



The Influence of Product Innovation on Marketing Performance through Competitive Advantage in Rattan MSMEs in Cirebon Regency

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Abstract

Rattan MSMEs in Cirebon Regency play a significant role in supporting Indonesia's handicraft industry and contributing to national export performance. However, increasing global competition, changing consumer preferences, and market uncertainty continue to challenge the ability of these enterprises to maintain sustainable marketing performance. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the influence of product innovation on marketing performance with competitive advantage as a mediating variable. A quantitative approach with a causal associative research design was employed. The study involved 102 rattan MSMEs selected from a population of 136 business units using the Slovin sampling technique. Data were collected through structured questionnaires using a five-point Likert scale and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS software. The findings indicate that product innovation has a positive and significant effect on both competitive advantage and marketing performance. In addition, competitive advantage significantly influences marketing performance and serves as a mediating variable in the relationship between product innovation and marketing performance. These results suggest that continuous product innovation can strengthen the competitive position of rattan MSMEs, which in turn improves their marketing performance. The study provides practical implications for MSME managers in developing innovation-driven strategies to achieve sustainable competitiveness and business growth.

INTRODUCTION

The rattan industry is a strategic sector in Indonesia's global economy. Together with Southeast Asian countries, Indonesia controls around 80-90% of the world's rattan supply, making it the main producer and exporter. Indonesian rattan products, especially furniture and household crafts, have penetrated international markets such as the United States, Europe, and Japan. At the domestic level, Cirebon Regency is known as one of the largest rattan industry centers in Indonesia with the majority of business actors coming from the MSME sector.

This phenomenon shows that the rattan industry in Indonesia still has competitive advantages such as abundant supply of raw materials and status as a leading exporter but is also faced with challenges such as production variations, dependence on natural forests, problems in the raw material supply chain, and the need for downstream and technological development. For example, although Indonesia produces and exports large quantities of rattan, the production of rattan raw materials has declined in recent years due to land conversion and deforestation.

Cirebon Regency's rattan and furniture export data for the 2020-2025 period shows significant fluctuations. The value of exports increased sharply from IDR 101 billion in 2020 to IDR 181 billion in 2021, but declined again in 2022 and 2023. This condition reflects the

instability of marketing performance influenced by the consistency of innovation and high global competition, especially from Vietnam and China. In 2024, exports will again increase to IDR 156 billion in line with the implementation of design innovations and product quality improvements. However, in November 2025, the export value will fall again to Rp 95 billion. These fluctuations show that the marketing performance of rattan MSMEs in Cirebon Regency is still vulnerable to market changes and depends on the sustainability of competitive advantage.

The fluctuation phenomenon shows that rattan MSME product innovation has not been carried out consistently and sustainably (Khurana *et al.* 2022; Agasty *et al.* 2023). When product innovation increases, marketing performance tends to improve, while a decrease in innovation has an impact on weakening marketing performance (Muñoz-Pascual *et al.* 2019). This condition is further aggravated by global competition from rattan producing countries such as Vietnam and China as well as external obstacles in the form of high import tariff policies in the United States market. Therefore, rattan MSMEs in Cirebon Regency are required not only to innovate, but also to be able to build a strong competitive advantage.

The research (Feranika *et al.*, 2023) reinforces the view that product innovation and competitive advantage are elements that are directly related to marketing performance, while highlighting the mediating function of competitive advantage that fits perfectly with the model you are using (Product Innovation, Competitive Advantage, Marketing Performance), albeit in different contexts (Jambi MSMEs versus Rattan SMEs in Cirebon Regency).

Competitive Advantage (Z) is considered crucial for marketing performance (Y), because it reflects the advantages of a business over its rivals. These advantages can include unique designs, superior quality, more competitive prices and value, more efficient service, or a more positive product reputation among consumers. Companies that have a strong competitive advantage tend to be more in demand and remembered by customers, so they have the potential to achieve higher sales and better customer loyalty. Therefore, the stronger the competitive advantage of MSMEs, the more optimal the marketing performance produced. These findings are in line with international studies (Handayani *et al.*, n.d.-a) which show that market orientation and product innovation affect competitive advantage, and affirm their role in improving the performance of SMEs in unstable market conditions.

Based on the opinion (Chalirafi *et al.*, 2024a) in a study titled "Analysis of Product Innovation on Market Performance with Innovation Performance and Competitive Advantage as Mediating Variables", product innovation produces a positive and significant influence on marketing performance, which emphasizes that the ability of MSMEs to create new products, make design updates, and also improve quality is a crucial strategy to increase the power of competition. In addition, product innovation has a positive impact on competitive advantage which results in a positive influence on marketing performance (Pratama Jaka Satria Wibawa, n.d.)

A study (Sudirjo & Sulistiyani, 2023) in the Journal of Industrial and Logistics Management shows that product innovation produces a positive and significant influence on competitive advantage, and this competitive advantage has a significant influence on marketing performance. These findings confirm that product innovation not only has a direct impact on marketing performance, but also strengthens the company's competitive position. Furthermore, the study (Made *et al.*, n.d.-a) shows that the mediating role of competitive advantage is

significant in the link between product innovation and marketing performance, with a positive and meaningful contribution to improving marketing performance.

In the context of this study, there is still a gap related to the bond between product innovation and marketing performance of rattan MSMEs in Cirebon Regency. Although product innovation in terms of design, raw materials, and quality is indicated to have a significant impact on export performance, studies that specifically measure the influence of product innovation on the marketing performance of rattan MSMEs are still limited. In addition, the role of competitive advantage as a mediating variable that strengthens the bond of product innovation and marketing performance has not been widely studied. Previous studies tend to focus on innovation without considering sustainable competitiveness, which is crucial in maintaining the position of MSMEs in the global market. Therefore, this study is aimed at filling this gap through an in-depth examination of the influence of product innovation on marketing performance and the role of competitive advantage in strengthening these bonds.

METHOD

Research Design

This study used a quantitative approach with a type of causal associative research, which aims to analyze the cause-effect relationship (Sugiyono, 2019). Among the variables of Product Innovation (X), Competitive Advantage (Z), and Marketing Performance (Y) in rattan MSMEs in Cirebon district. This research will examine the extent to which product innovation can improve marketing performance through competitive advantage, as well as identify the mediating role of competitive advantage

1. Product Innovation (X) acts as an independent variable,
2. Competitive Advantage (Z) as a mediation variable, and
3. Marketing Performance (Y) as a bound variable.

Population and Sample

1. Population: all 136 units of Rattan MSMEs in Cirebon Regency

$$\text{Formula} = n = \frac{N}{1 + N \cdot e^2}$$

2. n = sample size,
3. N= total population,
4. e= tolerated margin of error

$$n = \frac{136}{1 + 136 \cdot (0,05)^2} = = = = 101.49 \text{ or rounded } 102 \quad \frac{136}{1 + 136 \cdot 0,0025} \quad \frac{136}{1 + 0,34} \quad \frac{136}{1,34}$$

5. Sample: 102 respondents were determined using the Slovin technique

Data Types and Sources

1. Primary Data: Primary data was obtained through the distribution of questionnaires distributed to rattan MSME actors in Cirebon district.
2. Secondary Data: Secondary data is obtained from relevant annual reports, publications, and previous studies regarding the rattan industry in Cirebon Regency.

Data Analysis Techniques

Data analysis was carried out using the Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) method, which was carried out through SmartPLS software. The selection of this method is based on its ability to test the direct or indirect influence (through mediation) between product innovation, competitive advantage, and marketing performance. This method

is also suitable for research with latent variables, data based on the Likert indicator, and medium-sized samples, such as rattan MSMEs in Cirebon Regency.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

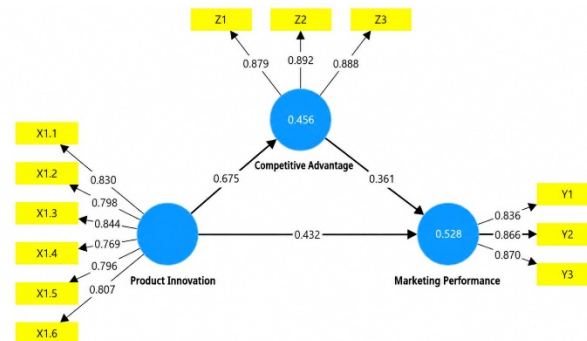


Figure 1. Outer Model

Convergent Validity Test

Convergent validity testing in the **Partial Least Squares (PLS)** approach can be done by looking at the loading factor value of each indicator in reflecting the latent construct being measured. Based on the general criterion (rule of thumb), an indicator is declared to have good convergent validity if the outer loading value exceeds 0.708 and the communality value and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is above 0.50, which shows that the construct is able to explain the variance of the indicator optimally (TomassMHultt, 2022).

Tabel 1. Outer Loading

Constructs	Items	Loadings	Conclusions
Product Innovation	X1.1	0.830	VALID
	X1.2	0.798	VALID
	X1.3	0.844	VALID
	X1.4	0.769	VALID
	X1.5	0.796	VALID
	X1.6	0.807	VALID
Advantages Compete	Z1	0.879	VALID
	Z2	0.892	VALID
	Z3	0.888	VALID
Performance Marketing	Y1	0.836	VALID
	Y2	0.866	VALID
	Y3	0.870	VALID

The results of the outer loading test showed that the Product Innovation indicator had a value of 0.769–0.844, Competitive Advantage 0.879–0.892, and Marketing Performance 0.836–0.870; Each value is above the minimum limit of 0.70. These findings confirm that the indicator is able to reflect latent constructs strongly and consistently, therefore the validity of the indicator in the measurement model is stated to be fulfilled.

1. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

The validity of the discriminant is evaluated through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value, where the construct is declared to meet the validity criteria if the AVE value is greater than 0.50. The results showed that all variables had AVE values above the minimum limit so that the discriminant validity of the model had been met (TomassMHultt, 2022).

Tabel 2. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Product Innovation	0.653
Competitive Advantage	0.786
Marketing Performance	0.735

The AVE value in the Product Innovation construct is 0.653, Competitive Advantage 0.786, and Marketing Performance 0.735 each value exceeds the minimum limit of 0.50. These findings show that each construct can provide an explanation for more than half of the variation of its constituent indicators, therefore the convergent validity of all constructs in the study model is declared to be met.

Discriminatory Validity

1. Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

The discriminant validity test in the PLS-SEM approach can be carried out using the Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) method, which is by comparing correlations between latent constructs to ensure that each variable has adequate conceptual differences. The construct is declared to meet the discriminant validity if the HTMT value is below the threshold of 0.90. (Henseler et al., 2015)

Tabel 3. Heterotrait–Singletrait Ratio (HTMT)

	Product Innovation	Competitive Advantage	Marketing Performance
Product Innovation			
Competitive Advantage	0.766		
Marketing Performance	0.783	0.772	

The HTMT value shows that the relationship between Product Innovation and Competitive Advantage is 0.766, Product Innovation and Marketing Performance is 0.783, and Competitive Advantage and Marketing Performance is 0.772, each value is below the maximum limit of 0.85. These findings confirm that each construct has a clear conceptual separation and that there is no overlap of constructs in the measurement model.

2. Fornell Larcker Criterion

Fornell–Larcker criteria by comparing the square root value of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) to the correlation between constructs. The construct is declared to meet the discriminant validity if the root value of AVE is higher than the correlation with other constructs, thus showing conceptual differences between the research variables.

Tabel 4. Fornell Larcker Criterion

	Product Innovation	Competitive Advantage	Marketing Performance
Product Innovation	0.808		
Competitive Advantage	0.675	0.887	
Marketing Performance	0.676	0.653	0.858

Based on the Fornell–Larcker criteria, the square root value of AVE in the Product Innovation construct is 0.808, Competitive Advantage is 0.887, and Marketing Performance is 0.858, all of which are greater than the correlation value between constructs. These findings show that all constructs are in accordance with the criteria of discriminant validity and can be empirically distinguished.

3. Cross Loading

The validity of the discriminant can be tested through the cross-loading value by comparing the loading indicator on its construct with that of other constructs (Hair, 2022)

Tabel 5. Cross Loading

	Product Innovation	Competitive Advantage	Marketing Performance
X1.1	0.830	0.495	0.509
X1.2	0.798	0.544	0.559
X1.3	0.844	0.596	0.556
X1.4	0.769	0.524	0.612
X1.5	0.796	0.580	0.542
X1.6	0.807	0.522	0.485
Y1	0.513	0.528	0.836
Y2	0.609	0.525	0.866
Y3	0.610	0.621	0.870
Z1	0.602	0.879	0.549
Z2	0.576	0.892	0.589
Z3	0.617	0.888	0.597

The results of the cross-loading test showed that each indicator had the highest loading value in the construct of the other constructs. These findings confirm that the indicators consistently represent the right latent constructs and that there is no measurement ambiguity.

Reliability Test

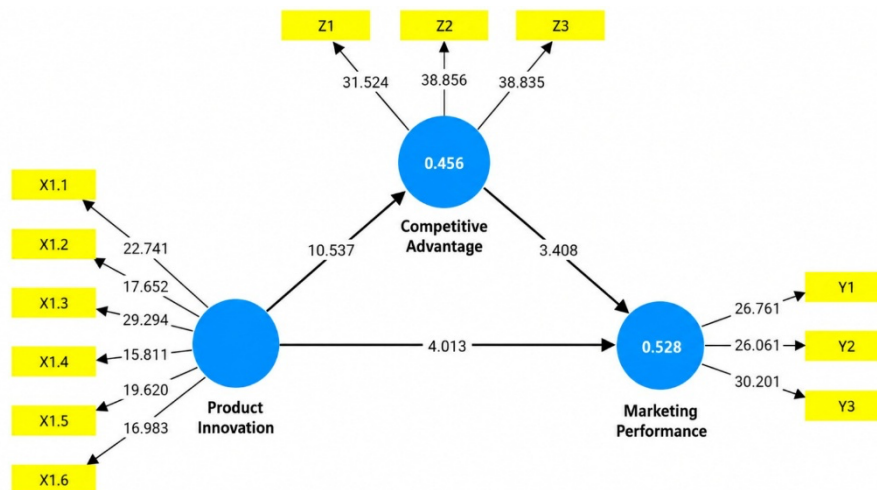
Reliability is used to measure the level of consistency of respondents' answers in representing research constructs so that the measurement results are not random. Reliability evaluation in the PLS-SEM method can be done through Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values, where a construct is declared reliable if it has a value greater than 0.70. (Kusmantini et al., n.d.)

Tabel 6. Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	
Product Innovation	0.893	0.894	Reliable
Competitive Advantage	0.864	0.865	Yuli Indriyani
Marketing Performance	0.821	0.826	Yuli Indriyani

The results of the reliability test showed that Cronbach's Alpha value in Product Innovation was 0.893, Competitive Advantage 0.864, and Marketing Performance 0.821, and Composite Reliability were 0.894, 0.865, and 0.826, respectively. Each value is above the minimum limit of 0.70, therefore the study instrument has good internal consistency and is stable in measuring latent constructs.

1. Inner Model

**Figure 2. Inner Model**

2. Good Fit (Q-Square)

The goodness of fit model in PLS-SEM can be evaluated using the Q-Square value to determine the model's predictive ability against endogenous variables (Hair, 2022)

Tabel 7. Good Fit

	Q ² predict
Competitive Advantage	0.439
Marketing Performance	0.439

The Q²predict value was used to evaluate the predictive ability of the model to endogenous constructs in the SEM-PLS analysis. The test results show that the Q²predict on Competitive Advantage is 0.439 and Marketing Performance is 0.439, both of which have positive values. These findings indicate that the study model has good predictive relevance because it is able to adequately predict endogenous variables. Therefore, it is concluded that the SEM-PLS model used has strong predictive quality and is suitable for structural bond testing in this study.

3. R-Square

The evaluation of the structural model was carried out through the R-Square value (R^2) to determine the ability of independent variables to explain dependent variables. The higher the R-Square value obtained, it shows that the research model has a better ability to explain endogenous variables.

Tabel 8. R-Square

	R-square	R-square adjusted
Competitive Advantage	0.456	0.450
Marketing Performance	0.528	0.518

The R-square value of Competitive Advantage of 0.456 shows that Product Innovation is able to explain 45.6% of the variation in Competitive Advantage, which indicates a fairly strong mediation role. Furthermore, the R-square of Marketing Performance of 0.528 shows that Product Innovation and Competitive Advantage are simultaneously able to explain 52.8% variation in Marketing Performance, therefore strengthening the role of Competitive Advantage in channeling the influence of Product Innovation to Marketing Performance.

4. F-Square

Table 9. F-Square

	f-square
Product Innovation -> Competitive Advantage	0.837
Product Innovation -> Marketing Performance	0.216
Competitive Advantage -> Marketing Performance	0.150

The f-square value shows that the effect of Product Innovation on Competitive Advantage 0.837 is in the large effects category, the effect of Product Innovation on Marketing Performance 0.216 is included in the medium category, and the effect of Competitive Advantage on Marketing Performance 0.150 is in the medium category. This finding confirms that Competitive Advantage has a crucial role in strengthening the influence of Product Innovation on Marketing Performance.

Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis testing was carried out through a bootstrapping procedure by looking at the path coefficient values, t-statistics, and p-values. The hypothesis is accepted if the t-values are greater than 1.96 and the p-values are less than 0.05 at a significance level of 5%

1. Path Coefficient

Tabel 10. Path Coefficient

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Product Innovation -> Competitive Advantage	0.675	0.680	0.064	10.537	0.000
Product Innovation -> Marketing Performance	0.432	0.429	0.108	4.013	0.000
Competitive Advantage -> Marketing Performance	0.361	0.369	0.106	3.408	0.001

The results show that the Product Innovation variable has a positive and significant influence on Competitive Advantage, shown by the values ($\beta = 0.675$), ($t = 10.537$), and ($p = 0.000$). Therefore, H1 was accepted.

The test results showed that Product Innovation produced a positive and significant influence on Marketing Performance, which was characterized by path coefficient ($\beta = 0.432$), t-statistic ($t = 4.013$), and p-value ($p = 0.000$). Therefore, the H2 hypothesis is declared accepted.

The test results showed that Competitive Advantage produced a positive and significant influence on Marketing Performance, which was marked by path coefficient ($\beta = 0.361$), t-statistic ($t = 3.408$), and p-value ($p = 0.001$). Therefore, the H3 hypothesis is declared accepted.

a. Specific Indirect Effect

Tabel 11. Specific Indirect Effect

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Product Innovation -> Competitive Advantage -> Marketing Performance	0.243	0.253	0.083	2.918	0.004

The results of the indirect effect test showed that Product Innovation had an influence on Marketing Performance through Competitive Advantage, which was characterized by indirect path coefficient ($\beta = 0.243$), t-statistic ($t = 2.918$), and p-value ($p = 0.004$). Therefore, Competitive Advantage is proven to mediate the bond of Product Innovation and Marketing Performance.

The Influence of Product Innovation on Competitive Advantage

The results of the first hypothesis test (H1) show that product innovation has a positive and significant effect on the competitive advantage of rattan MSMEs in Cirebon Regency. This is evidenced by the value of the β path coefficient = 0.675, the t-statistic value = 10.537, and the p-value = 0.000, so that H1 is declared accepted. These findings indicate that product innovation has a strong contribution to creating a competitive advantage for MSMEs.

Conceptually, product innovation is the main differentiating factor that allows rattan MSMEs not only to compete in terms of price, but also in terms of value and uniqueness of products. This condition is in line with the view of Graciafernandy (2024) who states that the competitive advantage of MSMEs can be formed when business actors are able to present added value through design innovations, quality, and product characteristics that are difficult for competitors to imitate. These innovations make products more relevant to consumer needs, especially in export markets that demand high quality and aesthetic standards.

These results are also aligned through the product innovation indicators defined by Kotler & Armstrong (2016), product variety, product quality, and also style and design, which directly contribute to the formation of business competitiveness (Irfandi et al., 2024) In the context of

rattan MSMEs in Cirebon Regency, the application of innovation in this aspect has been proven to be able to increase the perception of product superiority over competitor products.

These findings confirm the results of previous studies (Sudirjo & Sulistiyani, 2023) and (Dahana et al., 2021)) product innovation that have a significant influence in shaping the competitive advantage of MSMEs. Thus, product innovation can be seen as a strategic foundation for rattan MSMEs in building sustainable competitiveness.

The Influence of Product Innovation on Marketing Performance

The results of the study show that the second hypothesis (H2) is declared accepted, namely product innovation produces a positive influence on marketing performance. This finding is shown by $\beta = 0.432$, $t\text{-statistic} = 4.013$, and $p\text{-value} = 0.000$, therefore product innovation has a direct impact on improving the marketing performance of rattan MSMEs.

These findings support Ferdinand's (2000) theory in the Journal (Fadhillah et al., 2021) which states that marketing performance is a construct to measure the success of a company's strategy, including product innovation. Product innovation can support MSMEs to increase sales growth, sales value, and market share through products that are more relevant to consumer tastes.

In addition, the definition of marketing performance according to Bakti & Harun (2011) marketing performance reflects the results of all marketing activities carried out by the company, including the success of the product in meeting consumer expectations (Nofrizal et al., 2021). Continuous product innovation allows rattan MSMEs to maintain market interest and increase customer loyalty.

These results are in line with (Chalirafi et al., 2024) and (Feranika et al., 2023) which provide the conclusion that product innovation has a positive influence on the marketing performance of MSMEs. Therefore, product innovation can be seen as the main strategy in improving the marketing performance of rattan MSMEs in the midst of dynamic market competition.

The Influence of Competitive Advantage on Marketing Performance

The results of the hypothesis test show that Competitive Advantage produces a positive and significant influence on Marketing Performance, which is marked by the coefficient of the β path = 0.361, $t\text{-statistic} = 3.408$, and $p\text{-value} = 0.001$. Therefore, the H3 hypothesis is declared accepted. These findings indicate that rattan MSMEs that have a strong competitive advantage tend to have better marketing performance.

Theoretically, these results are supported by Porter (1990) who states that differentiation, cost leadership, and market focus are the main strategies in improving company performance. In the context of rattan MSMEs, differentiation of product design and quality is the dominant strategy in improving competitiveness and marketing performance.

Said that competitive advantage is the company's ability to manage and combine resources adaptively to create sustainable value (Muis et al., 2024). Rattan MSMEs that are able to take advantage of the uniqueness of raw materials and local designs are proven to be better able to survive and develop in a competitive market.

These results are also consistent through studies (Handayani et al., n.d.) and (Made et al., n.d.-b) which found that competitive advantage produces a significant influence on the marketing performance of MSMEs.

The Role of Competitive Excellence in Mediating the Influence of Product Innovation on Marketing Performance

The results of the indirect effect test showed that Product Innovation had a significant influence on Marketing Performance with Competitive Advantage, marked by an indirect coefficient value of $\beta = 0.243$, t-statistic value = 2.918, and p-value = 0.004. This means that Competitive Advantage is proven to mediate the relationship between Product Innovation and Marketing Performance, so the H4 hypothesis is accepted.

These findings confirm the theory that product innovation does not always produce optimal impact on marketing performance without the support of a strong competitive advantage. Dahana et al. (2021) stated that competitive advantage plays a crucial role in channeling the influence of product innovation to marketing performance in a sustainable manner.

These results are in line with the study of Sudirjo & Sulistiyani (2023) and Feranika et al. (2023) which prove that competitive advantage plays a significant mediating variable in the bond between product innovation and marketing performance

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the study and discussion of the influence of product innovation on marketing performance by passing the competitive advantage of rattan MSMEs in the Cirebon Regency area, it was concluded that product innovation is a crucial aspect in increasing the competitiveness and marketing performance of MSMEs. The analysis shows that product innovation has a positive and significant impact on competitive advantage, which indicates that improving the quality, variety, and design of rattan products is able to strengthen the competitive position of MSMEs in the midst of fierce market competition. Product innovation serves as the main differentiator that creates added value and uniqueness of products that are difficult for competitors to imitate. In addition, product innovation has a positive and significant impact on the marketing performance of rattan MSMEs in Cirebon Regency. These findings indicate that the higher the level of innovation carried out, the more optimal the marketing performance achieved, both through increased sales, volume growth, and product contribution in the market. Innovative rattan products are considered more attractive to consumers, adaptive to market needs, and competitive in the export market. Competitive advantage also produces a positive and significant influence on marketing performance. Rattan MSMEs that have strong competitive advantages through unique design, superior quality, and market segment alignment tend to achieve more optimal marketing performance, maintain market position, and increase consumer confidence. Furthermore, the mediation effect test showed that competitive advantage mediated the influence of product innovation on marketing performance. These findings confirm that product innovation has a direct and indirect impact through the formation of competitive advantage, thereby strengthening the bond between product innovation and the marketing performance of rattan MSMEs in Cirebon Regency.

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