSMEs in order to survive in the market, face competition, threats, and take advantage of opportunities.

MSMEs need to consider supply chain management problems in supporting the implemented strategy [8]. Previous research has highlighted the important role of companies in managing supply chains [9]. To improve business performance as well as to maintain competitive advantage, supply chain management is one of the tools that companies can use. This means that in addition to the ability of MSMEs to create competitive advantage, achieving optimal business performance for MSMEs can be achieved by implementing supply chain management practices (SCMP).

SCMP is a set of process activities in coordinating and managing information sharing between suppliers and customers with the aim of improving the performance of all companies in the supply chain. In general, in order for internal processes with suppliers and customers to be well connected, supply chain integration needs to be well coordinated. SCMP is used to bridge the gap between Supply Chain Management theory and its application [10]. A current study [11] showed that supply chain management practices aim to improve organizational performance. Some researchers generally use several dimensions as a construct of SCMP. The dimensions are a partnership of strategic supplier, information sharing level, information sharing quality, customer relationship management, practices of internal lean, postponement, and total quality management [12].

This study aims to build a model for improving SMEs' business performance by creating a competitive advantage in the application of SCMP. Through this research, it is hoped that information will be available on building a competitive advantage in snack food culinary SMEs. This research has a contribution in the form of providing a model in building a competitive advantage in improving business performance in MSMEs by implementing SCMP which can be used as a reference and studied by business people and academics.

## **2. METHOD**

The population in this study is the Snack Food Industry UMKM in Padang City, fostered by the Padang City Cooperatives and UMKM Service, with a total sample of 130 samples where the number of pieces is the same as the total population. The Purposive Sampling Technique uses as the sampling technique in this study. In this study, MSMEs used are located in Padang, with a

minimum business age of more than one year and a workforce of more than two people.

Dissemination of questionnaires to MSME managers is the method used in collecting data. Then the collected data will be analyzed using SmartPLS because, in this study, there is a formative construct. The initial stage of data analysis was carried out in a measurement model to ensure that the data had met the validity and reliability tests, then continued with structural model testing to answer the research objectives.

### 3. RESEARCH RESULT

#### A. Measurement Model

##### 1. Convergent Validity

Before the data was analyzed, convergent validity was first tested. According to [13] convergent validity is the use of different methods in assessing adjustments between the steps of the same construct. Convergent validity test of the reflexive indicator can be seen from the loading factor value for each construct indicator. Convergent validity is done by looking at the loading factor value, where the loading factor value is above 0.7, and the AVE (average variance extracted) is  $> 0.5$ . In Table 2 below, it can be seen the value of the loading factor for each indicator of the research variable.

**Table 2. Loading Factor**

	<b>Business Performance</b>	<b>Competitive Advantage</b>	<b>SCMP</b>
<b>BP1</b>	<b>0.763</b>		
<b>BP10</b>	<b>0.828</b>		
<b>BP12</b>	<b>0.751</b>		
<b>BP13</b>	<b>0.789</b>		
<b>BP4</b>	<b>0.824</b>		
<b>BP7</b>	<b>0.795</b>		
<b>BP8</b>	<b>0.779</b>		
<b>BP9</b>	<b>0.746</b>		
<b>CA11</b>		<b>0.810</b>	
<b>CA12</b>		<b>0.830</b>	
<b>CA13</b>		<b>0.824</b>	
<b>CA14</b>		<b>0.838</b>	
<b>CA15</b>		<b>0.813</b>	
<b>CA8</b>		<b>0.807</b>	
<b>CA9</b>		<b>0.821</b>	
<b>SCMP10</b>			<b>0.843</b>
<b>SCMP17</b>			<b>0.804</b>
<b>SCMP18</b>			<b>0.778</b>
<b>SCMP22</b>			<b>0.792</b>
<b>SCMP26</b>			<b>0.836</b>
<b>SCMP4</b>			<b>0.780</b>
<b>SCMP5</b>			<b>0.769</b>
<b>SCMP6</b>			<b>0.842</b>

Source: *Data Processing (2021)*

The data is run several times by issuing indicators that have a loading factor value of less than 0.7. Based on table 2, all research indicators have a loading factor value greater than 0.7, which means that all indicators used in this study can be further used in data analysis.

after the fulfillment of the loading factor value above 0.7 for all indicators, followed by constructing validity to perform a reliability test by checking at the value of Alpha Cronbach's, rho A, and value of composite reliability. The variable meets the reliability test if the

three assessment criteria have a value above 0.7. Then for the validity test, look at the AVE value of the variable, where the AVE value must be greater than 0.5.

Table 3 below shows the results of data processing for construct validity.<sup>3</sup>

**Table 3. AVE**

	<b>Alpha Cronbach's</b>	<b>Rho A</b>	<b>Composite Reliability</b>	<b>AVE</b>
<b>Business_Performance</b>	<b>0.911</b>	<b>0.915</b>	<b>0.928</b>	<b>0.616</b>
<b>Competitive_Advantage</b>	<b>0.919</b>	<b>0.920</b>	<b>0.935</b>	<b>0.673</b>
<b>SCMP</b>	<b>0.923</b>	<b>0.924</b>	<b>0.937</b>	<b>0.649</b>

*Source: Data Processing (2021)*

The results of the construct validity test show that the reliability and validity of the research variables have met the specified requirements, namely the alpha Cronbach's, rho-A, and composite reliability values of 0.7 and the AVE value of 0.50. Referring to the rules for the required outer loading value, which is 0.70, then all indicators in this research are declared to have met the requirements

because each indicator has met the value of loading factor above 0.70.

## 2. Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity is done by looking at the value of the square root of AVE, where the value of loading on the intended construct must be greater than the value of loading with other constructs.

**Table 4. Square Root of AVE**

	<b>Business Performance</b>	<b>Competitive Advantage</b>	<b>SCMP</b>
<b>Business_Performance</b>	<b>0.785</b>		
<b>Competitive_Advantage</b>	0.814	<b>0.821</b>	
<b>SCMP</b>	0.750	0.732	<b>0.806</b>

*Source: Data Processing (2021)*

Based on the results of data analysis shown in Table 4, the value of the square root of AVE, where the loading value on the intended construct is greater than the loading value with other constructs. These results indicate that the model has met the requirement for discriminant validity.

## B. Structural Model

### 1. R Square

After the measurement model testing has been fulfilled, it is continued with structural model testing as a form of the goodness of fit model by looking at the adjusted R Square value.

**Table 5. Table R-Square**

	<b>R-Square</b>	<b>R-Square_Adjusted</b>
<b>Business_Performance</b>	0.663	0.660
<b>Competitive_Advantage</b>	0.536	0.533

*Source: Data Processing (2021)*

The Adjusted R-square value shows how large the percentage of variation in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variable that influences it. The higher the adjusted R-square value, the better the predicted model. Adjusted R-square values will only be

found in endogenous constructs. In Table 5 above, it can be seen that the R-square adjusted business performance variable (Y) shows the number 0.660, this indicates that competitive advantage contributes to MSME business performance by 66% while the remaining 34% is

explained by other factors. variable. Likewise with the competitive advantage variable (Z) where the adjusted R-square value for the competitive advantage variable is 0.533. Through this, it can be concluded that competitive gains 53.3% contribution from supply chain management practices.

**1. Goodness of Fit**

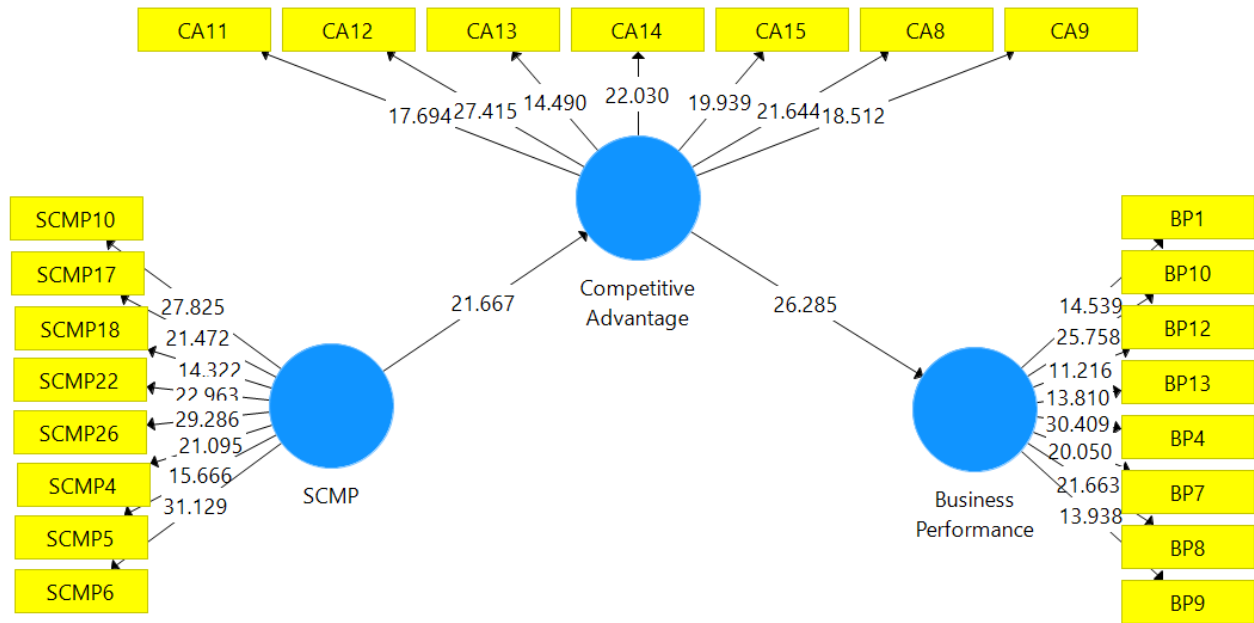
The model will be said to be fit if the model has an SRMR value <0.11[14]. Based on data processing, the research SRMR value is 0.082, where the value is < 0.11 which means the model in this study meets the specified goodness of fit.

**Table 6. Model Fit**

	Saturated_Model	Estimated_Model
Standardized Root Mean square Residual	0.069	0.082
d_ ULS	1.321	1.867
d_ G	0.769	0.808
Chi-Square	511.988	527.320
Normed Fit Index	0.791	0.784

Source: Data Processing (2021)

**4. DISCUSSION**



**Figure 2. Structural model Testing**

**Table 7. Path-Coefficient**

Hypothesis		Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Hypothesis 1	Competitiv_ Advantage -> Business Performance	0.814	0.818	0.031	26.229	0.000
Hypothesis 2	SCMP -> Competitive_Advantage	0.732	0.736	0.034	21.536	0.000
Hypothesis 3	SCMP ->	0.596	0.602	0.044	13.501	0.000

	<b>Competitive Advantage -&gt; Business Performance</b>					
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Source: Data Processing (2021)  
Significance level 0.05

**The Direct Effect: Competitive Advantage on Business Performance**

Increasing competition between supply chains in the global market, MSMEs will try to maintain their competitive advantage compared to others to maintain and improve their business performance. Competitive advantage is the ability to optimize all its resources in order to produce better products in creating and distinguishing itself from competitors [7]. Competitive advantage can be measured from Differentiation, Cost Leadership, and Outreach levels [16]. MSMEs can have competitive advantages, one or more compared to their competitors because through competitive advantages, MSMEs can improve their financial performance, increase customer loyalty and establish effective relationships with various parties, which in turn will improve the business performance of a company.

Based on the results of the analysis of the competitive advantage variable, it has a significant impact on the business performance of the MSMEs, which can be seen from the p-value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ . Then, based on the value of the original sample is 0.814 with a positive sign, it shows a positive relationship between the competitive advantage and business performance. This result indicates that if MSMEs can create and maintain their competitive advantage, they will improve MSME business performance in a better direction. Vice versa, if MSMEs cannot make competitive advantage in their business, then MSME business performance will down.

The results of research conducted by [17] [18] are in line with the results of research conducted by the authors, where the research results show that the application of supply chain management practices will increase competitive advantage. [19], which states that for companies to benefit from implementing strategies, they must go through competitive advantage. And also, as stated by [20], skill development, incubation, and acceleration are essential indicators to create a competitive advantage in order to improve business performance.

**The Direct Effect: Supply Chain Management Practices on Competitive Advantage**

To maintain the MSMEs' sustainability in the future, it is a must for companies to be able to create competitive

advantages. In creating a competitive advantage, increasing efficiency for MSMEs in creating competitive advantages is not an effective way, because maintaining competitive advantage must be carried out by the entire supply chain involved with the company, not just the competitive advantage created by one company. Compared to its competitors, an MSME can have one or more competitive advantages, such as low selling prices, good quality, and quick response. Through their competitive advantage, the company will have the ability to improve its overall performance [21]. In order to gain a competitive advantage and to increase profits, understanding, and practice of supply chain management (SCM) has become an important prerequisite for achieving them. SCM practices are described as a series of activities undertaken by companies to promote the effectiveness of supply chain management. The greater the collaboration between suppliers and consumers at all levels in the supply chain, the more likely it is that a competitive advantage can be obtained by the organization [22]. SCM practices not only have an impact on the company's performance, but also the competitive advantage of a company. The company is expected to increase its competitive advantage through price, quality, speed of company response to the market, and innovation of the product. Based on table 6 which is the result of the relationship between constructs, it can be seen that SCMP has a direct and significant effect on the competitive advantage at alpha 0.05 and P Values 0.000. Thus, it can be said that the second hypothesis in this study is accepted, namely, SCMP has a significant effect on competitive advantage, which means that if the collaboration and integration of MSMEs in implementing SCMP increases, the opportunities for MSMEs to create competitive advantage will be even greater. The results of this study illustrate that the MSMEs will gain a competitive advantage in their business activities if the MSMEs are able to implement SCMP properly, especially in collaborating with companies in the supply chain. SCM focuses on how companies take advantage of supplier relationships, use technology and capabilities to increase competitive advantage, and coordinate manufacturing, logistics, and materials within a company [23].

The results of this study are in line with research conducted by [19], [7], [23], [24], [23] where their

research results show that the application of SCM practices has a positive and significant impact on competitive advantage. For companies that are able to implement SCMP properly, it will be an important factor for companies with low performance to still have a competitive advantage in the competition. [7] and [26].

### **Indirect Effect: Competitive Advantage as the mediating between Supply Chain Management Practices on Business Performance**

The increasingly competitive competition in the global market causes companies to be under high market pressure to face the competition. In order to win this competition, companies must ensure that their customers are optimally served with excellent service and offer products at acceptable prices [27]. How quickly the company implements processes to produce quality products at low prices compared to its competitors is the essence of achieving a competitive advantage [28]. The key to achieving a competitive advantage by providing cheap and good quality products is implementing supply chain [12].

One of the effective strategies that companies can use in facing competition in the market is to focus on supply chain management. The company is expected to be able to manage its business processes, and establish good relationships with every network in the company, from suppliers to final consumers. Currently, the competition that occurs is no longer between companies and one company, but competition occurs between supply chains owned by companies. Companies that will survive in the market are companies that have a strong supply chain. [12]. When the supply chain becomes more expansive and more parties are involved in its activities because it outsources many of its operations and concentrates on core competencies, it will help the company achieve a competitive advantage [29].

Based on table 6 above, which is the result of the relationship between constructs, it states that there is a significant influence between the indirect relationship of SCMP on business performance mediated by competitive advantage at an alpha value of 0.05 and a P-Values value of 0.000. Thus, based on the study results, it can be stated that SCMP has a significant effect on business performance through competitive advantage. This result means that the better MSMEs are in implementing SCMP, the more excellent the opportunity for companies to create competitive advantages that will positively impact MSME business performance. This means that companies can gain a competitive advantage in their

business activities if the company can implement SCMP well, especially in collaborating with companies in the supply chain, so that it has an impact on good business performance [30] [31].

From the results of this study, it can be illustrated that an MSME can gain a competitive advantage in its business activities if it can implement SCMP properly, especially in collaborating with companies in the supply chain, so that it impacts good business performance. The results of this study support the results of research conducted by [7], where SCMP can encourage MSMEs to create competitive advantage, and competitive advantage will ultimately lead to increased business performance.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS**

This study was conducted to see whether the performance of the snack food MSMEs' business will increase by implementing supply chain management and creating a competitive advantage. To increase its competitive advantage, the company is expected to implement SCM practices at a higher level to maintain the company's competitive advantage in an ever-changing and evolving market. This paper provides empirical evidence to support the conceptual statement between the relationship among SCM practices, competitive advantage, and business performance. In the study, it was found that SCMP practices have a positive role in achieving a competitive advantage in the MSME business. And through the competitive advantage possessed by MSMEs can help MSMEs in improving their business performance. Although this study shows valid findings between variables, this study has several limitations. The sample size taken is too small because it only focuses on snack food SMEs, which are SMEs assisted by the cooperative and UMKM service office of Padang City. Therefore, the results of this study still have limitations in generalizing the results. For further research, it is recommended to expand the scope of the sample and use more robust analytical tools for large samples. The sampling technique to uses a random sampling technique to increase the generalizability of the research results.

## **AUTHORS CONTRIBUTIONS**

The contribution of this research is the establishment of a competitive advantage model and business performance model for MSMEs. The results of this study are expected to provide a source of knowledge for MSMEs on how to improve business performance through creating

competitive advantages and implementing SCMP properly.

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