

Investigate Strategic Ambidexterity: How Environmental Dynamism Affects Networking Capability in Small Businesses

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Abstract.

This study intends to investigate strategic ambidexterity (STA) by examining how environmental dynamism (EN) affects networking capability (NE) in small businesses. In addition, the moderating influence of EN on the relationship between NE and STA is examined. The association between networking capability, environmental dynamism, and strategic ambidexterity was determined by analyzing the responses from a survey of 185 small business owners in the province of West Java. The research has employed survey questionnaires and smart PLS for data analysis. This study indicated that small business networking capability and environmental dynamism directly affected strategic ambidexterity. However, this study's outcomes reveal that environmental dynamism as a moderator in the relationship between networking capability and strategic ambidexterity is insignificant.

Keywords: *Strategic ambidexterity, networking capability, and environmental dynamism, small business.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Promoting entrepreneurship is a pressing matter of concern for Indonesia's economic growth. Indonesia has the most significant Small Medium Enterprises population in Asia, it continues to be a lower middle-income nation, but its fast-expanding middle class is creating new market opportunities (1). The country's comparatively slow economic development, especially compared to other Asian countries, is sometimes blamed on a lack of entrepreneurial spirit (2). In Indonesia, SME policy is also a foundation of attempts to reduce poverty; as a result, this nation places a more considerable emphasis on assisting micro companies. Fewer barriers to entrance in these small and medium-sized business sectors increase competition (3). Consequently, the market becomes highly competitive, and in order to thrive, small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) must develop strategies that are both long-term stable and flexible (3). Small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) rely primarily on their capacity to build fruitful relationships to thrive in today's dynamic business environment. There has been a rise in studies over the past two decades that examine how joining networks—both formal and informal—benefits enterprises (4). A network consists of nodes and ties signifying their connectedness or lack thereof, while actors are nodes such as individuals, work units, or organizations (5) Network capability is a company's ability to build and exploit internal and external ties as a strategic competency that allows organizations to share expertise and knowledge (6). Previous studies have discussed network capability related to knowledge and learning as strategic actions innovation.

Due to rising environmental complexity, this research demonstrates that innovation success depends on the knowledge required for collaboration (7). Another study reviewed network capabilities, and the flow of strategic information with their supply chain partners helped reduce SME performance decline (8). In addition, Mu et al. (9) reveals that new product development (NPD) performance is most excellent when market (entrepreneurial) orientation, networking capacity, and networking skills are vital. This study introduces the notion of networking capability (NC) as a sophisticated organizational capability geared toward managing commercial relationships throughout all of their critical stages of development (10). Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) that want to enter the market face obstacles that make cross-border procurement challenging and reduce their chances of being awarded contracts. The ability to network is essential for overcoming obstacles and improving performance (11). Even in the most prosperous

entrepreneurship environment, a company's success hinges on its founder's network competence (NC) (12). In the strategic management literature, however, there is still room for dispute on research on networking capability as a small business strategy strength in a dynamic environment. It is necessary to comprehend small business networks to comprehend their actions and results. A business is said to have a network if it can nurture and spread it to achieve specific goals (13). Strategic management is distinguished by its emphasis on the firm's competitive environment (14). In order to survive and thrive, an organization must find a match or fit between the needs of its competitive environment and its internal management systems (14,15). According to the study, product development efforts in contexts with high degrees of dynamism and complexity seek and promote both exploratory and exploitative behaviors through an ambidextrous knowledge strategy (16).

Entrepreneurs in these businesses drive innovation by introducing novel goods and services, adopting novel methods of increasing productivity, and developing novel business models (12). Businesses can better align their resources with reputable partners through these mutually beneficial synergies to fortify their current capabilities. Organizations operate as a system of interacting actors with common objectives for generating and realizing value. Strategic change is a crucial trend since it serves as a mechanism by which companies can sustain their shift in competitiveness and environmental change, which generally pose challenges to their effective performance and are known as environmental dynamism (17). The rate of change and the degree of unpredictability in the environment are called its "dynamism," with changes in technologies, customer preferences, and market demands falling under this category (18). Environmental dynamism indicates the perceived frequency of any change in the management team, technology, customer preferences, competitive activity, regulation, and suppliers, as well as turnover in the external and task environment's marketing forces (19). In addition, businesses add to the uncertainty on purpose, albeit sometimes unwittingly (20). Environmental dynamism plays a decisive role as a moderator of relationships involving entrepreneurs' venture performance in various contexts (21). The literature argues that a dynamic environment necessitates innovative conduct and higher risk tolerance. The previous study reveals that environmental dynamism significantly moderates the association between transformational leadership and new venture performance (22).

According to the findings of earlier research, the environment's dynamism has a substantial impact on entrepreneurial orientation (23). Recent research indicates that the dynamic nature of the environment strengthens the link between effectuation and business model innovation (24). Even the uncertainty in green product innovation provides new insights into Eco-innovation (20). The link between entrepreneurship and environmental dynamics has been the subject of research. Nevertheless, research on entrepreneurial networks and environmental dynamism still needs further study. Product and market characteristics are dynamic; the continued exploitation of present product markets includes incremental learning, constant enhancement of product features, and better customer satisfaction (25). Product innovation requires strategic ambidexterity and an examination of the roles of external knowledge sources and internal information sharing (26). Exploitative and exploratory operations can strengthen the market competitiveness of a company in a complementary manner (27). Ambidextrous describes a business that can successfully traverse internal and external environmental shifts (28). Strategic ambidexterity is an effective and preferred method for companies to learn and develop in the face of uncertainty (3). Strategic ambidexterity can be achieved by combining exploration and exploitation across or within functional domains (25). This study intends to investigate strategic ambidexterity by examining how environmental dynamism affects networking capability in small businesses. This research aims to contribute to the rapidly expanding body of literature on ambidexterity and has several critical implications for the entrepreneurial field and policymakers. First, it contributes to the ambidexterity approach by shedding light on how small businesses maintain products and markets. It adds to an ambidextrous view of small businesses (25,27).

Secondly, it contributes to the networking capability perspective by shedding light on how small businesses learn to expand and retain their networks (12,29). However, a small business may encounter an abundance of complex uncertainties. Our findings imply that they can manage these uncertainties in ways that are well-maintained on product and market innovation, Given prior studies, networking capability and

environmental dynamism may play a role in the effect of strategic ambidexterity on small businesses. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed (Figure 1):

H1: Environmental dynamism affects small business strategic ambidexterity

H2: The link between networking capability and strategic ambidexterity is moderated by environmental dynamism

H3: Strategic ambidexterity is directly influenced by the networking capability

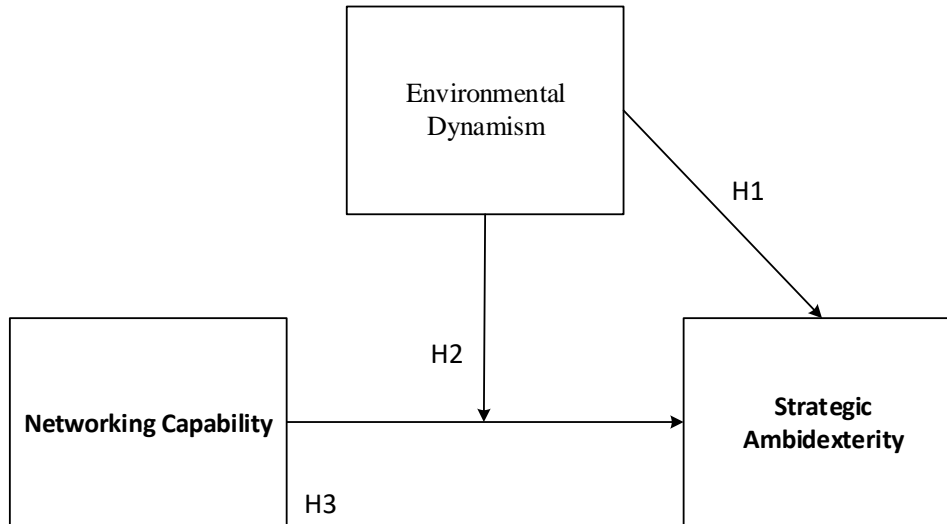


Fig 1.Research Framework

II. METHODS

This research was carried out in the context of small businesses in Jawa Barat, Indonesia. According to the Menegkop and UKM, a Small Business, is a business entity with net assets of less than Rp. 200,000,000,- excluding land and building of business premises, and annual sales of less than Rp.1.000.000.000,-(2). Small businesses are considered the primary growth engine in a healthy economy(12,30,31). The food service industry was the primary focus of this research. These small business sectors have a lower barrier to entry, which should lead to increased competition (3). Over two months, the questionnaire was distributed to the owner or managers of small businesses. The total number of small business owners invited to participate in this anonymous survey was 350, and 185 responded.

This study employs Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), with a recommended sample size of 100-200 (32). The primary analytical method used to test and analyze research data is the Structural Equation Modeling method using Smart PLS software. This method is widely used in social science research which uses perception a lot (33). Three factors were used in the development of the proposed research model: strategic ambidexterity (STA), networking capability (NE), and environmental dynamism (EN). Strategic ambidexterity consists of two dimensions, product (exploration and exploitation) and market (exploration and exploitation). Twelve indicators were presented by He & Wong to evaluate STA (25,34). Seven indicators are used to calculate NE, as suggested by (29). The extent of EN was measured with tools developed for an earlier investigation (35,36). The questionnaire's Likert-scale response options range from strongly disagree to agree on the seven scales strongly.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Figure 1 depicts the measurement analysis model for convergent validity in measuring strategic ambidexterity based on networking capability and environmental dynamism. Model analyses of measurement findings for indicators of each component are displayed in Table 1 and Figure 2.

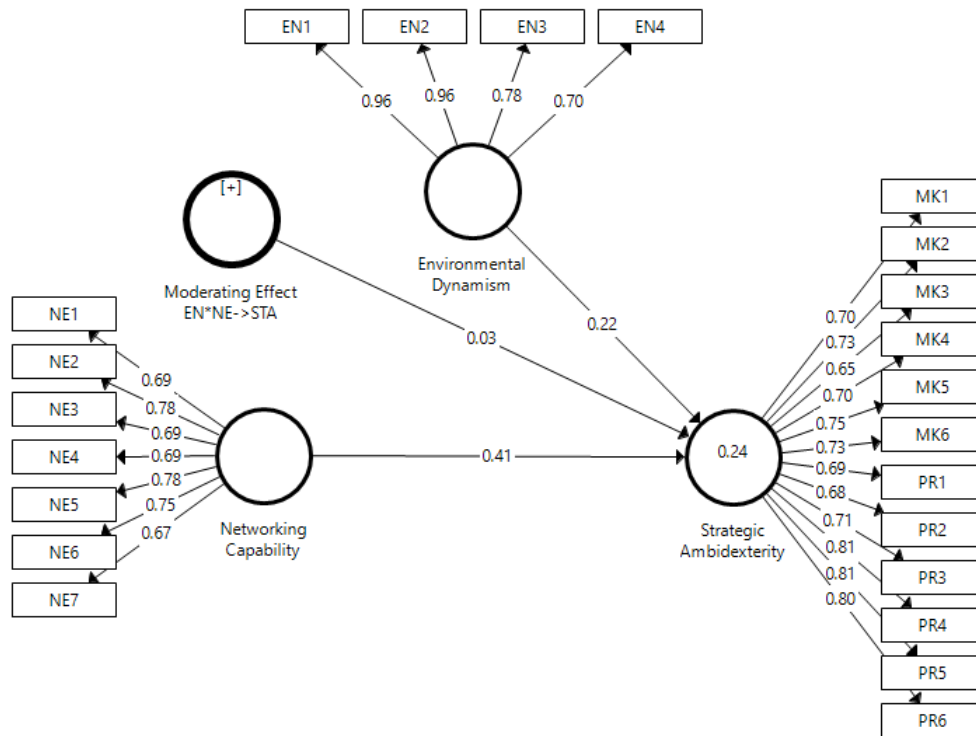


Fig 2.PLS Algorithm Calculation

Strategic ambidexterity loadings varied from 0.647 to 0.814 across the board. Likewise, networking capability has an outer loading range of 0,667 to 0,796. At the same time, environmental dynamism has an outer loading range of 0,703 to 0,964. All loading factors greater than 0.6 indicate that the indicator has reliability, as shown in Table 1 (Hair Jr, Sarstedt, et al., 2017).

Table 1. Convergent Validity Results

| Construct | Item | Loading |
|-------------------------|------|---------|
| Strategic Ambidexterity | MK1 | 0,705 |
| | MK2 | 0,731 |
| | MK3 | 0,647 |
| | MK4 | 0,702 |
| | MK5 | 0,747 |
| | MK6 | 0,735 |
| | PR1 | 0,691 |
| | PR2 | 0,683 |
| | PR3 | 0,706 |
| | PR4 | 0,806 |
| | PR5 | 0,814 |
| | PR6 | 0,796 |
| Networking Capability | NE1 | 0,687 |
| | NE2 | 0,778 |
| | NE3 | 0,688 |
| | NE4 | 0,694 |
| | NE5 | 0,776 |
| | NE6 | 0,745 |
| | NE7 | 0,667 |
| Environmental Dynamism | EN1 | 0,958 |
| | EN2 | 0,964 |
| | EN3 | 0,784 |
| | EN4 | 0,703 |

Additionally, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value for each construct was analyzed as part of the validity test. The AVE value analysis findings are shown in Table 2. If the AVE value is more significant than 0.5, then the average construct accounts for more than 50% of the variation in the indicator (37,38). AVE of strategic ambidexterity (0,536), networking capability (0,519), and environmental dynamism (0,739) are valid. Construct reliability was measured using CR (Composite Reliability) and CA (Cronbach's Alpha). To summarize Table 2, the internal consistency reliability for all three constructs is over 0.7 (strategic ambidexterity: CA= 0,921 and CR =0,932), networking capability: CA= 0,849 and CR =0,883, and environmental dynamism: CA= 0,898 and CR =0,918).

Table 2. Construct Reliability and Validity

| | CA | CR | AVE |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Environmental Dynamism | 0,898 | 0,918 | 0,739 |
| Moderating Effect EN*NE->STA | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 |
| Networking Capability | 0,849 | 0,883 | 0,519 |
| Strategic Ambidexterity | 0,921 | 0,932 | 0,536 |

It means that all constructs are valid across all indicators. These assertions are supported by Table 3, which discusses discriminant validity. In this study, none of the values in Table 3 for the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio are more significant than 0.90 (38). The validity and reliability analysis demonstrates that the constructs and indicators of the research framework are all solid.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|---|
| 1. Environmental Dynamism | | | | |
| 2. Moderating Effect EN*NE->STA | 0,028 | | | |
| 3. Networking Capability | 0,171 | 0,127 | | |
| 4. Strategic Ambidexterity | 0,249 | 0,083 | 0,441 | |

T-statistics of direct and total effects between construct were calculated using path parameter coefficients to assess the quality of the structural model used in this research. The PLS Algorithm and bootstrapping results are displayed in Table 4, Figure 2, and Figure 3.

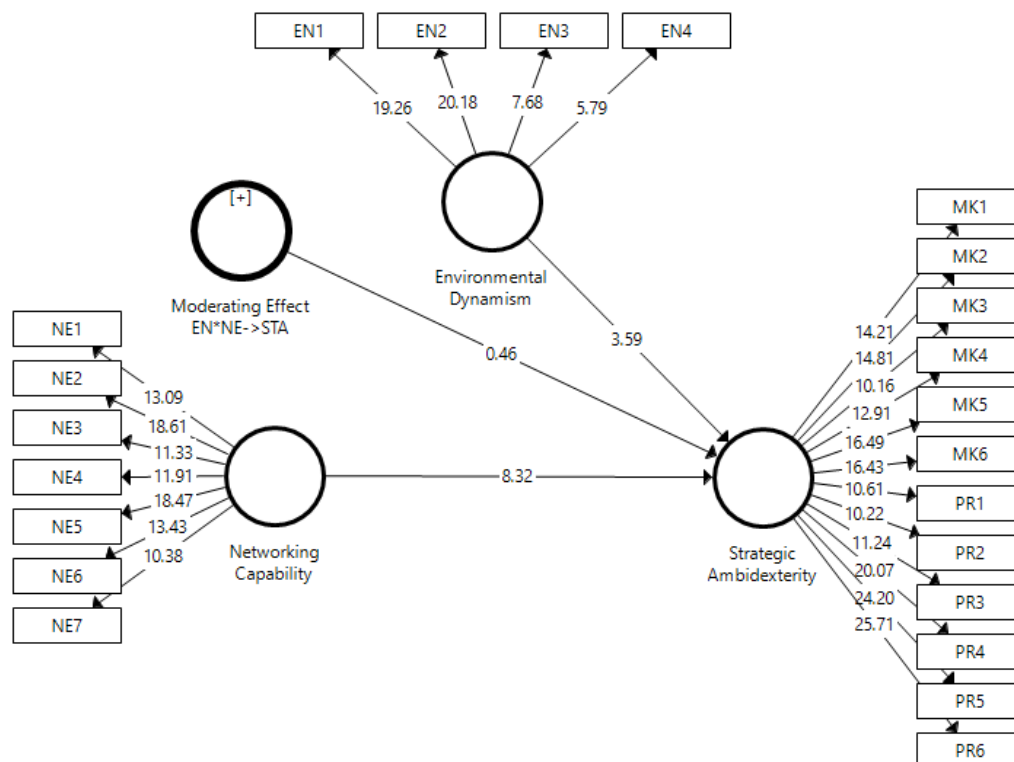


Fig 3. Bootstrapping Calculation

The hypotheses might be tested with the structural model analysis results. The outcomes of 5000 replicates of the bootstrapping analysis are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Hypothesizes Testing

| Hypotheses | Path Coeff | T Statistics | P Values | Result |
|----------------------------------|------------|-----------------|-------------|------------------|
| H1: EN -> STA | 0,216 | 3,653 | 0,000 | Supported |
| H2: Moderating Effect EN*NE->STA | 0,027 | 0,464 | 0,643 | Not Supported |
| H3: NE -> STA | 0,408 | 8,486 | 0,000 | Supported |

H1 has path coefficients of 0,216 (t-Statistics = 3,683 and p-Value= 0,000). All indications lead to a statistically significant positive association between environmental change and STA, confirming hypothesis 1. This finding supports the hypothesis that environmental dynamism increases the positive effect of innovation ambidexterity on firm performance and underlines the significance of this attribute (39). Changes in consumer preferences necessitate ambidexterity in business. Research demonstrates that dynamic environmental cues influence the effect of corporate resources and capabilities on firm behavior, operations, and performance(19). In contrast, H2 is rejected because the path has t-Statistics of 0,464 and p-Values of 0,643 (greater than 0.05). Previous investigations support these conclusions. Environmental change does not affect the technological capacity to promote organizational ambidexterity (40). Likewise, environmental dynamism was not supported as a moderator on the association between strategic change and firm performance (17).

While other studies demonstrate that environmental dynamism has a considerable negative moderating influence on the connection between transactional leadership and new venture performance, this study demonstrates that environmental dynamism has no effect (22). Changes in consumer behavior necessitate businesses in the service behavior sector to innovate new service patterns to remain competitive continuously (41). Companies working in more dynamic contexts are more likely to consider an entrepreneurial mindset as the key to boosting their performance (19). The ability to form networks is contingent on developing relationships through time. However, STA is unaffected by the unpredictable environment dynamics or the networking capability. Meanwhile, H3 (t-Statistics =8,486 and p-Values= 0,000) has 0,391 in path coefficient, which is acceptable. It may be concluded from the test results that NE has a positive and significant influence on STA. These findings are consistent with earlier research and indicate that businesses can provide expertise to get strategic performance through networks (6,42). This study also supports a substantial relationship between NE and innovativeness and competitive aggression on small business performance (12).

Table 5. Value of the Coefficient of Determination

| | R Square | R Square Adjusted |
|-------------------------|----------|-------------------|
| Strategic Ambidexterity | 0,239 | 0,226 |

Table 5 demonstrates that the R Square value for strategic ambidexterity was 0.239, indicating that networking capability and environmental dynamism can explain 23,9 percent of the effect as an exogenous variable.

IV. CONCLUSION

Growing the country's entrepreneurial spirit is crucial to the country's economic future. By delving into the relationship between networking capability and environmental dynamism, this study hopes to contribute new knowledge to strategic ambidexterity. In order to verify the hypothesis, a method called partial least squares structural equation modeling is employed (PLS-SEM). This study supports the influence of environmental dynamism and networking capability on strategic ambidexterity in SMEs in Indonesia's small business sectors. This research shows that the ability to network is crucial to small-business ambidexterity. This study sheds light on why small businesses must expand their networks. This study's findings refute the notion that environmental dynamism as a moderator has a favorable relationship with

networking capability and strategic ambidexterity. Companies need to be prepared for and ready to respond quickly to environmental changes, especially in the lead-up to a crisis (43). Strategic ambidexterity is challenging for organizations due to several factors that make it necessary to pick between a less detailed and riskier alternate plan and a safer one (20).

Changes in customer tastes are an exciting issue, and businesses must continue to innovate to maintain their sustainability. Innovation is often regarded as the most crucial factor in determining a company's performance and a nation's economic prosperity(44). This research has implications for small business owners and managers. This study suggests that small business owners should understand the most effective market or product-related strategies for adapting to environmental pressure to maximize their strategic options when confronted with various effects and environmental dynamics. In addition, comprehending networking capacity and environmental dynamism is anticipated to increase insights and the growing number of startups or new entrepreneurs. The unpredictability is a severe blow to the business world and the economy, particularly for entrepreneurs just starting (45). Although on the other hand, uncertainty can be both an opportunity and a challenge for business continuity. Despite the depth of the analysis presented here, two caveats should be considered when interpreting the results. Since our sample was limited to small businesses, future research must focus on medium and large organizations to ensure generalizability. We believe that small business networking skills hold enormous promise for understanding the complexity of how products and markets must collaborate to achieve strategic ambidexterity. Future research will evaluate networking capability by measuring customer relationship ties.

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