

Research Article

Improve Marketing Performance through Marketing Relationships and Sustainable Competitive Advantage

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Abstract

The objective of this study was how to increase the market performance of micro and, small, medium enterprises in Kampung Wisata Tegalwaru Bogor. We examine the effect of relationship marketing and sustainable competitiveness advantage on market performance. On the other hand, this study also examined sustainable competitive advantage as moderating variables. The survey was conducted by distributing the questionnaires to 50 micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSME). The sampling method used in this study is nonprobability sampling with a purposive technique. The results indicate that relationship marketing was influenced significantly by sustainable competitiveness advantage. Relationship marketing was influenced significantly by market performance. Sustainable competitiveness advantage was influenced significantly by market performance. Sustainable competitiveness advantage was the mediate relationship between relationship marketing to market performance. This research implies that companies can create sustainable competitive advantage for company managers as a strategic step by identifying competitors who can positively influence the implementation of management strategies that are expected to improve marketing performance to achieve sustainable competitive advantage.

Keywords: Marketing, Sustainable, Competitiveness, Advantage, Market Performance, MSME

JEL Classification: L26, M31, O14

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1. Introduction

Global economic developments significantly impact Indonesia's economic growth, which is evident through three main aspects. Firstly, there is a notable rise in the number of unemployed and underemployed individuals. Secondly, the industrial sector's workforce in urban areas needs help to expand, and in some cases, it may even shrink. Lastly, the country's rapid population growth and associated growth rate make it challenging for the government to provide sufficient health, housing, and transportation services. These characteristics are observed in all rapidly growing cities facing increased economic activity. As a result, the business environment becomes highly competitive. Dealing with this situation necessitates collaboration among various stakeholders, including companies, individuals, and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) (Mulyadi, 2016).

The role of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the Indonesian economy is very important, especially in providing employment (Aliyah, 2022). In 2011, MSMEs contributed to economic growth of 2.4 percent. Based on these data, MSMEs should receive greater attention in Indonesia's economic development. Some of the characteristics inherent in most MSMEs and at the same time being a source of problems include the low quality of human resources working in the MSME sector, low labor productivity, relatively low quality of goods produced (not yet certified/standardized), lack of creativity, lack of innovation and adoption of new technologies in production, low understanding of entrepreneurial orientation and market orientation (Muslikh et al., 2016).

The definition of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) according to the State Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises is a business entity with a net worth of Rp.200,000,000,- up to Rp.10,000,000,000,- excluding land and buildings for business, has annual net sales of around Rp.1,000,000,000,- (Sari & Yafiz, 2022). According to the Indonesian Chamber of Commerce (KADIN), small and medium enterprises (SMEs) account for a staggering 99% of all business units in Indonesia, totaling approximately 51.26 million establishments. These SMEs are crucial in propelling the country's economy, contributing as much as 53% to Indonesia's GDP in 2009. Furthermore, the small and medium industrial sector significantly aids in addressing unemployment issues and economic challenges in urban regions. The ILO reports that 60% of workers in cities in developing countries are absorbed by the informal sector and activities in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) (Sahban, 2015).

The SME sector is very important because it can create markets, develop trade, manage natural resources, reduce poverty, create jobs, build communities, and support families without adequate control and facilities from the local government (Suprianto et al., 2021). Even though SMEs have an important role in driving the national economy, SMEs must continue to innovate continuously in developing their business so that they are preserved by the flow of liberalization (Salim, 2018). MSMEs encounter challenges primarily associated with competitiveness. Various measures can be taken to enhance their competitiveness, such as bolstering entrepreneurial orientation, market orientation, learning capabilities, and improving overall competence. Besides that, what is no less important is how MSMEs implement product innovation (Octavia et al., 2017).

MSMEs possess advantages over large businesses, including flexibility and the ability to adapt to market fluctuations swiftly. They also excel in absorbing a considerable number of unskilled laborers. Most MSMEs focus on producing consumer goods and services with low-income elasticity of demand. Given Indonesia's predominantly low-educated population, the capacity of MSMEs to employ unskilled workers significantly aids in job creation. However, it faces classic problems (Wahyudiono et al., 2019).

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis

Marketing Relations

Competition in an increasingly tight business environment encourages companies to strengthen customer relationships (Setiyono & Sutrimah, 2016). The concept of relationship marketing exists in the field of concrete product marketing and service marketing. Relationship marketing aims to build, maintain and enhance relationships with customers and other partners so that the objectives of all parts involved in the organization can be fulfilled (Haryanto, 2023). Ramanta et al. (2021) define it as an effort to increase commitment to repurchasing or subscribing to products or services offered in the future, even though there are situational influences and marketing efforts that have the potential to cause behavior changes.

Relationship marketing is a form of marketing in which a company targets customers and makes relevant marketing communications. The quality of relationships with customers will lead to commitment, and commitment is the desire to continuously maintain the value of the relationship (Utami & Oetomo, 2015). Morgan & Hunt in Sulistyono (2014) say that commitment and trust are the basis for building long-term partnerships between business partners. Innovation is not only related to developing products, services, and production process technology, but innovation can

also occur in organizational support activities (administrative innovation). Building and creating good customer relationships will positively affect the company's rate of return. Bthat relationship marketing will increase consumer loyalty. Slater (1997) states that companies that use differentiation and cost advantages continuously will create added value for customers, both in the short term and in the long term, so that the company's performance will be relatively better compared to its competitors through customer satisfaction and loyalty (Riadi et al., 2021).

Sustainable Competitive Advantage

Literature in strategic management shows that a company's advantages can be in the form of cost advantages, uniqueness, and different advantages. If the company has one of them, it can be superior to its competitors. That differentiation advantage as a form of competitive advantage significantly influences organizational performance. Riadi et al. (2021) state that companies that continuously use differentiation and cost advantages will create added value for customers, both in the short term and in the long term, so that the company's performance will be relatively better than its competitors through customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Companies can create a competitive advantage through quality, service, cost control, speed, and innovation (Riadi et al., 2021). The sustainable competitive advantage arises from consistently providing superior customer value. Companies must effectively leverage sources of excellence to deliver exceptional value to their customers. This competitive advantage represents a distinct position that organizations develop to outperform their competitors. According to Manek (2013), market orientation culture can be converted into organizational performance by providing continuous competitive advantage to customers. Wiyadi in Pudjiarti & Swastuti (2022) The present business landscape has undergone a profound transformation, compelling every industry to prioritize efficiency and competitiveness when competing against domestic products.

Marketing Performance

Voss & Voss in Utaminingsih (2016) proposed that market performance is determined by the outcomes of an organization's efforts, encompassing factors such as sales turnover, customer base, profits, and sales growth. An organization can adapt and respond to environmental challenges with a long-term outlook. Organizational performance, often termed company performance, measures how successfully a company accomplishes its objectives. Strong company performance reflects effective and efficient business practices. Various studies adopt diverse indicators to assess organizational performance. Widagdo & Lestari (2023) measures organizational performance using two construct dimensions, namely the first dimension is objective performance, which includes financial performance or performance based on marketing, such as usage levels, profitability, and market share, while the second is subjective performance.

3. Data and Method

This type of research is quantitative research using instruments in the form of questionnaires and measurements with an ordinal scale. The design of this research is causality research which explains the causal relationship between variables. The sampling method is by using a purposive sampling method. The purposive sampling method is when the researcher has certain criteria or goals for studying the sample (Santosa & Hidayat, 2014). The criteria are (1) have been running a UKM business for at least three years, (2) are registered with the Bogor Regency UKM Sub-agency, and (3) are willing to provide information.

Meanwhile, the reason researchers used the purposive sampling method in this study was so that researchers got the information needed from SMEs. The sample selection and distribution of the questionnaires to be sent were carried out as follows: first, determine the number of samples to be studied, namely 50 respondents; second, determine the number of questionnaires to be sent. Fifty copies of the questionnaire will be sent with a 100% response rate. The researcher will come directly to them if the response rate reaches less than 50 percent of the distributed questionnaires.

The research was conducted in the Tegalwaru Tourism Village, Ciampea, Bogor, targeting all small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the area as the population. The sample size consisted of

50 SMEs from the same village. According to the latest available data, the total number of small businesses in the population was 50. The study collected both primary and secondary data. Primary data was gathered directly from the respondents through questionnaires and observations, focusing on the variables of interest. Secondary data, on the other hand, came from relevant literature and previous studies related to the research problem and data specific to the subject under investigation. Various data collection instruments were used for this purpose.

The primary research data was collected using an instrument in the form of a questionnaire or questionnaire. The questionnaire is used to measure the variables of business orientation, consumer orientation, competitor orientation, marketing innovation, and performance. Based on the theoretical framework and framework, the empirical research model proposed is:

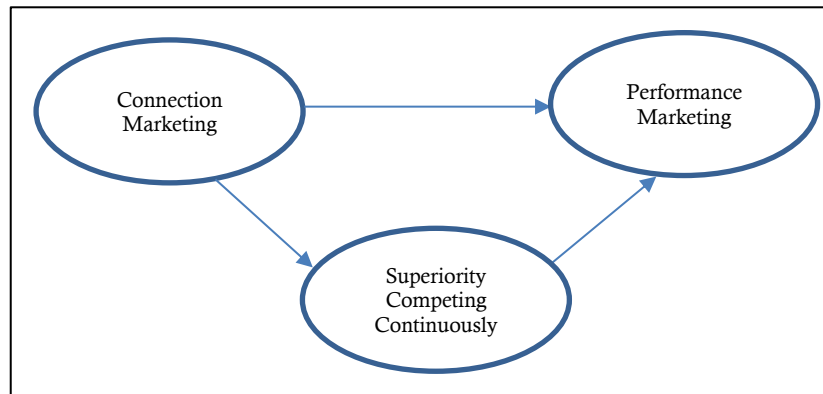


Figure 1. Research Model

4. Results

Description of Statistics Respondent's answer

The measurement scale used in this study uses five measurement scales from one to five, so the resulting respondent's answers will range from 1 to 5. The four criteria will produce a range of 4 criteria that will be used as the basis for interpreting values on average. Based on the research output, the description of each variable is shown in the following table:

Table 1. Descriptive Statistical Test Results

| No | Variable | Mean | Category |
|----|-----------------------------------|-------|----------|
| 1 | Marketing relationships | 2.844 | Medium |
| 2 | Sustainable competitive advantage | 2.788 | Medium |
| 3 | Market performance | 2.976 | Medium |
| | Average | 2.889 | Medium |

Source: Processed Data (2022)

Path Analysis

Path Analysis is used to analyze the causal relationship between variables to know a causal variable's direct and indirect effects on a consequential variable (Suliyanto, 2011). The results of path analysis in this study can be described in the table below:

Table 2. Regression Analysis of Competitive Advantage

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 (Constant) | 8.596 | 1.034 | | 8.311 | .000 |
| Marketing Relations | .014 | .028 | .072 | 2.501 | .618 |

Source: Processed Data (2022)

The regression equation can be described as follows:

$$\text{Competitive Advantage} = 0.072 (\text{MR}) + 0.14 \quad (1)$$

This equation informs that the tendency of changes in each independent variable to the dependent variable can be summarized as follows:

Table 3. Regression Analysis of Market Performance

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 (Constant) | 3.348 | 1.273 | | 2.630 | .011 |
| Marketing Relations | .034 | .022 | .175 | 1.536 | .131 |
| Sustainable competitive advantage | .611 | .114 | .613 | 5.371 | .000 |

Source: Processed Data (2022)

Based on the table above, it is known that the regression equation is as follows:

$$\text{Market Performance} = 0.175 (\text{MR}) + 0.613 (\text{SCA}) + 0.780 \quad (2)$$

From these equations, it can be explained that:

- The Standardized Coefficients (Beta) in Marketing Relations obtained a value of 0.175, which means that every time there is an increase in Marketing Relations, it will be followed by an increase in Market Performance of 0.175 units.
- The Standardized Coefficients (Beta) value for Competitive Advantage obtained a value of 0.613; this indicates that whenever there is a rise in Competitive Advantage, there will be a subsequent increase in Market Performance by 0.613 units.

Based on the equation above, the path analysis model obtained is as follows:

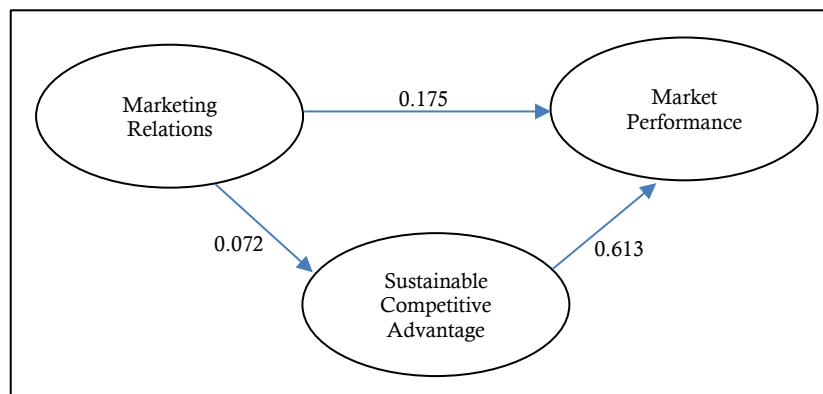


Figure 2. Intervening Variable Test Results

Direct Effect

1. Effect of Relationship Marketing on Competitive Advantage

According to the research findings, the direct path coefficient of Marketing Relations to Competitive Advantage is -0.072, indicating a positive relationship. The t-test value (2.501) exceeds the critical t-table value (2.009) or Sig. (significance level) the Marketing Relations variable (0.618) exceeds the alpha level (0.05). Consequently, the Marketing Relations variable significantly impacts sustainable competitive advantage, leading to the acceptance of Hypothesis 1.

2. Effect of Relationship Marketing on Market Performance

According to the research findings, the direct path coefficient of Marketing Relations to Market Performance is 0.175, indicating a positive relationship. However, the t-test value (1.536) is less than the critical t-table value (2.011) or Sig. (significance level) the Marketing Relations variable (0.131) exceeds the alpha level (0.05). As a result, the Marketing Relations variable does not significantly impact Market Performance, leading to the acceptance of Hypothesis 2.

3. The Effect of Competitive Advantage on Market Performance

According to the research findings, the direct path coefficient of Competitive Advantage to Market Performance is 0.613, indicating a positive relationship. Moreover, the t-test value (5.371) exceeds the critical t-table value (2.011), and the Sig. (significance level) the Competitive Advantage variable is 0.000, less than the alpha level (0.05). Consequently, the Competitive Advantage variable significantly influences market performance, leading to the acceptance of Hypothesis 3.

Indirect Effect

The Influence of Relationship Marketing on Market Performance through Competitive Advantage: The indirect effect, obtained by multiplying the path coefficient value of Marketing Relations with the path coefficient value of Competitive Advantage to Market Performance, amounts to 0.107. This value proves that the marketing relationship variable can be through the intervening variable, namely competitive advantage in influencing market performance; it is just that the coefficient value obtained is smaller when compared to the direct influence of marketing relations on market performance, which is equal to 0.175. The mediating effect (indirect effect) shown by the multiplication result has a significant effect or not will be tested using the Sobel test by comparing the magnitude of the t count and t table as follows:

Finding the standard error of the indirect effect coefficient:

$$\begin{aligned} Sab &= \sqrt{(0.611)^2(0.028)^2 + (-0.014)^2(0.114)^2 + (0.028)^2(0.114)^2} \\ &= \sqrt{0.373321 \times 0.000784 + 0.000196 \times 0.012996 + 0.000784 \times 0.012996} \\ &= \sqrt{0.000293 + 0.00000225 + 0.0000102} \\ &= \sqrt{0.00030575} = 0.0175 \end{aligned} \quad (3)$$

Based on the calculation of the standard error above, it can be seen that the calculated t value is:

$$t \text{ count} = \frac{ab}{Sab} = \frac{0.107}{0.0175} = 6.114 \quad (4)$$

As the calculated t-value (6.114) is greater than the critical t-table value (2.011) at a significance level of 5%, it can be inferred that the mediation coefficient of 0.107 has a statistically significant partial effect.

Total Effect

Effect of relationship marketing on market performance through sustainable competitive advantage From the sum result, the total influence of Marketing Relations on Market Performance is 0.788.

F Test (Simultaneous Test)

The F test is utilized to assess whether both the Marketing Relations variable and the Competitive Advantage variable together significantly influence Market Performance in the regression model. The significance level of the regression equation was determined through the F test, and the results are presented in the table below:

Table 4. Analysis of Linear Regression Variance

| Model | | Sum of Squares | df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
|-------|------------|----------------|----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1 | Regression | 156.544 | 2 | 78.272 | 15.085 | .000 ^b |
| | Residual | 243.876 | 47 | 5.189 | | |
| | Total | 400.420 | 49 | | | |

Source: Processed Data (2022)

After calculating using SPSS ver. 23.0, the Fcount value is 15,085. Meanwhile, the critical value of the F-table at 95% is 3,159. Thus F-count > F-table, so clearly, Hypothesis 4 is accepted. This result shows that the marketing relationship variable and the sustainable competitive advantage variable simultaneously have a significant effect on market performance.

Coefficient of Determination (Determinant Coefficient)

R Square, also known as the coefficient of determination, quantifies the proportion of the variance in the dependent variable that can be attributed to the independent variable's influence. The higher the coefficient of determination, the higher the independent variable explains variations in changes in the dependent variable (Suliyanto, 2011).

Table 5. Market Performance Dependent Variable Determination Coefficient

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .625 ^a | .391 | .365 | 2.278 |

Source: Processed Data (2022)

According to the information provided in Table 5, the Adjusted R Square value, or the Adjusted R² coefficient of determination, is 0.391. This result indicates that approximately 39.1% of the variations in Market Performance can be accounted for by variations in Marketing Relationships and Continuous Competitive Advantage, meaning these variables jointly influence market performance by 39.1%. The remaining 60.9% of the variations in Market Performance are influenced by other factors not considered in this study.

Answers to Open Statements

In addition to closed statements, the researcher also gave open questions. Based on data from open questions, it can be seen in the following table:

Table 6. Description of Relationship Marketing Variable Qualitative Answers, Sustainable Competitive Advantage, and Market Performance

| Variable | Averages and Interpretations | Research Findings-Respondents' Perceptions |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Marketing relationships | 2.844 (Medium) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain product quality • Good service • Handling complaints • Receive input and criticism from consumers • Informing new products |
| Sustainable competitive advantage | 2.788 (Medium) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different products/units • Competitive price • Quality comes first • Maintain customer satisfaction • Fast service |
| Market performance | 2.889 (Medium) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turnover goes up and down • There is an increase in the number of subscribers • There is an increase in turnover • There is an increase in profits |

5. Discussion

The Effect of Relationship Marketing on Sustainable Competitive Advantage

The study results show that the marketing relationship directly affects the sustainable competitive advantage of 0.072 with a probability value of 0.618. The one-way sign on the path coefficient

indicates a positive change, which means the sustainable competitive advantage increases if the marketing relationship increases. In other words, one way to increase the sustainable competitive advantage of Kampung Wisata UMKM products is to improve marketing relationships with customers. Improving marketing relationships is improving relationships with stakeholders, customers, and other parties involved in the business. Thus efforts to increase the sustainable competitive advantage of MSME products in Kampung Wisata Bogor have the potential to remain with the organization by increasing spirituality-based motivation. The results of this study follow research conducted by [Suliyanto \(2010\)](#) that marketing relationships significantly affect sustainable competitive advantage. If SMEs in the Business Tourism village conduct good marketing relations with consumers, they will get a sustainable competitive advantage.

The Effect of Relationship Marketing on Marketing Performance

Based on the study results, marketing relationships directly affect the market performance of 0.175 with a probability value of 0.131. The one-way sign on the path coefficient indicates a positive but insignificant change, which means that if relationship marketing increases, market performance will also increase. In other words, to improve market performance is to improve marketing relationships. In principle, improving marketing relations is broadly improving relations with customers. The strategy to improve the performance of the MSME market in the Business Tourism Village through good marketing relations. Improving marketing relations is how to improve relations with consumers. The results of this study are under the research conducted by [Suliyanto \(2010\)](#) that marketing relationships significantly affect marketing performance. It means that marketing performance will increase if SMEs in the Business Tourism village carry out good marketing relationships with consumers.

The Effect of Sustainable Competitive Advantage on Marketing Performance

The study's results show that sustainable competitive advantage directly affects marketing performance by 0.613 with a probability value of 0.000. The unidirectional sign on the path coefficient shows a positive change which means that if competitive advantage is sustainable, market performance will also increase. In other words, to improve market performance, one of the strategies is to increase sustainable competitive advantage. The results of this study are consistent with those of [Nofrizal et al. \(2020\)](#), who state that sustainable competitive advantage has a positive and significant correlation with market performance. This research is in line with the study of [Nuryakin \(2018\)](#), which says that competitive advantage can increase firm value and performance.

6. Conclusion

Based on the discussion and analysis results, it can be concluded as follows: Marketing The research findings indicate that in the Bogor Business Tourism Village, Marketing Relations positively and significantly impact the marketing performance of MSME products. However, the effect of Marketing Relations on Sustainable Competitive Advantage is positive but not statistically significant. On the other hand, Sustainable Competitive Advantage positively and significantly influences the market performance of UMKM products in the same village. Moreover, the study reveals that Sustainable Competitive Advantage mediates between Marketing Relations and Market Performance of MSME products in the Tegalwaru Business Tourism Village, Bogor. As a strategic approach, companies can create a sustainable competitive advantage by identifying influential competitors and implementing effective management strategies, thereby improving marketing performance and achieving long-term success for MSME products in the Bogor Business Tourism Village.

Recommendation

Similar research is needed on a theoretical basis with other researchers' viewpoints or with the addition of other theories, for example, adding other variables such as the speed of reaction between large and small companies in market conditions. The object of research can be expanded not only to medium-scale entrepreneurs but can be added to respondents from large entrepreneurs with a more diverse product range. The presence of advanced researchers for companies with quite complex management, too (firms on a large scale).

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