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Empowerment Level of MSMEs in Local Food Processing Industry in Kuningan Regency, West Java

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ABSTRACT

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are vital to Indonesia's economy, significantly aiding job creation and economic growth while enhancing community welfare. In Kuningan Regency, known for its agricultural strengths and superior food crops like sweet potatoes and cassava, there is substantial potential for MSME development in local food processing. However, the post-pandemic landscape has seen a decline in MSMEs, facing challenges such as limited capital, competitiveness, and human resources. This study investigates the empowerment levels of MSME food processors in Kuningan Regency and their impact on productivity. Data were collected through interviews with 114 respondents from Kramatmulya, Cigugur, and Kuningan Districts. Utilizing the Likert Scale and SPSS for statistical testing, the research reveals that MSMEs in the food processing sector are categorized as empowered and moderately empowered. Regression analysis indicates that all independent variables—input, output, and marketing—positively and significantly influence productivity, with significance values below 0.05. The findings suggest that untapped resources and market potential could enhance productivity. This study aims to inform more effective empowerment policies to bolster MSMEs in Kuningan Regency, improving their competitiveness in a challenging market.

KEYWORDS *Empowerment, MSME Food Processors, Quantitative Analysis*

INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have a strategic role in the national economy, both in developing countries like Indonesia and in developed countries (Nursini, 2020; Sari & Kusumawati, 2022a; Tambunan, 2019a, 2019b). In Indonesia, MSMEs not only contribute to economic growth but also play an important role in tackling unemployment (Hidayat Siregar A. & Pratama W., 2022). Furthermore, MSMEs are one of the main pillars in creating jobs and improving community welfare (Sunariani Kusuma E et al. 2017). Therefore, empowering MSMEs is crucial to accelerate economic development, both at the regional and central levels, as well as to enhance the competitiveness of MSME products (Sunariani et al., 2017).

Economic development aims to improve community welfare, which can be measured by various welfare indicators reflecting better quality of life achievements Arliman (2017) (Sitorus & Arsani T., 2018). In the context of Indonesia, the goal of economic development is stated in the 1945 Constitution, *Alinea* 4, which emphasizes the importance of general welfare, educating the nation's life, and achieving social justice. One way to achieve this welfare is by increasing job opportunities and community income through MSMEs (Kadeni, 2020).

The development of MSMEs in Indonesia continues to show growth, although with significant fluctuations (Junaidi, 2021). According to data from the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce (*Kadin*), the number of MSMEs in Indonesia increased from 64.19 million units in 2018 to 66 million units in 2023, although there were some years that showed a decline

(Indonesia, 2023). The contribution of MSMEs to Indonesia's GDP is recorded at 61%, indicating that this sector is a major driver of Indonesia's economy, absorbing about 117 million workers (97% of the total workforce (*(Kadeni, 2020)*.

Micro and small industry sectors (*IMK*) with the largest contributions include food industries, ready-made clothing, and wood industries as well as woven products made from bamboo and rattan (*Kadin Indonesia*, 2023). MSMEs in the food and beverage sector have significant potential to improve regional economies and job absorption (Hayati & Fatarib, 2022; Hidayat et al., 2025; Sari & Kusumawati, 2022b; Sunariani Kusuma E. & Hartono A., 2017; Tahi Hamonangan Tambunan, 2011). For instance, the food industry in Indonesia, especially in West Java Province, has seen a significant increase in the number of business units (Statistics Center of West Java Province, 2023).

Kuningan Regency in West Java, with its superior food crop sector, has significant potential for developing MSME food processing industries. This Regency is one of the main producers of food crops such as rice, sweet potatoes, and cassava, which can be used as raw materials for local food processing industries. In recent years, the number of MSMEs in Kuningan Regency, especially those engaged in processed food sectors, has increased (Department of Industry and Trade of Kuningan Regency, 2020).

However, despite the development of MSMEs in Kuningan, there are challenges related to capital, competitiveness, and product marketing. Most MSMEs still rely on traditional methods and have limitations in terms of technology and business management Gunawan & Kartika R. (2021); (Sulistiyo & Putra W., 2020). Therefore, efforts to empower MSMEs in Kuningan, especially in the food processing industry, need to be intensified to enhance productivity, competitiveness, and business sustainability. This research aims to analyze the level of empowerment concerning the productivity of MSME players in the local food processing industry in Kuningan Regency, West Java (Kuningan, 2020).

This study is expected to provide empirical evidence on the relationship between empowerment and productivity among MSME food processors in Kuningan Regency, offering insights into the specific factors that influence business performance in this sector. The findings will contribute to the formulation of targeted empowerment policies and programs that address capital constraints, competitiveness, and marketing challenges. Furthermore, the research will support regional development strategies by highlighting the potential of local food processing MSMEs to drive economic growth and community welfare. Ultimately, this study aims to enhance the sustainability and competitiveness of MSMEs in Kuningan, serving as a model for similar regions in Indonesia.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research is quantitative research using a survey method. The positivistic philosophy is used on specific populations or samples (Sugiyono, 2022). Data collection in this type of research uses research instruments in the form of questionnaires, and data analysis of a quantitative or statistical nature using SPSS. This aims to test previously determined hypotheses so that the influence between independent and dependent variables can be established. The scope of the study represents the research framework, which describes the research boundaries, narrows down the issues, and limits the research area (Ridwan, 2019). To make this research focused and to avoid deviations during the drafting stage, there must be clear limitations in the scope of the research regarding the level of empowerment and productivity of *MSME* players in the food processing sector in Kuningan Regency.

These clear limitations can be outlined in the operational definition of variables. The level of empowerment is the embodiment of efforts made by individuals that can enhance their quality and self-confidence in life. Empowerment in the context of society is the ability of individuals living in the community to build the empowerment of the community concerned. There are three indicators in the empowerment level variable, namely: 1) Input process, 2) Output process, and 3) Marketing process related to the productivity of MSME food processors.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Research Instrument Testing

Validity Test

The validity test is conducted by examining the total score. If the significance is < 0.05, the questionnaire is considered valid; if the total score has a significance > 0.05, it is considered invalid. Another method to determine validity is by comparing the calculated r value (Rhitung) to the table r value (Rtabel). If Rhitung ≥ Rtabel, the statement is considered valid. The results of the validity test are as follows:

Table 1 Validity Test Results

Item	Sig.	Count	Table	Information
X1.1	0,000	0,667	0,184	Valid
X1.2	0,000	0,647	0,184	Valid
X1.3	0,000	0,778	0,184	Valid
X1.4	0,000	0,558	0,184	Valid
X1.5	0,000	0,676	0,184	Valid
X1.6	0,000	0,609	0,184	Valid
X1.7	0,000	0,736	0,184	Valid
X1.8	0,000	0,724	0,184	Valid
X1.9	0,000	0,645	0,184	Valid
X1.10	0,000	0,631	0,184	Valid
X2.1	0,000	0,617	0,184	Valid
X2.2	0,000	0,466	0,184	Valid
X2.3	0,000	0,535	0,184	Valid
X2.4	0,000	0,603	0,184	Valid
X2.5	0,000	0,610	0,184	Valid
X2.6	0,000	0,540	0,184	Valid
X2.7	0,000	0,547	0,184	Valid
X2.8	0,000	0,615	0,184	Valid
X2.9	0,000	0,568	0,184	Valid
X2.10	0,000	0,511	0,184	Valid
X3.1	0,000	0,680	0,184	Valid
X3.2	0,000	0,403	0,184	Valid
X3.3	0,000	0,658	0,184	Valid
X3.4	0,000	0,628	0,184	Valid
X3.5	0,000	0,687	0,184	Valid
X3.6	0,000	0,689	0,184	Valid
X3.7	0,000	0,700	0,184	Valid
X3.8	0,000	0,556	0,184	Valid
X3.9	0,000	0,490	0,184	Valid
X3.10	0,000	0,704	0,184	Valid
Y1	0,000	0,661	0,184	Valid
Y2	0,000	0,616	0,184	Valid
Y3	0,000	0,810	0,184	Valid
Y4	0,000	0,568	0,184	Valid
Y5	0,000	0,759	0,184	Valid
Y6	0,000	0,598	0,184	Valid
Y7	0,000	0,666	0,184	Valid

Item	Sig.	Count	Table	Information
Y8	0,000	0,627	0,184	Valid
Y9	0,000	0,613	0,184	Valid
Y10	0,000	0,639	0,184	Valid

Source: Data Processed

Table 1 shows that all statement items are valid, as indicated by a significance value < 0.05 and R-count ≥ R-table of 0.184. Therefore, all items in the questionnaire are valid and can be used for research.

Reliability Test

The reliability test is used to assess the consistency of the data obtained over a certain period, determining how well the measuring instrument can be used. The technique used in this study is Cronbach's Alpha (α), where a variable is considered reliable if Cronbach's Alpha > 0.6. The results of the reliability test are as follows:

Table 2 Reliability Test Results

Item	Cronbach Alpha	Standard values	Information
X1.1	0,849	0,6	Reliable
X1.2	0,850	0,6	Reliable
X1.3	0,837	0,6	Reliable
X1.4	0,859	0,6	Reliable
X1.5	0,849	0,6	Reliable
X1.6	0,855	0,6	Reliable
X1.7	0,842	0,6	Reliable
X1.8	0,843	0,6	Reliable
X1.9	0,850	0,6	Reliable
X1.10	0,853	0,6	Reliable
X2.1	0,730	0,6	Reliable
X2.2	0,753	0,6	Reliable
X2.3	0,741	0,6	Reliable
X2.4	0,731	0,6	Reliable
X2.5	0,730	0,6	Reliable
X2.6	0,745	0,6	Reliable
X2.7	0,739	0,6	Reliable
X2.8	0,730	0,6	Reliable
X2.9	0,738	0,6	Reliable
X2.10	0,746	0,6	Reliable
X3.1	0,802	0,6	Reliable
X3.2	0,831	0,6	Reliable
X3.3	0,805	0,6	Reliable
X3.4	0,808	0,6	Reliable
X3.5	0,800	0,6	Reliable
X3.6	0,800	0,6	Reliable
X3.7	0,799	0,6	Reliable
X3.8	0,817	0,6	Reliable
X3.9	0,820	0,6	Reliable
X3.10	0,798	0,6	Reliable
Y1	0,838	0,6	Reliable
Y2	0,846	0,6	Reliable

Item	Cronbach Alpha	Standard values	Information
Y3	0,822	0,6	Reliable
Y4	0,847	0,6	Reliable
Y5	0,829	0,6	Reliable
Y6	0,844	0,6	Reliable
Y7	0,838	0,6	Reliable
Y8	0,843	0,6	Reliable
Y9	0,843	0,6	Reliable
Y10	0,840	0,6	Reliable

Source: Data Processed

Table 2 shows that all statement items are reliable, as indicated by a Cronbach's Alpha value > 0.6. Therefore, all items in the questionnaire are reliable and can be used for research.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistical analysis is performed to describe data based on minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation values. The researcher categorizes based on 5 class intervals, with the lowest score = 1 and the highest score = 5, as follows:
Minimum Score = 1
Maximum Score = 5
Number of Classes = 5
Interval = (Maximum Score - Minimum Score) / (Number of Classes) = (5 - 1) / 5 = 0.8

Based on the interval class calculation, the category intervals are as follows:

1.00 to 1.80: Very Low
1.81 to 2.60: Low
2.61 to 3.40: Moderate
3.41 to 4.20: High
4.21 to 5.00: Very High

Table 3 Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	Item	Min	Max	Std.Dev	Mean (Indicator)	Mean (variable)	Information
Input (X1)	X1.1	2	5	0,653	3,55	3,71	High
	X1.2	2	5	0,628	3,73		
	X1.3	2	5	0,775	3,83		
	X1.4	2	5	0,658	3,68		
	X1.5	2	5	0,722	3,79		
	X1.6	2	5	0,689	3,75		
	X1.7	2	5	0,661	3,60		
	X1.8	2	5	0,686	3,82		
	X1.9	2	5	0,635	3,75		
	X1.10	2	5	0,712	3,67		
Output (X2)	X2.1	2	5	0,739	3,58	3,55	High
	X2.2	2	5	0,694	3,47		
	X2.3	2	5	0,624	3,57		
	X2.4	2	5	0,704	3,65		
	X2.5	2	5	0,690	3,83		
	X2.6	2	5	0,760	3,39		
	X2.7	2	5	0,651	3,57		
	X2.8	2	5	0,720	3,37		
	X2.9	2	5	0,730	3,55		

Variable	Item	Min	Max	Std.Dev	Mean (Indicator)	Mean (variable)	Information
	X2.10	2	5	0,694	3,51		
Marketing (x3)	X3.1	2	5	0,729	3,56	3,58	High
	X3.2	2	5	0,647	3,33		
	X3.3	2	5	0,740	3,70		
	X3.4	2	5	0,694	3,53		
	X3.5	2	5	0,663	3,66		
	X3.6	2	5	0,672	3,68		
	X3.7	2	5	0,764	3,57		
	X3.8	2	5	0,702	3,59		
	X3.9	2	5	0,583	3,53		
	X3.10	2	5	0,709	3,62		
Productivity (Y)	Y1	2	5	0,650	3,42	3,60	High
	Y2	2	5	0,811	3,46		
	Y3	2	5	0,741	3,77		
	Y4	2	5	0,678	3,57		
	Y5	2	5	0,838	3,71		
	Y6	2	5	0,663	3,59		
	Y7	2	5	0,703	3,58		
	Y8	2	5	0,721	3,62		
	Y9	2	5	0,666	3,74		
	Y10	2	5	0,649	3,59		

Source: Data Processed

Table 3 shows that for the input variable (X1), the minimum score is 2 and the maximum score is 5. The average score for the input variable is 3.71, indicating a high level. The highest item is from indicator X1.3 with a value of 3.83, while the lowest item is from indicator X1.1 with a value of 3.55. Similar observations can be made for output (X2), marketing (X3), and productivity (Y) variables, indicating high average levels across all categories (Barat, 2023).

Data Analysis

Classical Assumption Test

The prerequisite tests used in this study include normality test, linearity test, multicollinearity test, and heteroscedasticity test.

Normality Test

The normality test aims to determine whether the data follows a normal distribution. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-S) test is used to detect normal distribution. If the significance is < 0.05, the data is not normally distributed; if > 0.05, it is normally distributed. The results of the normality test are shown below.

Table 4. Normality Test Results

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		Unstandardized Residual
N		114
Normal Parametersa,b	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	3.39297573
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.048
	Positive	.045

Negative	-.048
Test Statistic	.048
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	.200c,d
a. Test distribution is Normal.	
b. Calculated from data.	
c. Lilliefors Significance Correction.	
d. This is a lower bound of the true significance.	

Normality Test

Based on the table above, it can be observed that Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) is 0.200, which means it is > 0.05. Therefore, it can be stated that the data in this study is normally distributed.

Linearity Test

The linearity test is used to determine whether the research data is linear or not. If the linearity value has a significance < 0.05, it can be stated that the two variables have a linear relationship. If the linearity value has a significance > 0.05, it can be stated that the two variables do not have a linear relationship. The results of the linearity test can be seen in Table 5.

Table 5. Linearity Test Results

Variable	Linearity	Significance	Information
Input (X1)	0,000	0,05	Linear
Output (X2)	0,000	0,05	Linear
Output (X3)	0,000	0,05	Linear

Source: Data Processed

Based on the table above, it can be seen that the linearity values for each variable are < 0.05. This means that the research data meets the linearity requirement and can proceed to multiple linear regression testing.

Multicollinearity Test

The multicollinearity test aims to determine the presence of regression models by examining the correlation among independent variables. The decision-making basis uses the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance. If VIF ≤ 10.00 and Tolerance ≥ 0.10, it indicates that multicollinearity symptoms do not occur. The results of the multicollinearity test can be seen in Table 6.

Table 6. Multicollinearity Test Results

Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	**VIF**
1	(Constant)		
	TotalX1	0,504	1,985
	TotalX2	0,552	1,813
	TotalX3	0,625	1,601

Source: Data Processed

Based on Table 6, the multicollinearity test results show that each variable has a VIF value ≤ 10.00 and Tolerance ≥ 0.10. Thus, it can be concluded that there are no multicollinearity symptoms in this study.

Heteroscedasticity Test

The heteroscedasticity test is used for regression models that experience differences in the variance of residuals from one observation to another. The detection of heteroscedasticity is conducted using the Glejser method. If the significance is > 0.05, then heteroscedasticity symptoms do not occur. The results of the heteroscedasticity test can be seen in Table 7.

Table 7. Heteroscedasticity Test Results

Model		Sig.
1	(Constant)	0,000
	TotalX1	0,540
	TotalX2	0,150
	TotalX3	0,062

Source: Data Processed

Based on Table 7, the heteroscedasticity test results indicate that each independent variable has a significance value > 0.05, thus concluding that there are no heteroscedasticity symptoms in this study.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing is conducted to test the proposed hypotheses. The hypotheses proposed in this study relate to the influence of input, output, and marketing variables on productivity.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis is used to determine the extent of the effect of independent variables (X) on the dependent variable (Y). The results of the multiple regression test are as follows:

Table 8. Multiple Regression Analysis Results

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	*Std. Error*	*Beta*	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	4.032	3.275		1.231	.221
	TotalX1	.316	.100	.308	3.167	.002
	TotalX2	.242	.111	.204	2.192	.031
	TotalX3	.326	.095	.299	3.429	.001

Source: Data Processed

Based on the regression test conducted, the following regression equation is obtained:

$Y = \alpha + \beta 1\ X1 + \beta\ 2\ X2 + \beta\ 3\ X3 + e$
$Y = 4{,}032 + 0{,}316 + 0{,}242 + 0{,}326 + 0{,}05$

Constant (β0) = 4.032, indicating the constant level where if input, output, and marketing variables = 0, the productivity variable value is 4.032.
Coefficient (β1) = 0.316. This indicates that the input variable (X1) positively affects productivity (Y), increasing it by 0.316.
Coefficient (β2) = 0.242. This indicates that the output variable (X2) positively affects productivity (Y), increasing it by 0.242.
Coefficient (β3) = 0.326. This indicates that the marketing variable (X3) positively affects productivity (Y), increasing it by 0.326.

t Test

The t-test is used to determine the extent of the effect of independent variables partially on the dependent variable. The testing criteria are the error level (α) = 5% and degrees of freedom (df) = (n-k) = 114 – 3 = 111, so the t-table used is 1.658.

Table 9. t Test Results

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Unstandardized Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	4.032	3.275		1.231	.221
	TotalX1	.316	.100	.308	3.167	.002
	TotalX2	.242	.111	.204	2.192	.031
	TotalX3	.326	.095	.299	3.429	.001

Source: Data Processed

Based on the t-test conducted, the results can be interpreted as follows:

- The input variable (X1) has a positive and significant effect on productivity (Y), as seen from t_count (3.167) > t_table (1.658) and significance 0.002 < 0.05. This means that if the input variable (X1) increases by one unit, productivity (Y) will increase.
- The output variable (X2) has a positive and significant effect on productivity (Y), as seen from t_count (2.192) > t_table (1.658) and significance 0.031 < 0.05. This means that if the output variable (X2) increases by one unit, productivity (Y) will increase.
- The marketing variable (X3) has a positive and significant effect on productivity (Y), as seen from t_count (3.429) > t_table (1.658) and significance 0.001 < 0.05. This means that if the marketing variable (X3) increases by one unit, productivity (Y) will increase.

F Test

In this study, the number of samples (n) is 114, and the total number of variables (k) is 4. Thus, we obtain:

df1 = k – 1 = 4 – 1 = 3

df2 = n – k = 114 – 3 = 111

The value of F_count will be obtained by comparing it with F_table. The value of F_table in this study is 2.69.

Table 10. F Test Results

ANOVA						
	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1185.893	3	395.298	33.425	.000b
	Residual	1300.888	110	11.826		
	Total	2486.781	113			
a. Dependent Variable: totally						
b. Predictors: (Constant), TotalX3, TotalX2, TotalX1						

Source: Data Processed

Based on the F-test results, the independent variables (input, output, and marketing) have a significant effect on the dependent variable (productivity), with an F_count value of 33.425. This value is greater than the F_table value of 2.69. Based on these results, it can be concluded that the independent variables in this study together have a significant effect on the dependent variable with a significance of 0.00.

R² Test

The effect of independent variables on the dependent variable is seen from the correlation value (R^2). From the output, the coefficient of determination (R^2) is obtained, which indicates the percentage of the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable.

Table 11. R² Test Results

Model Summary[b]				
Model	**R**	**R Square**	**Adjusted R Square**	**Std. Error of the Estimate**
1	.691a	.477	.463	3.439
a. Predictors: (Constant), TotalX3, TotalX2, TotalX1				
b. Dependent Variable: totally				

Source: Data Processed

The R^2 test results show an Adjusted R Square value of 0.463. This means that the influence of input, output, and marketing on productivity is 0.463 or 46.3%, while the remaining 53.7% of the productivity variance is influenced by factors not examined in this study.

Empowerment Analysis

The formula for the level of empowerment used Putra (2014) is as follows:

$$\mathbf{RS = 1 + \frac{(m - n)}{b}}$$

Where:
RS: scale range
m: highest score in measurement
n: lowest score in measurement
b: formed categories

Based on the calculation of the empowerment level formula, the formed categories are as follows:

Table 12. The Empowerment Level

Item	Min.	Max.	Std. Deviation	Mean (Indicator)	Mean (Variable)	Information
Power within.1	2	4	0,628	3,37		
Power within.2	2	4	0,598	3,53		
Power within.3	2	4	0,586	3,62		
Power within.4	2	5	0,668	3,53	3,51	Empowered
Power within.5	2	5	0,688	3,60		
Power within.6	2	5	0,686	3,39		
Power within.7	2	5	0,706	3,54		

Power within.8	2	4	0,668	3,49		
Power to.1	2	5	0,733	3,62	3,48	Empowered
Power to.2	2	4	0,647	3,33		
Power to.3	2	4	0,595	3,56		
Power to.4	2	5	0,714	3,41		
Power to.5	2	5	0,694	3,54		
Power to.6	2	4	0,567	3,46		
Power to.7	2	4	0,613	3,48		
Power to.8	2	5	0,754	3,45		
Power over.1	2	4	0,613	3,47	3,37	Quite Empowered
Power over.2	2	4	0,686	3,39		
Power over.3	2	5	0,700	3,40		
Power over.4	2	5	0,760	3,39		
Power over.5	2	4	0,663	3,34		
Power over.6	2	4	0,688	3,29		
Power over.7	2	5	0,766	3,36		
Power over.8	2	5	0,784	3,29		
Power with.1	2	4	0,720	3,24	3,26	Quite Empowered
Power with.2	2	5	0,676	3,25		
Power with.3	2	5	0,823	3,24		
Power with.4	2	5	0,786	3,30		
Power with.5	2	4	0,710	3,21		
Power with.6	2	5	0,784	3,29		
Power with.7	2	5	0,679	3,26		
Power with.8	2	5	0,821	3,31		

Source: Data Processed

Table 12 shows that at the empowerment level, the training variable has a minimum score of 2 and a maximum score of 5. The table also indicates that the average empowerment level of the power within variable is 3.51, which means it is empowered. The highest item is from indicator power within.3 with a value of 3.62, while the lowest item is from indicator power within.1 with a value of 3.37.

Similarly, for the power to variable, the minimum score is 2 and the maximum score is 5, with an average empowerment level of 3.48, indicating that it is empowered. The highest item is from indicator power to.1 with a value of 3.62, and the lowest item is from indicator power to.2 with a value of 3.33.

For the power over variable, the minimum score is 2 and the maximum score is 5, with an average empowerment level of 3.37, indicating that it is sufficiently empowered. The highest item is from indicator power over.1 with a value of 3.47, and the lowest items are from indicators power over.6 and 8 with a value of 3.29.

Lastly, for the power with variable, the minimum score is 2 and the maximum score is 5, with an average empowerment level of 3.26, indicating that it is sufficiently empowered. The highest item is from power with.8 with a value of 3.31, and the lowest item is from indicator power with.5 with a value of 3.21.

CONCLUSION

The study reveals that the empowerment level of MSME actors in Kuningan Regency is generally good across various dimensions—*power within*, *power to*, *power over*, and *power with*—though improvements are needed particularly in controlling external factors (*power over*) and fostering collaboration (*power with*). MSMEs in the region show significant potential but require further strengthening to effectively address challenges and capitalize on business opportunities. Regression analysis confirms that input, output, and marketing variables positively and significantly influence productivity, supporting the hypothesis that these factors drive MSME performance. Future research could explore specific strategies to enhance *power over* and *power with* dimensions, as well as investigate the long-term impact of empowerment initiatives on MSME sustainability and growth.

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