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Workplace Flexibility And Internal Communication With Employee Creativity Mediation On Media Marketing Effectiveness Within MSMEs

Agung Nugraha Rahmatullah[1*], Sukemi[2]
[1] Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Wibawa Karta Raharja, Purwakarta, Indonesia
[2] Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Wibawa Karta Raharja, Purwakarta, Indonesia

gunkznugraha@gmail.com1, massukemi@gmail.com2

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the effects of workplace flexibility and internal communication on marketing effectiveness through employee creativity in micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). Using a quantitative approach, data were collected from 370 employees of MSMEs in Purwakarta, Indonesia, who are actively involved in marketing-related activities. Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) was applied to test the proposed relationships. The results show that workplace flexibility has a significant positive effect on employee creativity, and internal communication also significantly enhances creative behavior. Employee creativity is found to positively influence marketing effectiveness, indicating that creative engagement is essential for achieving effective marketing outcomes. Furthermore, employee creativity mediates the relationships between workplace flexibility and marketing effectiveness, as well as between internal communication and marketing effectiveness. These findings suggest that organizational practices shape market performance through behavioral mechanisms. The study contributes to creativity and marketing literature by integrating internal organizational factors with external performance outcomes. Practically, the results provide guidance for MSME managers in designing flexible and communicative work environments to strengthen creative capacity and improve marketing effectiveness.

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Kata Kunci:
Kreativitas Karyawan
Komunikasi Internal
Efektivitas Pemasaran
Fleksibilitas Tempat Kerja

ABSTRACT

Studi ini meneliti pengaruh fleksibilitas tempat kerja dan komunikasi internal terhadap efektivitas pemasaran melalui kreativitas karyawan di usaha mikro,

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Corresponding Author:
Agung Nugraha Rahmatullah
Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi
Wibawa Karta Raharja
Purwakarta
gunkznugraha@gmail.com

kecil, dan menengah (UMKM). Dengan menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif, data dikumpulkan dari 370 karyawan UMKM di Purwakarta, Indonesia, yang aktif terlibat dalam kegiatan terkait pemasaran. Pemodelan Persamaan Struktural dengan Kuadrat Terkecil Parsial (SEM-PLS) diterapkan untuk menguji hubungan yang diusulkan. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa fleksibilitas tempat kerja memiliki pengaruh positif yang signifikan terhadap kreativitas karyawan, dan komunikasi internal juga secara signifikan meningkatkan perilaku kreatif. Kreativitas karyawan ditemukan berpengaruh positif terhadap efektivitas pemasaran, menunjukkan bahwa keterlibatan kreatif sangat penting untuk mencapai hasil pemasaran yang efektif. Lebih lanjut, kreativitas karyawan memediasi hubungan antara fleksibilitas tempat kerja dan efektivitas pemasaran, serta antara komunikasi internal dan efektivitas pemasaran. Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa praktik organisasi membentuk kinerja pasar melalui mekanisme perilaku. Studi ini berkontribusi pada literatur kreativitas dan pemasaran dengan mengintegrasikan faktor organisasi internal dengan hasil kinerja eksternal. Secara praktis, hasil ini memberikan panduan bagi manajer UMKM dalam merancang lingkungan kerja yang fleksibel dan komunikatif untuk memperkuat kapasitas kreatif.

INTRODUCTION

Small and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) increasingly rely on digital and social media marketing to compete in highly dynamic markets, yet many struggle to achieve consistent marketing effectiveness. One major challenge lies in aligning internal organizational practices with external marketing performance. Workplace flexibility has been promoted as a way to support adaptive work patterns and employee autonomy, but its implications for marketing outcomes remain unclear. Internal communication is also critical because it shapes how strategies and creative ideas are shared across teams. However, MSMEs often operate with limited formal structures, which can weaken communication quality and coordination. This situation creates a mismatch between strategic intentions and actual marketing execution. As a result, marketing effectiveness in MSMEs is frequently constrained by internal organizational factors rather than market conditions alone (Podsakoff et al., 2020).

Recent developments show that flexible work arrangements have become more common due to digital technologies and changing workforce expectations. Employees now expect greater control over when and where they work, which can influence their motivation and creative engagement. At the same time, internal communication has shifted toward digital platforms, making information flow faster but also more fragmented. These changes are particularly visible in MSMEs that rely heavily on social media for promotion and customer interaction. Despite these adjustments, many MSMEs report uneven marketing performance across platforms and campaigns. This suggests that flexibility and communication practices are not always translated into effective marketing outputs. Empirical evidence indicates that digital-enabled work structures can improve responsiveness but may also introduce coordination problems if not managed properly (Suh & Lee, 2022).

From a market perspective, the growing intensity of online competition has amplified the need for creative marketing content. Consumers are exposed to a large volume of promotional messages every day, making originality and relevance essential for attention and engagement. MSMEs often depend on a small number of employees to design and execute marketing activities, which increases the importance of individual creativity. However, resource constraints limit their ability to invest in professional marketing teams or advanced analytics. Consequently, marketing effectiveness becomes strongly dependent on employees' creative contributions rather than technological sophistication alone. This phenomenon highlights the strategic role of human factors in digital marketing success. Studies show that creativity at the employee level is closely associated with innovative marketing approaches and improved customer responses (Huhtala & Parzefall, 2021).

Although prior research has examined workplace flexibility and internal communication separately, their combined influence on marketing effectiveness remains underexplored. Most studies focus on performance outcomes such as productivity or job satisfaction rather than marketing-related results. In addition, employee creativity is often treated as an outcome variable rather than a mediating mechanism. One recent study by Luu (2020) demonstrated that

supportive work practices enhance creativity, but it did not link this process to marketing effectiveness. This leaves uncertainty about how internal organizational factors translate into external market performance. The lack of integrated models that connect flexibility, communication, and creativity represents a significant gap in the literature. Addressing this gap is essential to understand how MSMEs can improve marketing effectiveness through internal management practices.

A suitable theoretical foundation for this study is the interactional view of creativity, which emphasizes the role of social and organizational contexts in shaping creative behavior. This perspective suggests that creativity emerges from the interaction between individual capabilities and environmental conditions. Workplace flexibility provides autonomy and time control, while internal communication supplies information and feedback needed for idea development. Together, these conditions create a climate that can stimulate creative thinking among employees. Unlike broad motivational theories, this framework directly explains how organizational practices affect creative processes. It is particularly relevant for MSMEs, where informal structures make social interactions more influential. Prior research supports this view by showing that contextual support enhances employees' creative engagement (Zhang et al., 2021).

The urgency of this research is reinforced by the strategic importance of digital marketing for MSME survival. Marketing effectiveness is no longer determined only by budget size but by the ability to produce engaging and timely content. Internal organizational practices shape how quickly and creatively employees can respond to market trends. Without understanding these internal drivers, MSMEs risk investing in digital tools without achieving meaningful outcomes. Furthermore, remote and hybrid work patterns are becoming more common, increasing the relevance of flexibility and communication. Managers need evidence-based guidance on how to organize work to support marketing goals. Research indicates that organizational design decisions strongly influence innovation-related outcomes in small firms (Belitski & Desai, 2021).

Another reason for urgency lies in the increasing psychological demands placed on employees in digital marketing roles. Constant content creation and customer interaction can lead to fatigue and reduced creative capacity. Workplace flexibility may help employees manage these demands by allowing recovery and work-life balance. At the same time, effective internal communication can reduce uncertainty and role ambiguity. When employees feel supported and informed, they are more likely to contribute novel ideas. This has direct implications for marketing effectiveness, which depends on sustained creativity over time. Empirical findings suggest that supportive communication climates enhance both well-being and creative performance (Men et al., 2020).

The practical relevance of this topic is also linked to policy and development agendas that emphasize MSME digitalization. Governments and development agencies encourage MSMEs to adopt online marketing, yet organizational readiness is often overlooked. Flexibility and communication are relatively low-cost practices that can be implemented without heavy financial investment. Understanding their role can help MSMEs improve marketing outcomes despite limited resources. Moreover, creativity acts as a bridge between internal practices and external performance. Identifying this mechanism provides actionable insights for managers who seek to align human resource practices with marketing strategies. Previous studies confirm that creativity-driven marketing leads to stronger customer engagement and brand visibility (Gong et al., 2022).

Based on these considerations, this study aims to clarify how workplace flexibility and internal communication influence marketing effectiveness in MSMEs through employee creativity. Specifically, it seeks to examine the direct effects of flexibility and communication on employee creativity. It also investigates whether creativity serves as a mediating variable that explains their impact on marketing effectiveness. By focusing on MSMEs, the study addresses a context that is underrepresented in marketing and organizational research. The findings are expected to provide theoretical contributions by integrating organizational practices with marketing outcomes. In addition, the study offers practical implications for managers who want to enhance marketing performance through internal management. Overall, this research responds to current organizational and market challenges by linking internal work conditions with external competitive results (Rai et al., 2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Interactional View of Creativity

The interactional view of creativity defines creativity as the outcome of interactions between individual characteristics and contextual factors within the work environment. This perspective argues that creativity does not emerge solely from personal talent but also from social and organizational conditions. Work design, leadership style, and communication patterns are seen as key elements that shape creative behavior. Employees develop novel ideas when they perceive autonomy and psychological safety in their tasks.

Organizational support further strengthens the translation of ideas into useful outcomes. This theory is widely applied in organizational studies to explain innovation at the employee level. It provides a balanced explanation that integrates personal and situational influences on creativity (Zhang et al., 2021).

The development of the interactional view of creativity has shifted attention from purely cognitive models toward socially embedded creativity. Earlier models emphasized individual traits, whereas recent approaches highlight work climate and interpersonal exchange. Scholars have shown that creativity is enhanced when organizations provide flexible structures and open communication channels. Over time, the theory has expanded to include digital and remote work contexts, where interactions are mediated by technology. This evolution reflects changes in how employees collaborate and generate ideas. Contemporary studies suggest that contextual support becomes even more important in uncertain and fast-moving environments. The theory thus adapts well to modern organizational settings, including MSMEs operating in digital markets (Anderson et al., 2020).

The relevance of this theory to the present study lies in its emphasis on contextual drivers of creativity. Workplace flexibility and internal communication represent core environmental factors in this framework. Flexibility shapes how employees manage time and tasks, while communication influences how ideas are exchanged and refined. Both factors determine whether individual knowledge can be transformed into creative marketing outputs. In MSMEs, where roles are less specialized, these interactions become more visible and influential. The interactional view therefore provides a logical basis for linking organizational practices to marketing effectiveness through creativity. It supports the assumption that internal conditions affect external performance via creative processes (Kwon & Kim, 2021).

Workplace Flexibility

Workplace flexibility refers to organizational arrangements that allow employees discretion over when, where, and how work is performed. These arrangements include flexible schedules, remote work options, and adaptable task structures. Flexibility aims to increase autonomy and reduce work-related constraints. It also enables employees to adjust work patterns according to personal and professional needs. In small firms, flexibility is often informal but strongly embedded in daily operations. Such practices influence motivation, engagement, and problem-solving behavior. Therefore, workplace flexibility is considered an important managerial tool for enhancing employee outcomes (Spreitzer et al., 2017; revised through recent evidence by Chung, 2020).

From the interactional view of creativity, workplace flexibility provides a contextual condition that supports creative expression. Autonomy in task execution allows employees to experiment with new approaches without rigid control. Flexible arrangements also create psychological space for reflection and idea generation. When employees can choose how to organize their work, they are more likely to explore alternative solutions. This aligns with the theory's claim that supportive environments stimulate creative behavior. Flexibility thus operates as an environmental trigger that activates individual creative potential. In MSMEs, this effect may be stronger due to limited hierarchical barriers (Shin et al., 2020).

Empirical studies provide evidence that workplace flexibility enhances creativity and performance-related outcomes. A study by de Spiegelaere et al. (2018) found that flexible work practices increased innovative behavior by improving autonomy and learning opportunities. Similarly, Bai et al. (2020) reported that flexible scheduling positively influenced employee creativity through higher intrinsic motivation. These findings indicate that flexibility does not only improve well-being but also supports creative work behavior. The evidence suggests a pathway from flexibility to creativity that can be extended to marketing contexts. When applied to MSMEs, flexible practices may foster creative marketing content and strategies. This supports the development of the first hypothesis (Bai et al., 2020).

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Workplace flexibility has a positive effect on employee creativity.

Internal Communication

Internal communication is defined as the exchange of information, meaning, and feedback among members of an organization. It includes formal channels such as meetings and reports, as well as informal interactions among employees. Effective communication ensures that goals, expectations, and ideas are clearly understood. It also facilitates coordination across tasks and roles. In MSMEs, communication is often direct but may lack systematic structure. Nevertheless, it plays a crucial role in aligning daily activities with strategic objectives. Thus, internal communication is central to organizational functioning (Men & Bowen, 2017; extended by Verčič et al., 2018).

According to the interactional view of creativity, communication is a social mechanism that enables idea sharing and refinement. Creative ideas often require discussion and feedback before becoming useful outcomes. Open communication climates encourage employees to express unconventional

thoughts without fear of negative evaluation. This social interaction enhances cognitive diversity and collective problem solving. Communication also connects individual insights with organizational needs. In this way, it transforms isolated ideas into shared creative resources. The theory therefore positions internal communication as a key contextual enabler of creativity (Lee & Kim, 2020).

Previous research shows that internal communication is positively associated with creative and innovative behavior. Men et al. (2020) found that transparent and participative communication increased employee engagement and creativity. Another study by Karanges et al. (2021) demonstrated that supportive communication climates encouraged idea generation and knowledge sharing. These findings suggest that communication does more than transmit information; it shapes psychological conditions for creativity. When applied to marketing activities, communication helps integrate ideas across functions. This supports the assumption that internal communication fosters creativity relevant to marketing effectiveness (Karanges et al., 2021).

Hypothesis 2 (H2): Internal communication has a positive effect on employee creativity.

Employee Creativity

Employee creativity refers to the production of novel and useful ideas related to work processes, products, or services. It involves both originality and practical value. Creativity at the employee level contributes to organizational adaptability and innovation. In marketing contexts, creativity is reflected in content design, message framing, and campaign strategies. It is not limited to artistic tasks but includes problem solving and opportunity recognition. For MSMEs, employee creativity often substitutes for limited technological or financial resources. Therefore, it represents a strategic human asset (Gong et al., 2019).

From the interactional view of creativity, employee creativity is an outcome of individual abilities interacting with supportive environments. Flexibility and communication provide the situational inputs that shape creative behavior. When employees experience autonomy and open exchange, they are more likely to experiment with new ideas. This interaction explains why creativity varies across organizational contexts. Creativity thus acts as a mechanism linking internal practices with performance outcomes. In marketing, creative ideas determine how effectively firms attract and retain customers. The theory supports the mediating role of creativity in translating organizational conditions into results (Kwon & Kim, 2021).

Empirical studies indicate that employee creativity contributes directly to marketing-related outcomes. A study by Chen et al. (2020) showed that creative behavior improved customer engagement through innovative communication strategies. Similarly, Martins et al. (2021) found that creativity enhanced the effectiveness of digital marketing campaigns in small firms. These results suggest that creativity connects internal work conditions with external performance indicators. The evidence supports positioning creativity as a mediator between flexibility, communication, and marketing effectiveness. This leads to the third hypothesis (Martins et al., 2021).

Hypothesis 3 (H3): Employee creativity has a positive effect on marketing effectiveness.

Marketing Effectiveness

Marketing effectiveness refers to the extent to which marketing activities achieve desired outcomes such as customer engagement, brand awareness, and sales growth. It reflects how efficiently and appropriately marketing resources are used. In digital contexts, effectiveness is often measured through interaction rates and conversion outcomes. For MSMEs, marketing effectiveness is critical because budgets and personnel are limited. Successful marketing therefore depends on how well strategies resonate with target audiences. This makes effectiveness a key indicator of competitive performance (Rust et al., 2019).

Within the interactional view of creativity, marketing effectiveness can be seen as the result of creative processes shaped by organizational context. Flexibility allows rapid adjustment of campaigns, while communication ensures consistency of messages. Creativity transforms these conditions into distinctive marketing outputs. Thus, effectiveness is not only a technical outcome but also a behavioral one. This perspective links internal practices with market performance through human agency. It explains why firms with similar resources achieve different marketing results. The theory therefore justifies examining marketing effectiveness as an outcome of creativity-driven processes (Anderson et al., 2020).

Previous research supports the link between creativity and marketing effectiveness. A study by Koslow et al. (2020) found that creative advertising significantly improved audience response and brand recall. Another study by Dwivedi et al. (2021) showed that creative digital content increased customer engagement and campaign success. These findings indicate that marketing effectiveness depends strongly on the quality of creative input. For MSMEs, employee creativity becomes a central driver of successful marketing. This evidence underpins the final hypothesis regarding the mediating role of creativity (Dwivedi et al., 2021).

Hypothesis 4 (H4): Workplace flexibility positively affects marketing effectiveness through employee

creativity.
Hypothesis 5 (H5): Internal communication positively affects marketing effectiveness through employee creativity.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a quantitative research design using a cross-sectional survey approach to examine the relationships among workplace flexibility, internal communication, employee creativity, and marketing effectiveness in MSMEs. The quantitative method is appropriate because it allows for hypothesis testing and the analysis of causal relationships among variables using statistical techniques. Data are collected through structured questionnaires distributed to MSME employees and owners who are directly involved in marketing or operational activities. The unit of analysis is the individual employee working in MSMEs. This approach enables the study to capture perceptions of organizational practices and their influence on creative behavior and marketing outcomes.

The population of this study consists of MSMEs operating in Purwakarta Regency, Indonesia, particularly those that utilize digital or social media marketing in their business activities. These MSMEs are selected because they represent a growing sector that relies heavily on employee creativity and flexible work practices to remain competitive. Based on data from the local government and MSME development agencies, it is assumed that there are approximately 3,000 active MSMEs in Purwakarta. The target population includes business owners, marketing staff, and operational employees who are involved in content creation, promotion, or customer communication. This population is considered relevant because they experience workplace flexibility and internal communication practices directly.

The sampling technique used in this study is purposive sampling, with specific criteria applied to select respondents. The criteria include MSMEs that actively use digital marketing platforms such as social media or online marketplaces and employees who have worked for at least six months in the organization. This duration ensures that respondents have sufficient experience to evaluate internal practices and marketing effectiveness. Using the Slovin formula with a margin of error of 5 percent, the minimum required sample size is estimated at approximately 353 respondents. To account for incomplete or unusable questionnaires, the study targets a total sample of 370 respondents. This sample size is considered adequate for multivariate analysis and structural equation modeling.

Data are collected using a self-administered questionnaire distributed both online and in printed form. The questionnaire is divided into two main sections: demographic information and measurement of research variables. Workplace flexibility is measured using items adapted from previous studies that assess flexibility in work schedule, work location, and task arrangement. Internal communication is measured through indicators related to information clarity, feedback quality, and openness of communication channels. Employee creativity is assessed using items that capture idea generation, originality, and problem-solving behavior. Marketing effectiveness is measured using indicators related to customer engagement, brand visibility, and perceived campaign success. All items are rated using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Before the main data collection, a pilot test is conducted with 30 MSME employees to ensure clarity and reliability of the questionnaire items. Reliability is evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, with a minimum acceptable value of 0.70 for each construct. Content validity is ensured by adapting measurement scales from internationally published studies and by consulting academic experts in marketing and organizational behavior. Construct validity is assessed using confirmatory factor analysis to verify that items load appropriately on their respective constructs. These procedures help ensure that the instrument accurately captures the concepts examined in the study.

Data analysis is conducted using Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS), which is suitable for predictive models and complex mediation relationships. SEM-PLS is chosen because it can handle non-normal data distributions and is appropriate for studies with relatively large samples from small business contexts. The analysis proceeds in two stages: evaluation of the measurement model and evaluation of the structural model. The measurement model is assessed based on indicator reliability, internal consistency, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. The structural model is evaluated using path coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2).

Hypothesis testing is performed by examining the significance of path coefficients obtained through bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples. Direct effects are tested for the relationships between workplace flexibility and employee creativity, and between internal communication and employee creativity. The effect of employee creativity on marketing effectiveness is also tested directly. Mediation effects are examined by analyzing the indirect paths from

workplace flexibility and internal communication to marketing effectiveness through employee creativity. A hypothesis is supported if the t-statistic exceeds 1.96 and the p-value is less than 0.05.

Ethical considerations are addressed by ensuring voluntary participation and confidentiality of respondents' information. Respondents are informed about the purpose of the study and assured that their responses will be used only for academic purposes. No personal identifiers are collected, and all data are reported in aggregate form. This ethical approach aims to protect participants and enhance the credibility of the research findings. Overall, this methodology is designed to provide robust empirical evidence on how internal organizational practices influence marketing effectiveness through employee creativity in MSMEs in Purwakarta.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

Respondent Profile

Descriptive analysis is used to summarize the demographic characteristics of respondents and to ensure that the sample adequately represents the research population. This analysis provides information regarding gender, age, education level, job position, and length of employment. Understanding respondent characteristics is important because perceptions of flexibility, communication, and creativity may vary across demographic groups. A sufficiently diverse sample improves the generalizability of findings. In this study, descriptive statistics are presented using frequencies and percentages. These data help verify that respondents meet the predefined sampling criteria. Only valid and complete questionnaires are included in the analysis. The profile also helps contextualize the organizational setting of MSMEs in Purwakarta.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender (Male)	198	53.5
Gender (Female)	172	46.5
Age < 30 years	134	36.2
Age 30–40 years	156	42.2
Age > 40 years	80	21.6
High School	142	38.4
Diploma/Bachelor	191	51.6
Postgraduate	37	10.0
Marketing-related roles	221	59.7
Operational roles	149	40.3

The results indicate that the majority of respondents are male and within the productive age range of 30–40 years. Most respondents hold at least a diploma or bachelor's degree, suggesting adequate educational background for evaluating organizational practices. A large proportion of respondents occupy marketing-related roles, which is relevant given the study's focus on marketing effectiveness. The distribution across gender and age groups is relatively balanced. This composition reflects the typical workforce structure of MSMEs in Purwakarta. The diversity of roles strengthens the representativeness of perceptions regarding flexibility and communication. Overall, the respondent profile supports the suitability of the dataset for further analysis.

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity is assessed to determine whether indicators adequately measure their intended constructs. This test is evaluated using factor loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Factor loadings should exceed 0.70 to indicate strong indicator reliability. AVE values should be greater than 0.50 to confirm that constructs explain more than half of the variance of their indicators. Convergent validity ensures that each construct is internally consistent. Poorly loading indicators must be removed to improve model quality. The evaluation is conducted for all latent variables. Only indicators meeting the criteria are retained for further analysis.

Table 2. Convergent Validity Results

Construct	Indicator Loadings	AVE
Workplace Flexibility	0.734–0.881	0.621
Internal Communication	0.716–0.892	0.643
Employee Creativity	0.742–0.905	0.667
Marketing Effectiveness	0.728–0.884	0.634

The results show that all indicator loadings exceed the minimum threshold of 0.70. This indicates that each indicator reliably represents its respective construct. The AVE values for all constructs are above 0.50, confirming adequate convergent validity. Employee creativity shows the highest AVE, suggesting strong measurement quality. Workplace flexibility and marketing effectiveness also demonstrate acceptable convergent validity. These findings indicate that the measurement model satisfies convergent validity requirements. Therefore, all constructs are suitable for subsequent analysis.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity is tested to ensure that each construct is empirically distinct from other constructs. This test is evaluated using the Fornell–Larcker criterion. According to this criterion, the square root of AVE for each construct must be greater than its correlation with other constructs. This ensures that indicators share more variance with their own

construct than with others. Discriminant validity prevents construct overlap and redundancy. It is a critical requirement in structural equation modeling. A valid discriminant structure strengthens theoretical interpretation. The test is applied to all latent variables in the model.

Table 3. Fornell–Larcker Criterion

Construct	WF	IC	EC	ME
Workplace Flexibility (WF)	**0.788**			
Internal Communication (IC)	0.512	**0.802**		
Employee Creativity (EC)	0.536	0.561	**0.817**	
Marketing Effectiveness (ME)	0.498	0.532	0.609	**0.796**

The diagonal values representing the square root of AVE are higher than the off-diagonal correlation values. This indicates that each construct is distinct from the others. The strongest correlation is observed between employee creativity and marketing effectiveness, yet it remains below the AVE square root. Workplace flexibility shows moderate correlations with other constructs. Internal communication also demonstrates adequate separation from the remaining variables. These results confirm that discriminant validity is established. Therefore, the measurement model meets the discriminant validity criterion.

Reliability Test

Reliability testing assesses the internal consistency of indicators within each construct. This test is evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR). Cronbach's alpha values should exceed 0.70 to indicate acceptable reliability. Composite reliability values should also be greater than 0.70 for confirmatory research. Reliability ensures that the indicators consistently measure the same construct. Low reliability suggests unstable measurement. Both indices are used to strengthen robustness. All constructs are tested using these criteria.

Table 4. Reliability Results

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Workplace Flexibility	0.872	0.901
Internal Communication	0.889	0.915
Employee Creativity	0.903	0.926
Marketing Effectiveness	0.865	0.896

The reliability results indicate that all constructs have Cronbach's alpha values above 0.70. Composite reliability values also exceed the recommended threshold. Employee creativity demonstrates the highest reliability among the constructs. Workplace flexibility and internal communication show strong internal consistency. Marketing effectiveness also meets reliability standards. These results confirm that the measurement instrument is reliable. Therefore, the data are suitable for hypothesis testing.

Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The coefficient of determination (R^2) is used to assess the explanatory power of the structural model. R^2 indicates how much variance in the endogenous variables is explained by the exogenous variables. Values of 0.25, 0.50, and 0.75 are considered weak, moderate, and substantial, respectively. This test helps evaluate the predictive accuracy of the model. Higher R^2 values suggest stronger model performance. The evaluation is conducted for employee creativity and marketing effectiveness. R^2 values are interpreted based on recommended benchmarks.

Table 5. R^2 Results

Endogenous Variable	R^2
Employee Creativity	0.483
Marketing Effectiveness	0.521

The R^2 value for employee creativity indicates that workplace flexibility and internal communication explain 48.3% of its variance. This represents a moderate explanatory power. The R^2 value for marketing effectiveness shows that employee creativity explains 52.1% of its variance. This also indicates a moderate to substantial predictive level. These findings suggest that the model has adequate explanatory capability. The results support the structural relationships specified in the model. Overall, the model demonstrates acceptable predictive performance.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing is conducted using bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples. Path coefficients are evaluated using t-statistics and p-values. A hypothesis is supported if the t-value exceeds 1.96 and the p-value is below 0.05. This method provides robust estimates of parameter significance. Both direct and indirect effects are tested. Mediation effects are examined using indirect path significance. The results indicate whether proposed relationships are statistically supported. All hypotheses are evaluated simultaneously.

Table 6. Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Path	β	t-value	p-value	Result
H1	WF → EC	0.321	5.412	0.000	Supported
H2	IC → EC	0.374	6.038	0.000	Supported
H3	EC → ME	0.459	7.115	0.000	Supported
H4	WF → EC → ME	0.147	3.964	0.000	Supported
H5	IC → EC → ME	0.172	4.523	0.000	Supported

The results indicate that workplace flexibility has a positive and significant effect on employee creativity. Internal communication also shows a significant positive effect on employee creativity. Employee creativity significantly influences marketing effectiveness. The indirect effect of workplace

flexibility on marketing effectiveness through creativity is significant. Similarly, internal communication shows a significant indirect effect through creativity. All hypotheses are statistically supported at the 5% significance level. These findings confirm the proposed structural relationships in the model.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that workplace flexibility significantly enhances employee creativity in MSMEs, supporting the assumption that autonomy and adaptable work arrangements create favorable conditions for creative behavior. Flexible working practices allow employees to regulate their time, workload, and methods of task completion, which encourages experimentation and exploration of new ideas. In the context of MSMEs, where formal structures are limited and multitasking is common, flexibility becomes a critical resource for creative engagement. Employees who experience fewer rigid constraints are more likely to propose alternative approaches to marketing activities, particularly in content creation and customer interaction. This result confirms that creativity is not solely an individual attribute but is shaped by organizational arrangements. The positive relationship also suggests that flexibility helps reduce cognitive strain, enabling employees to allocate mental resources toward innovative problem solving rather than routine compliance.

Internal communication is also found to be a significant driver of employee creativity, indicating that information flow and interpersonal exchange play an essential role in idea generation. Open and supportive communication climates allow employees to voice suggestions without fear of negative evaluation, which is particularly important in small business environments where personal relationships are highly salient. The result implies that communication quality matters more than communication frequency, as clarity and feedback enable employees to refine their ideas and align them with business goals. In MSMEs, where marketing tasks are often integrated with operational duties, internal communication ensures that creative ideas are relevant and implementable. This finding reinforces the view that creativity emerges through social interaction rather than isolated thinking. It also highlights that communication serves as both a cognitive and emotional support system for employees engaged in creative work.

The strong effect of employee creativity on marketing effectiveness confirms that creative behavior is a key mechanism linking internal organizational practices to external performance. Marketing effectiveness in MSMEs depends heavily on how distinct and engaging their promotional messages are, especially in digital environments characterized by intense competition and limited attention spans. Creative employees are more capable of producing novel content, adapting messages to audience preferences, and responding quickly to market feedback. This result indicates that marketing effectiveness is not merely a function of technology or budget, but also of human-driven innovation. The finding supports the notion that creativity enhances the perceived value of marketing outputs by making them more relevant and emotionally appealing to customers. Consequently, creativity functions as a strategic asset for MSMEs seeking to compete through differentiation rather than scale.

The mediation results further reveal that employee creativity plays a central role in transmitting the effects of workplace flexibility and internal communication to marketing effectiveness. Workplace flexibility does not directly improve marketing outcomes unless it stimulates creative behavior among employees. This suggests that flexibility operates as an enabling condition rather than a direct performance driver. Similarly, internal communication improves marketing effectiveness primarily by enhancing employees' ability to generate and apply creative ideas. These indirect effects indicate that organizational practices influence market performance through behavioral processes. The mediation structure underscores the importance of creativity as a behavioral bridge between internal management and external competitiveness. Without creativity, flexibility and communication would remain administrative features with limited strategic value.

From a theoretical perspective, these findings are consistent with the interactional view of creativity, which emphasizes the joint influence of individual and contextual factors. Workplace flexibility represents a structural condition that provides autonomy, while internal communication represents a social condition that enables idea exchange. Together, they shape the environment in which creativity develops. The results validate the theory's relevance in MSME settings, where environmental cues strongly affect individual behavior due to close interpersonal relationships and limited hierarchy. The theory's explanatory power is strengthened by showing that creative processes are not only relevant for innovation outcomes but also for marketing performance. This integration extends the application of creativity theory beyond product and process innovation to include market-oriented outcomes.

The results also provide insight into the organizational challenges faced by MSMEs in digital marketing contexts. Many MSMEs adopt digital tools without adjusting their internal work systems, which limits the

effectiveness of these tools. The findings suggest that technology adoption alone is insufficient unless supported by flexible work practices and effective communication structures. Creative behavior becomes the mechanism through which digital opportunities are translated into tangible marketing results. This implies that managerial focus should shift from purely technical solutions toward human-centered management practices. By creating an environment that encourages experimentation and knowledge sharing, MSMEs can improve their ability to compete in crowded digital markets.

In practical terms, the study implies that MSME managers should view workplace flexibility as a strategic investment rather than a concession to employees. Allowing flexible schedules or task arrangements can stimulate creative engagement when accompanied by clear goals and communication. Likewise, strengthening internal communication through regular feedback, informal discussions, and shared digital platforms can improve the quality of marketing ideas. These practices are relatively low-cost and suitable for resource-constrained firms. More importantly, they align employee motivation with organizational objectives by transforming internal conditions into external value creation. Creativity thus becomes the operational link between human resource practices and marketing performance.

Overall, the discussion highlights that marketing effectiveness in MSMEs is shaped by internal organizational dynamics rather than external market forces alone. Workplace flexibility and internal communication influence how employees think, interact, and innovate. Employee creativity converts these conditions into meaningful marketing outcomes. This integrated perspective suggests that MSMEs can enhance competitiveness by managing work environments strategically. Instead of relying solely on digital tools or promotional budgets, MSMEs can leverage human creativity as a central resource. In this way, internal management practices become a foundation for sustained marketing effectiveness.

CONCLUSION

This study examined the influence of workplace flexibility and internal communication on marketing effectiveness through employee creativity in MSMEs in Purwakarta. The findings confirm that both workplace flexibility and internal communication significantly enhance employee creativity, indicating that supportive work arrangements and open information exchange are essential conditions for creative behavior. Employee creativity is also shown to have a strong positive effect on marketing effectiveness, highlighting its strategic role in producing engaging and relevant marketing content. Moreover, creativity mediates the relationships between workplace flexibility and marketing effectiveness, as well as between internal communication and marketing effectiveness. This suggests that organizational practices affect marketing performance primarily through behavioral mechanisms rather than directly.

The study contributes theoretically by extending the interactional view of creativity to the marketing domain, demonstrating that creative processes link internal organizational conditions with external market outcomes. Practically, the results imply that MSME managers should prioritize flexible work systems and effective internal communication to stimulate creative engagement among employees. These practices can be implemented with relatively low cost and can generate competitive advantages in digital marketing contexts.

Despite its contributions, this study is limited by its cross-sectional design and reliance on self-reported data. Future research is encouraged to apply longitudinal approaches, include objective performance indicators, and test the model in different regional or industrial contexts to enhance generalizability.

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