

Technological Capacity as a Mediator between Womenpreneur Leadership and Entrepreneurial Competencies on Business Success in MSME: Evidence from Culinary MSMEs in West Java, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Business success in Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) remains a persistent challenge. There are inconsistent findings regarding the effect of leadership and entrepreneurial competencies on performance, especially when digital capability is considered as an enabling factor. Many studies still examine these variables separately, while limited empirical evidence integrates them within a unified dynamic capability framework. This gap is more evident in women-led culinary MSMEs in West Java, Indonesia. The research examines the role of womenpreneur leadership and entrepreneurial competencies in driving MSME success, with technological capacity serving as a mediating mechanism in culinary MSMEs. The research adopts the dynamic capability perspective to explain how managerial and behavioral resources are transformed into performance outcomes through digital capability. A quantitative approach is applied using data from 384 women-led MSMEs across 27 regencies and cities. Data are analyzed using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results show that womenpreneur leadership and entrepreneurial competencies significantly influence both technological capacity and business success. Technological capacity also significantly mediates these relationships, confirming its role as a dynamic capability that enables resource integration, digital adaptation, and performance improvement. The research contributes in three ways. First, it addresses the theoretical gap by integrating womenpreneur leadership and entrepreneurial competencies within the dynamic capability framework. Second, it resolves inconsistencies in previous findings by demonstrating the mediating role of technological capacity in strengthening performance outcomes. Third, it provides a contextual contribution by focusing on culinary MSMEs in West Java, an underexplored setting in digital entrepreneurship research.

Keywords: womenpreneur leadership, entrepreneurial competencies, technological capacity, dynamic capability, culinary Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)

INTRODUCTION

Business success, encompassing both financial and non-financial dimensions, remains a central concern for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). In the Indonesian context, assessing

business success is not only a matter of profitability but also of operational excellence, sustainability, and social contribution (Nanda & Yandari, 2025; Rochmatullah et al., 2023). Previous research has shown that organizational excellence and entrepreneurial orientation are crucial in enhancing firm performance

through effective deployment of management models and strategic learning (Cho & Lee, 2018; Setiawati & Mastarida, 2024; Sousa & Lengler, 2011). Moreover, the growing relevance of non-financial indicators, including Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) practices, highlights that sustainable success requires integrating ethical and social responsibility into business operations (Rahmaniati & Ekawati, 2024; Syahchari et al., 2023). In emerging economies like Indonesia, where MSMEs form the backbone of economic activity, these multidimensional aspects of business success are vital to ensuring long-term competitiveness and resilience.

The culinary sector has emerged as one of the most interesting segments of MSMEs, particularly in West Java. Culinary MSMEs contribute significantly to regional employment, cultural identity, and local economic growth (Hendrayati et al., 2024; Putra et al., 2022; Wibowo et al., 2023). Despite this significance, limited research examines the combined influence of womenpreneur leadership, entrepreneurial competencies, and technological capacity in this sector, leaving a gap in understanding how digital readiness transforms managerial capabilities into measurable business success. However, the sector faces continuous challenges, such as market turbulence, digital transformation, and post-pandemic recovery pressures (Gaffar et al., 2022; Muthalib et al., 2025; Susanti et al., 2023). The ability of culinary entrepreneurs to adapt through innovation, digital literacy, and strategic networking determines their business continuity and sustainability (Ramdhany et al., 2022; Setiawati & Mastarida, 2024; Wibowo et al., 2023). In this context, exploring the determinants of business success among culinary MSMEs in West Java becomes crucial. It provides empirical insight into how financial and non-financial factors interact and support policy development and capacity-building programs aimed at strengthening Indonesia's creative and culinary economy.

Business success has long been regarded as a multidimensional concept that captures both financial and non-financial achievements of an enterprise. From a financial perspective, business success is commonly associated with profitability, sales growth, return on investment, and operational efficiency. Those elements reflect the firm's capacity to generate economic value and sustain competitiveness (Alves et al., 2017; Cho & Lee, 2018; Syahchari et al., 2023). These indicators provide tangible evidence of managerial effectiveness and market performance. However, relying solely on financial indicators can lead to a limited understanding of what constitutes long-term success. According to Rochmatullah et al. (2023), their application of the Baldrige Excellence Measurement Model in Indonesia shows that business success also depends on process excellence, leadership quality, and organizational learning, which together strengthen resilience and innovation. In the context of MSMEs, financial success represents a fundamental requirement, yet it must be supported by adaptive capabilities that ensure

business continuity amid market uncertainty.

Beyond financial outcomes, the non-financial dimension of business success captures a broader range of performance indicators related to customer satisfaction, social responsibility, innovation, and sustainability. Non-financial performance increasingly reflects how enterprises contribute to long-term value creation through ethical practices, stakeholder engagement, and environmental stewardship (Rahmaniati & Ekawati, 2024; Setyono et al., 2024). This broader view aligns with the ESG framework, which integrates responsible management into business strategy to improve both reputation and competitiveness. Evaluation of success should align with the organizational mission and values, particularly in the creative and cultural sectors, where social impact and innovation are key outcomes (Boorsma & Chiaravalloti, 2010). Therefore, business success can be viewed as a holistic construct that combines measurable financial gains with intangible assets such as trust, creativity, and sustainability orientation. For MSMEs in Indonesia's culinary industry, understanding and integrating both financial and non-financial dimensions is essential for achieving balanced and enduring growth.

Womenpreneur leadership reflects women entrepreneurs' ability to lead, innovate, and sustain their businesses through strategic and adaptive competencies. It begins with strategic vision and innovation, which guide long-term goals and market responsiveness (Aisyah et al., 2023; Siwiyanti, Suryana, Furqon, et al., 2025). Womenpreneurs use creative ideas to identify opportunities and develop unique business strategies, especially in competitive sectors such as the culinary and fashion industries. They also demonstrate decision-making and risk-taking skills that balance analytical reasoning and social sensitivity (Gurel et al., 2021; Putit et al., 2025). Muslim women entrepreneurs in Indonesia make ethical and sustainable decisions, often supported by financial literacy that strengthens confidence in managing uncertainty (Iram et al., 2023; Rafiki et al., 2024; Siwiyanti, Suryana, Furqon, et al., 2025). These qualities allow womenpreneurs to innovate while maintaining business stability.

There are equally important factors such as participative leadership, motivation and empowerment, adaptability and resilience, and ethics and social responsibility. Participative leadership encourages teamwork, communication, and shared responsibility, thereby building trust and improving performance (Aisyah et al., 2023; Siwiyanti et al., 2026). Through motivation and empowerment, womenpreneurs strengthen employee commitment and social capital within their networks (Maulana et al., 2025; Nurlatifah et al., 2022; Siwiyanti, Suryana, Furqon, et al., 2025). Meanwhile, adaptability and resilience help womenpreneurs survive in changing environments and recover from crises (Rezaei-Moghaddam et al., 2023). Moreover, strong ethical values and social responsibility enhance trust, reputation, and long-

term legitimacy (Ramirez-Lozano et al., 2023; Sajjad et al., 2020). Altogether, womenpreneur leadership integrates strategic vision, empathy, and ethics, forming a foundation for sustainable business success among women-led MSMEs.

Womenpreneur leadership is a vital factor in the sustainability and competitiveness of women-led MSMEs. Effective leaders articulate a strategic vision, foster innovation, and promote participative decision-making (Aparisi-Torrijo & Ribes-Giner, 2022; Beta et al., 2024). This leadership style nurtures an adaptive and ethical business culture that supports technological advancement and strategic improvement, which in turn enhances organizational performance. Therefore, womenpreneur leadership is expected to have a positive influence on both technological capacity and business success.

Entrepreneurial competencies, including opportunity recognition, innovation, resource management, problem-solving, and networking, are key behavioral attributes that sustain entrepreneurial performance (Park & Kim, 2025). Entrepreneurs with strong competencies can identify opportunities, manage resources efficiently, and respond effectively to market changes. In the digital era, these competencies also determine how entrepreneurs acquire and apply technological knowledge (Seo et al., 2022). Hence, entrepreneurial competencies are expected to affect technological capacity and business success positively.

Entrepreneurial competencies represent the combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable entrepreneurs to identify opportunities, manage resources, and create value. One important aspect is opportunity creation and innovation, which refers to the entrepreneur's ability to recognize unmet market needs and transform ideas into practical solutions (Azalanazllay et al., 2022; Detthamrong et al., 2023). These competencies help business owners to adapt to technological change and customer demands through creative problem-solving and continuous improvement. The integration of knowledge management and emotional intelligence also supports systematic innovation and long-term competitiveness. Experiential learning strengthens these competencies, especially through real-world exposure in start-up environments where entrepreneurs learn to take calculated risks and refine their business ideas (Lantu et al., 2022).

Another critical dimension of entrepreneurial competency is resource management, which includes the efficient use of financial, human, and technological assets to sustain business operations (Cahill et al., 2021; Mitrache et al., 2025). Entrepreneurs who can effectively allocate resources are better positioned to respond to uncertainty and seize emerging opportunities. This ability is closely connected to problem-solving and decision-making, which emphasize analytical thinking, strategic flexibility, and ethical judgment. In addition, networking and collaboration enhance access to information, partnerships, and social capital that support business growth (Pansuwong et al., 2023;

Pennetta et al., 2024). When these competencies interact, they strengthen entrepreneurial capability and contribute significantly to innovation, adaptability, and ultimately business success, particularly among SMEs operating in dynamic markets.

Technological capacity represents an organization's ability to adopt, integrate, and innovate through technology to enhance efficiency and competitiveness. It begins with the adoption of digital technology, which enables entrepreneurs to digitalize operations, marketing, and communication for better customer engagement and performance (Pawestri et al., 2024; Sudrajat et al., 2024). The ability to use digital platforms effectively supports business continuity, especially during disruptions such as crises or market instability (Miao et al., 2024; Rahmah & Ibrahim, 2023). Another crucial element is technology infrastructure, which includes access to reliable internet, hardware, and software that form the foundation for digital transformation (Ibrahim et al., 2024; Sulaeman et al., 2024). Adequate infrastructure allows MSMEs to streamline workflows, manage data efficiently, and expand their market reach.

Furthermore, technology systems integration and technology innovation capabilities determine how well different technological tools align with business strategies. System integration improves coordination between business processes, while innovation capability fosters continuous improvement and competitive differentiation (Bhagavathula et al., 2021; Cadrazco-Parra et al., 2020). Digital literacy and access to technology empower entrepreneurs to overcome adoption barriers and participate in the digital economy (Neumeyer et al., 2021).

Technological capacity serves as a mediating mechanism linking leadership and competencies to performance outcomes. Drawing on dynamic capability theory (Pitelis et al., 2024), it reflects a firm's ability to sense, seize, and transform opportunities through digital technologies. This capacity enables entrepreneurs to convert strategic intent and skills into measurable business performance. Ultimately, business success, encompassing both financial and non-financial outcomes (Putranta et al., 2025; Siwiyanti, Suryana, Mulyadi, & Furqan, 2025), is the result of effective leadership, competency development, and technological capability. In the context of MSMEs, especially women-led enterprises, technological capacity transforms entrepreneurial vision and skill into operational excellence, innovation, and long-term sustainability in the digital era.

Recent studies in international entrepreneurship journals highlight that digital transformation significantly reshapes the performance of women-led enterprises. Many scholars emphasize that women entrepreneurs increasingly rely on digital platforms, social media marketing, and fintech solutions to enhance business scalability and resilience (Nambisan et al., 2019; Neumeyer et al., 2021). However, despite growing attention to digital entrepreneurship, most studies still focus on either leadership or

entrepreneurial competencies in isolation, with limited integration into a unified capability framework

Furthermore, recent empirical evidence from high-impact journals shows inconsistent findings regarding how womenpreneurial characteristics translate into firm performance in digital contexts. Some studies suggest direct effects, while others highlight the necessity of technological readiness as a mediating mechanism (Miao et al., 2024; Park & Kim, 2025). This inconsistency indicates the need for a more integrated model that combines leadership, competencies, and technological capacity in explaining MSME success.

Despite growing attention to MSME performance, research on the combined influence of womenpreneur leadership, entrepreneurial competencies, and technological capacity on business success remains limited, particularly in the culinary sector in West Java. Previous studies have often examined these variables separately or focused only on financial outcomes, leaving gaps in understanding how leadership and competencies interact through technology to create sustainable success (Miao & Ju, 2020; Nurlatifah et al., 2022; Pulka et al., 2021). The research addresses this gap by proposing an integrated model. By integrating womenpreneur leadership, entrepreneurial competencies, and technological capacity within a unified dynamic capability framework, the research offers both theoretical and practical contributions. The research aims to develop and test a model that explains the role of womenpreneur leadership and entrepreneurial competencies in enhancing business success, with technological capacity as a mediating factor. The findings are expected to make theoretical contributions to entrepreneurship and provide practical insights to strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of culinary MSMEs in Indonesia. In particular, the research focuses on underexplored culinary MSMEs in West Java (Shaya et al., 2026).

Womenpreneur leadership has become an increasingly important factor influencing business success, particularly in the MSME sector. Women-led enterprises in Indonesia demonstrate unique leadership characteristics such as empathy, perseverance, and community orientation that contribute to both financial and social performance (Rafiki et al., 2024; Sajjad et al., 2020). In West Java, womenpreneurs play a pivotal role in sustaining household incomes and driving local economies despite structural constraints, including limited access to finance and training (Nurlatifah et al., 2022; Syahchari & Zanten, 2024). Their leadership is often characterized by transformational and collaborative approaches that foster creativity, inclusivity, and innovation (Aisyah et al., 2023; Hendrayati et al., 2019). Furthermore, womenpreneurs' ability to leverage entrepreneurial resources and adapt to market uncertainty has been shown to enhance enterprise sustainability (Rezaei-Moghaddam et al., 2023; Wibowo et al., 2023). These qualities can advance gender equity and strengthen the

competitiveness of the culinary MSME sector.

Complementing leadership, entrepreneurial competencies represent another critical determinant of MSME performance and survival. Competencies, such as opportunity recognition, strategic thinking, innovation, and networking, enable entrepreneurs to respond effectively to environmental changes (Azalanzazllay et al., 2022; Pulka et al., 2021). These skills are central to building adaptive business models, especially in sectors characterized by high competition and low barriers to entry, such as culinary MSMEs. Then, technological capacity serves as a key mediating mechanism, amplifying the impact of these competencies. Entrepreneurs can improve efficiency, market reach, and customer engagement by enhancing digital literacy and technology adoption (Miao et al., 2024; Neumeyer et al., 2021; Taleb et al., 2025). Thus, integrating womenpreneur leadership, entrepreneurial competencies, and technological capacity provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the multidimensional nature of MSME success in the culinary industry of West Java.

The literature used is highly contemporary, with more than half of the references published within the last five years. It ensures that the theoretical foundation reflects current developments in women's entrepreneurship, digital transformation, and MSME performance, thereby strengthening the relevance and timeliness of the proposed model. The results are expected to provide recommendations for policymakers, entrepreneurship educators, and MSME practitioners to support innovation, empowerment, and sustainable growth in the culinary industry. Based on the theoretical and empirical foundations, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H1: Womenpreneur leadership has a positive effect on technological capacity,
- H2: Entrepreneurial competencies have a positive effect on technological capacity,
- H3: Technological capacity has a positive effect on business success,
- H4: Womenpreneur leadership has a positive effect on business success,
- H5: Entrepreneurial competencies have a positive effect on business success,
- H6: Technological capacity mediates the relationship between womenpreneur leadership and business success,
- H7: Technological capacity mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial competencies and business success.

In summary, the research seeks to address the limited empirical evidence on how women entrepreneurs in the culinary sector can leverage their leadership and competencies to achieve both financial and non-financial success in a digitalized business environment. Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual

framework that explains the relationships among the variables examined. To achieve this aim, the research employs a quantitative approach using Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to analyze the relationships among the variables. The methodology allows for testing complex interdependencies and mediation effects within a single comprehensive model. Overall, the research contributes to filling the research gap in MSME and womenpreneurship literature by offering an integrated view of leadership, competencies, and technology as determinants for business success.

METHODS

The research employs a quantitative research design to examine the influence of womenpreneur leadership and entrepreneurial competencies on business success, with technological capacity as a mediating variable. The quantitative approach allows the relationships among variables to be tested empirically using measurable indicators, ensuring objectivity, reliability, and replicability of findings. Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Form between April and June 2025. The questionnaire consists of closed-ended statements measured on a seven-point interval scale. Before distribution, the instrument has been validated by three experts in entrepreneurship and business management to ensure clarity, content validity, and contextual relevance.

The population in the research consists of 3,940 womenpreneurs operating in the culinary sector in Sukabumi Regency, West Java, Indonesia (Siwiyanti, Suryana, Furqon, et al., 2025). The unit of analysis is individual women entrepreneurs who own or manage MSMEs in the culinary sector. Although business success is measured at the firm level, the perceptions and decisions are captured at the individual entrepreneur level. It ensures consistency

between individual-level constructs (leadership and competencies) and organizational outcomes (business success). A proportional random sampling technique is applied to ensure representation across 27 regencies and cities in West Java. Using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error, the minimum sample size determined is 384 respondents. This sample size is considered adequate for PLS-SEM analysis.

Data analysis is conducted using PLS-SEM with SmartPLS 4.0 software. PLS-SEM is selected for its suitability for predictive and exploratory research models involving complex relationships among latent constructs. It is also appropriate for studies with relatively small to medium sample sizes and does not require strict normality assumptions (Hair et al., 2021). The analysis follows a two-stage procedure. The first stage evaluates the measurement model, including indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Discriminant validity is assessed using both the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait Monotrait (HTMT) ratio to ensure robustness of construct distinctiveness. The second stage evaluates the structural model to test the hypothesized relationships among variables, including direct and indirect (mediating) effects. The significance of the relationships is assessed using a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 resamples. A two-tailed test with a 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$) is applied. Hypotheses are considered supported when t-statistics exceed 1.96 and p-values are below 0.05 (Akther et al., 2024).

All constructs are measured using multiple indicators adapted from previous validated studies. Womenpreneur leadership is measured by six indicators: strategic vision and innovation (WL1), decision-making and risk-taking (WL2), participative leadership (WL3), motivation and empowerment (WL4), adaptability and resilience (WL5), and ethics and social responsibility (WL6) (Aisyah et al., 2023;

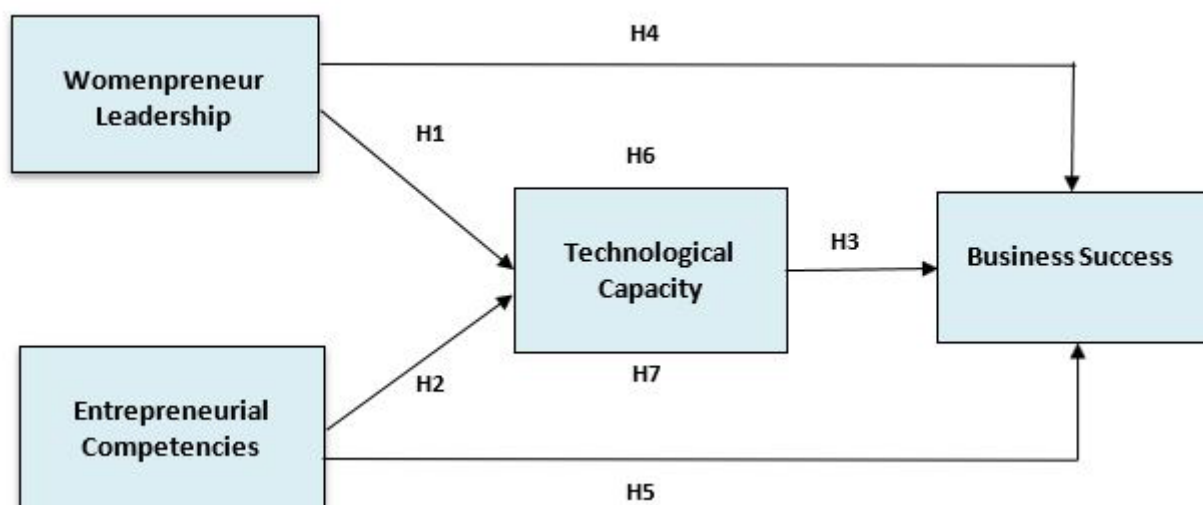


Figure 1 Research Framework

Hendrayati et al., 2025; Rafiki et al., 2024). Then, entrepreneurial competencies comprise four indicators: opportunity creation and innovation (EC1), resource management (EC2), problem-solving and decision-making (EC3), and networking and collaboration (EC4) (Detthamrong et al., 2023; Pulka et al., 2021).

Technological capacity is measured by four indicators: digital technology adoption (TC1), technology infrastructure (TC2), technology system integration (TC3), and technology innovation capabilities (TC4) (Miao et al., 2024; Neumeyer et al., 2021). Meanwhile, business success is measured using two main indicators, namely financial (BS1) and non-financial (BS2). Both of these indicators reflect overall business performance, while aspects such as profitability, growth, customer satisfaction, and reputation are used as operational indicators to represent those performance dimensions (Cho & Lee, 2018; Rochmatullah et al., 2023). All measurement items are tested for reliability and validity using Cronbach's alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and HTMT criteria.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The evaluation of the measurement model aims to ensure that all indicators used in the research are valid and reliable before testing the structural model. The analysis includes indicator reliability through several tests. There are outer loadings, internal consistency reliability using CR, convergent validity with AVE, and discriminant validity using both the Fornell-Larcker criterion and HTMT.

Table 1 shows that most respondents are in the productive age group of 26–45 years. This result indicates that women entrepreneurs in culinary MSMEs are dominated by economically active individuals with strong decision-making capacity and adaptability. The dominance of this group suggests higher involvement in operational and strategic business activities. In contrast, older age groups represent a smaller proportion, indicating lower participation in digitally driven entrepreneurial activities. This demographic condition strengthens the interpretation of the structural model, particularly in explaining the adoption of technological capacity and entrepreneurial behavior.

Table 1 Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
< 25 years	42	10.9%
26–35 years	148	38.5%
36–45 years	121	31.5%
46–55 years	56	14.6%
> 55 years	17	4.5%
Total	384	100%

Table 2 Results of Convergent Validity

Variable	Construct	Loading	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Result
Business Success	BS1	0.887	0.893	0.806	Valid & Reliable
	BS2	0.909			
Entrepreneurial Competencies	EC1	0.798	0.898	0.688	Valid & Reliable
	EC2	0.830			
	EC3	0.822			
	EC4	0.867			
Technological Capacity	TC1	0.893	0.904	0.703	Valid & Reliable
	TC2	0.840			
	TC3	0.820			
	TC4	0.797			
Womenpreneur Leadership	WL1	0.703	0.880	0.551	Valid & Reliable
	WL2	0.719			
	WL3	0.753			
	WL4	0.758			
	WL5	0.797			
	WL6	0.720			

Table 2 presents the results of the convergent validity test for all constructs. The outer loadings for each indicator are above 0.70, indicating that all indicators represent their constructs well. The CR values range from 0.880 to 0.904, exceeding the minimum requirement of 0.70, which indicates strong internal consistency. Likewise, the AVE values are all above 0.50, confirming good convergent validity. These findings demonstrate that all constructs, including womenpreneur leadership, entrepreneurial competencies, technological capacity, and business success, are valid and reliable for further model testing with SmartPLS. All constructs meet the required threshold values (Kyambade et al., 2024).

Table 3 shows the results of the discriminant validity test using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The square roots of the AVE (diagonal values) are higher than the correlations between constructs (off-diagonal values). It confirms that each variable is distinct from the others. Business success (0.898) has greater value than its correlations with other constructs, indicating strong discriminant validity (Hair et al., 2022). Overall, these results demonstrate that the constructs measure different concepts, and there is no multicollinearity problem among the variables in the model.

The HTMT results in Table 4 show that all values are below the 0.90 threshold (Roemer et al., 2021), confirming adequate discriminant validity among the constructs. Each construct is empirically distinct, and there is no issue of discriminant validity in the model. The results indicate that each latent variable captures a unique conceptual domain and does not overlap significantly with other constructs

in the structural model. The assessment results, including the Fornell-Larcker criterion and the HTMT ratio, show that inter-construct correlations remain below the recommended thresholds, confirming adequate separation among variables. Therefore, the measurement model demonstrates strong construct distinctiveness, supporting the validity of subsequent structural analysis and hypothesis testing (Hair et al., 2022).

Table 5 presents the coefficient of determination (R^2) values, which indicate the model's explanatory power. The R^2 for technological capacity is 0.291, meaning that womenpreneur leadership and entrepreneurial competencies collectively account for 29.1% of its variance. Meanwhile, business success has an R^2 of 0.459. Technological capacity, womenpreneur leadership, and entrepreneurial competencies together explain 45.9% of its variance. The remaining 54.1% is influenced by other factors not included in the model. These findings suggest that both endogenous variables exhibit a moderate level of explanatory power within the structural model (Chinnaraju, 2025).

The overall model (measurement and structural) for this output is illustrated in Figure 2. It shows the relationship between latent variables and the indicators used in the research. In addition, this model also describes the direction of influence between the variables tested through structural analysis. By looking at the model as a whole, researchers can understand how the constructs are interrelated and the extent to which the indicators represent the latent variables under study. The measurement results for this model also serve as the basis for evaluating the construct's

Table 3 Results of Discriminant Validity

Fornell-Larcker	BS	EC	TC	WL
Business Success (BS)	0.898			
Entrepreneurial Competencies (EC)	0.440	0.830		
Technological Capacity (TC)	0.528	0.362	0.838	
Womenpreneur Leadership (WL)	0.588	0.334	0.498	0.742

Table 4 Results of Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio

Variables	BS	EC	TC	WL
Business Success (BS)	-	0.523	0.612	0.701
Entrepreneurial Competencies (EC)	0.523	-	0.401	0.376
Technological Capacity (TC)	0.612	0.401	-	0.540
Womenpreneur Leadership (WL)	0.701	0.376	0.540	-

Table 5 Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

	R-Square	Adjusted R-Square
Technological Capacity	0.291	0.287
Business Success	0.459	0.455

validity and reliability before further hypothesis testing. The model confirms that womenpreneur leadership and entrepreneurial competencies influence both technological capacity and business success, while technological capacity acts as a mediating variable that strengthens these relationships.

Using the measurement and structural model in Figure 2 and the bootstrapping method, the results of hypothesis testing can be summarized in Table 6. The bootstrapping procedure is conducted to evaluate the significance of the relationships between variables in the structural model by examining the path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values. Through this approach, the research can determine whether the proposed hypotheses are supported or rejected.

Furthermore, the results presented in Table 6 provide a clearer understanding of the strength and direction of the relationships among the constructs analyzed in this research. These findings also provide important evidence for explaining the empirical relationship between the independent and dependent variables within the proposed research model.

Table 6 shows the results of hypothesis testing using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS. All hypotheses are supported, as indicated by t-statistics greater than 1.96 and p-values below 0.05. Womenpreneur leadership and entrepreneurial competencies have significant positive effects on technological capacity and business success. Moreover, technological capacity also has a significant

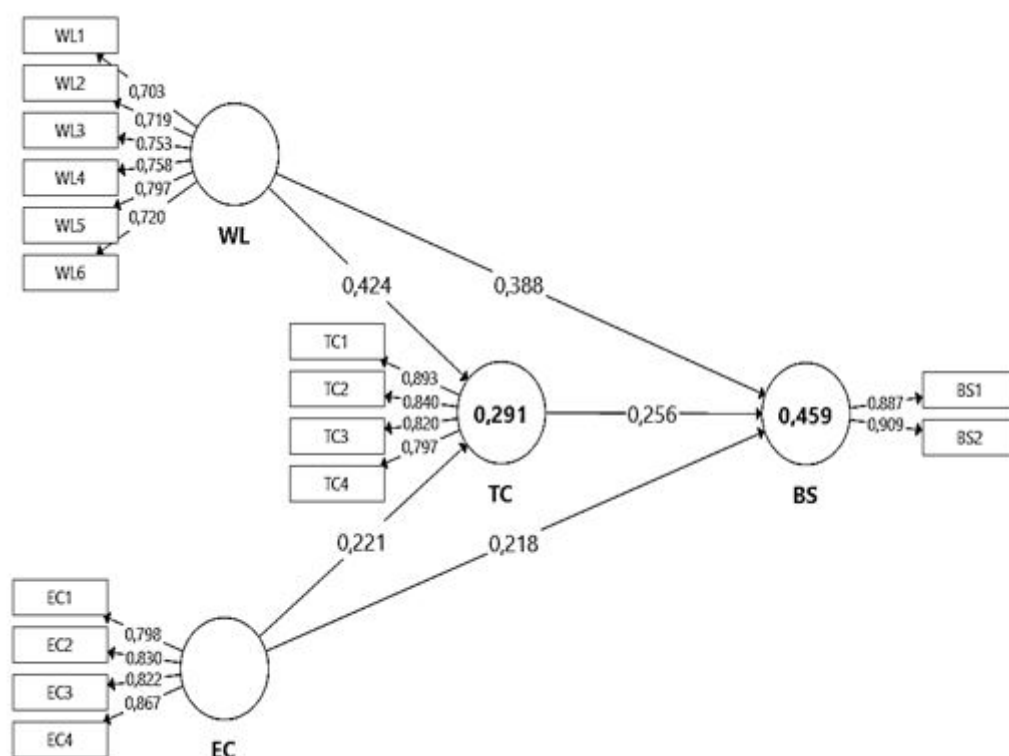


Figure 2 Measurement and Structural Model. It has Womenpreneur Leadership (WL), Technological Capacity (TC), Entrepreneurial Competencies (EC), and Business Success (BS)

Table 6 Results of Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis	Coefficient	T-Statistics	P-Values	Result
H1: WL→TC	0.424	9.373	0.000	Supported
H2: EC→TC	0.221	4.699	0.000	Supported
H3: TC→BS	0.256	5.587	0.000	Supported
H4: WL→BS	0.388	9.814	0.000	Supported
H5: EC→BS	0.218	5.618	0.000	Supported
H6: WL→TC→BS	0.109	4.844	0.000	Supported
H7: EC→TC→BS	0.057	3.321	0.001	Supported

Note: Womenpreneur Leadership (WL), Technological Capacity (TC), Entrepreneurial Competencies (EC), and Business Success (BS).

direct effect on business success. The mediating tests show that technological capacity mediates the relationships of womenpreneur leadership and entrepreneurial competencies with business success, confirming its important role as a bridge between leadership, competencies, and business success. These findings support the idea that personal and organizational competencies together determine how MSMEs adapt and compete in the digital era. Thus, the research reinforces the importance of leadership and technological capability in shaping business success within the MSME context in Indonesia.

The differences in the strength of relationships among variables can be explained by the contextual characteristics of culinary MSMEs in Indonesia. Womenpreneur leadership shows the strongest effect on business success, indicating that in small culinary businesses, decision-making speed, personal control, and direct customer interaction play a dominant role in driving performance. In contrast, entrepreneurial competencies have a relatively lower effect because many MSMEs operate under informal structures, where strategic planning and resource optimization are still developing. Technological capacity acts as a complementary mechanism that strengthens both leadership and competencies. However, its impact is slightly lower due to uneven digital adoption levels among culinary entrepreneurs in West Java.

In the context of Indonesian culinary MSMEs, business operations are highly dependent on owner-based decision-making and customer proximity. This makes leadership a more dominant driver compared to structured managerial competencies. Moreover, the variation in digital infrastructure and digital literacy across regions also explains why technological capacity does not uniformly exceed the effects of human-based factors.

The dominance of respondents in the productive age group strengthens the empirical results. Womenpreneurs aged 26–45 years tend to show higher adaptability in adopting digital technologies, developing competencies, and implementing innovative leadership practices. This condition supports the effectiveness of technological capacity as a mediating mechanism in translating leadership and competencies into business success.

The significant influence of womenpreneur leadership on technological capacity and business success aligns with the findings of Aparisi-Torrijo and Ribes-Giner (2022), Hossain et al. (2025), and Brush et al. (2024). They have emphasized that effective women leaders often exhibit transformational qualities that foster innovation, collaboration, and ethical management. In the research, these leadership characteristics appear to enhance MSMEs' readiness to adopt and integrate digital tools, including online marketing, cashless payments, and data-driven decision-making. This result supports the view that leadership plays a strategic role in transforming vision into digital action. Womenpreneurs who practice participative and visionary leadership can build trust

among team members and encourage creativity, which leads to innovation and improved business outcomes. These results also highlight that leadership is not only about direction and control but also about nurturing an adaptive culture that embraces technological change and continuous learning.

The relationship between womenpreneur leadership and business success also indicates that leadership style and values shape organizational resilience. Leaders who inspire and communicate effectively are more capable of guiding their businesses through uncertainty. In the context of culinary MSMEs, which face intense competition and frequent market shifts, leadership becomes the main driver of performance improvement. Womenpreneurs with high leadership capability can balance both business goals and social responsibility, leading to sustainable success. Therefore, leadership can be viewed as both a personal strength and a strategic asset that enables MSMEs to survive and grow in a digital and competitive environment.

The influence of entrepreneurial competencies on technological capacity and business success also supports the previous findings of Park and Kim (2025), Pennetta et al. (2024), Taleghani and Taleghani (2025), and Pulka et al. (2021). Entrepreneurial competencies include opportunity creation, innovation, resource management, problem-solving, and networking. These competencies are essential behavioral attributes that strengthen a business's capacity to innovate and respond to environmental change. In the research, MSME owners or managers who show higher entrepreneurial competencies are found to be more proactive in adopting digital platforms, integrating technology into business operations, and maintaining effective collaboration with suppliers, customers, and communities. This result suggests that entrepreneurial competencies not only enhance decision-making and resource allocation but also promote technological readiness and sustainable performance.

The positive relationship between entrepreneurial competencies and business success further indicates that these competencies function as dynamic capabilities that enable adaptation in a rapidly changing environment. Entrepreneurs with strong opportunity recognition and resource management skills can identify new market niches, reduce operational costs, and sustain profitability. Networking and collaboration competencies, as highlighted by Pansuwong et al. (2023), also facilitate access to knowledge, technology, and financial resources. Therefore, the result emphasizes that entrepreneurial competencies remain a core determinant of success, especially when complemented by adequate technological capacity.

Technological capacity also has a significant direct effect on business success, as it enables MSMEs to operate more efficiently and respond more quickly to market demands. When entrepreneurs adopt digital technologies, they can streamline business processes, improve transaction speed, and enhance customer

engagement through online platforms and digital marketing channels. This condition directly contributes to increased sales performance, cost efficiency, and service quality. Previous studies have shown that digital capability strengthens firm performance by improving information processing, operational coordination, and speed of innovation in small businesses (Miao et al., 2024; Neumeyer et al., 2021). In addition, access to adequate technological infrastructure and digital tools enables MSMEs to expand their market reach and improve competitiveness without relying heavily on traditional operational structures (Huong et al., 2024; Sulaeman et al., 2024). Therefore, technological capacity not only functions as a mediator but also as an independent driver that directly enhances business success in digitalized MSME environments.

The mediating role of technological capacity provides additional insight into how leadership and competencies contribute to business success. The mediation analysis confirms a partial mediation effect of technological capacity. According to Hair et al. (2021), partial mediation occurs when independent variables influence both the mediator and the dependent variable simultaneously. It indicates that technological capacity does not fully replace the role of leadership and competencies but strengthens their impact. This finding implies that womenpreneur leadership and entrepreneurial competencies still have direct strategic importance, while technological capacity acts as an enhancing mechanism rather than a substitute.

The findings confirm the dynamic capability theory proposed by Pitelis et al. (2024), suggesting that firms achieve competitive advantage by sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring resources in response to technological change. In the research, technological capacity (including digital technology adoption, infrastructure, system integration, and innovation capabilities) serves as a mechanism that transforms leadership vision and entrepreneurial skill into measurable business outcomes. When women entrepreneurs possess strong leadership and competencies but have limited technological readiness, performance improvement remains partial. However, when technological capacity is well developed, the potential of leadership and competencies is fully realized. This finding is consistent with Neumeyer et al. (2021), Wurth et al. (2023), and Miao et al. (2024), who have found that digital literacy and innovation capacity are key mediators in linking managerial factors to performance in small enterprises.

From a theoretical perspective, this research contributes by integrating womenpreneur leadership and entrepreneurial competencies within the framework of dynamic capability and digital transformation. It extends prior studies that have examined these constructs separately by showing their joint effect through technological capacity. The proposed model emphasizes that business success is determined not only by traditional managerial practices but also by the ability to integrate technology strategically. Hence, this research provides a more comprehensive view of

how women-led MSMEs build competitive advantage in the digital economy.

Practically, the findings suggest that programs supporting women entrepreneurs should focus on enhancing both leadership and entrepreneurial competencies, alongside strengthening digital capacity. Training modules can be designed to improve strategic thinking, communication, and innovation skills among womenpreneurs. Government agencies, universities, and industry associations may collaborate to provide workshops on digital marketing, financial technology, and technology integration for MSMEs. Strengthening these aspects will help women-led businesses to improve efficiency, expand market reach, and ensure sustainability. Policymakers should also recognize that empowering women entrepreneurs in the digital economy can have a broad socio-economic impact, promoting inclusive growth and community resilience.

An interesting insight from the research is that while technological capacity plays a mediating role, the direct effects of leadership and competencies on business success remain strong. The result indicates that human and behavioral aspects still dominate MSME performance outcomes. However, as digital transformation becomes more critical, the mediating role of technology is expected to grow stronger over time. Therefore, longitudinal data can be examined to understand how technological capacity evolves and interacts with leadership behavior and competencies in different stages of business growth (Huong et al., 2024).

Overall, the findings highlight that womenpreneur leadership and entrepreneurial competencies form the strategic foundation for MSME success, while technological capacity acts as a key enabler of innovation and adaptability. Together, these factors create a synergy that allows women-led MSMEs to thrive in the digital age. The research not only strengthens theoretical understanding but also offers practical direction for empowering womenpreneurs to achieve sustainable and competitive business performance.

CONCLUSION

The research examines how womenpreneur leadership and entrepreneurial competencies influence business success, with technological capacity as a mediating variable, in women-led culinary MSMEs in West Java, Indonesia. The research addresses the limited empirical evidence on how womenpreneur leadership and entrepreneurial competencies influence business success, with technological capacity as a mediating variable, in culinary MSMEs. The results confirm that effective leadership and strong entrepreneurial competencies significantly improve technological capacity and business performance. Technological capacity plays a crucial mediating role by transforming leadership vision and competencies into tangible outcomes, thus supporting the dynamic capability framework.

The findings highlight that leadership, competencies, and technology are complementary drivers of MSME success in the digital era. Womenpreneurs who demonstrate strategic vision, participative decision-making, and resilience can lead their businesses toward innovation and sustainability. Entrepreneurial competencies further enhance adaptability and problem-solving skills, while technological readiness strengthens competitive advantage. These insights can guide policymakers and institutions in designing empowerment programs that integrate leadership development, entrepreneurial training, and digital literacy for women-led MSMEs.

However, the research has several limitations. The data are collected only from the culinary sector in West Java, Indonesia, which may limit the generalizability of the results to other regions or industries. The cross-sectional design also prevents observation of long-term changes in leadership behavior and technological adaptation. Future research can use longitudinal or comparative approaches to analyze how technological capacity evolves over time or across sectors. Adding qualitative methods may also enrich understanding of the personal experiences and contextual factors that influence womenpreneurs' business success. Strengthening womenpreneur leadership, entrepreneurial competencies, and technological capacity simultaneously is essential to enhance MSME sustainability and competitiveness in the digital economy.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Designed the research framework and conceptual model, L. S.; Distributed and collected survey data from respondents, L. S.; Conducted PLS-SEM analysis using SmartPLS 4, L. S.; Prepared the manuscript and results interpretation, L. S.; Supervised research design and methodological framework, H. H.; Provided methodological guidance for PLS-SEM analysis, H. H.; Reviewed and refined manuscript structure and academic writing, H. H.; Assisted in validation of instruments and theoretical framework, L. P.; Supported statistical interpretation and model evaluation, L. P.; Provided critical review of discussion and theoretical alignment, L. P.; Assisted in literature review and international journal integration, N. A. B. I.; and Provided cross-country perspective on women entrepreneurship research, N. A. B. I.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The data that support the findings of this study

are available from the corresponding author, Leonita Siwiyanti, upon reasonable request. The dataset consists of survey responses from womenpreneurs in culinary MSMEs in West Java, Indonesia. Due to confidentiality and ethical considerations related to respondent privacy, the data cannot be publicly shared.

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