

Competitive Advantage and Innovation Capability: Can It Optimize the Export Marketing Performance of SMEs Coffee in Central Java Indonesia?

Rohwiyati^{1,*}, Tulus Haryono³, Ahmad Ikhwan Setiawan⁴, Lilik Wahyudi⁵ Endang Dwi Amperawati⁶, Mi'raj Akbar Pradianto⁷, Agus Dwianto⁸

¹Department of Management, Universitas Surakarta, Surakarta, Indonesia; rohwiyati@gmail.com (R.).

^{2,3,4,5,7,8}Department of Management, Universitas Sebelas Maret, Surakarta, Indonesia; tulus_fe_ums@yahoo.com (T.H.)

aikhwansse@gmail.com (A.I.S.) lilik.wahyudi@staff.ums.ac.id (L.W.) ed4prof@gmail.com (M.A.P.) agusdwianto90@gmail.com (A.D.)

⁶Department of Management, Faculty of Economic, STIE Arlindo, Bogor, Indonesia; miraj.akbar11@student.ums.ac.id (E.D.A.).

Abstract. Phenomenon, coffee SMEs are constrained in achieving competitive advantage which has an impact on suboptimal export marketing performance, innovation capability plays a role as a strategy to strengthen competitiveness to achieve better results in export marketing performance while still focusing on market orientation. Objectives, to test and analyze the direct and indirect influence of MO (CSO and CMO) on EMP through CA and the role of IC on the influence of CA on EMP. Novelty, provides strategic insight for Indonesian coffee SMEs, the importance of exploring available resources to solve competitive advantage problems that will have an impact on export marketing performance. A total of 212 Central Java Indonesian coffee SMEs as samples. Data analysis using PLS-SEM. Findings: MO dimensions (CSO and CMO) significantly have a positive relationship to competitive advantage (CA), but its influence on export marketing performance (EMP) is only significant for CSO, while the influence of CA on EMP is also significant. Further evidence, CA can link both MO dimensions to EMP. The role of innovation capability is proven to strengthen the influence of CA on EMP.

Keywords: Competitive Advantage, Capability, Marketing Performance.

1. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable business activities will always be pursued through various strategic approaches, this is why profit is the goal of the business. Profit-oriented business goals are not enough to achieve growth and maintain the sustainability of the company, because the company must be involved in improving customer welfare and actively creating innovative strategies to beat its competitors (Rohwiyati et al., 2023).

Every country has economic potential, especially coffee farming, for example Indonesia has achievements in coffee exports such as Robusta and Arabica. Data reported by ICO (2021) Indonesia is also considered by the world as the 4th ranked coffee exporter with 375,555.9 tons/year with an export orientation to the United States, Germany, and even the Asian region: Japan, Malaysia (<https://www.ico.org>). Indonesia's export trend (2011-2021) has experienced turmoil in the last 5 years, but previously showed good growth.

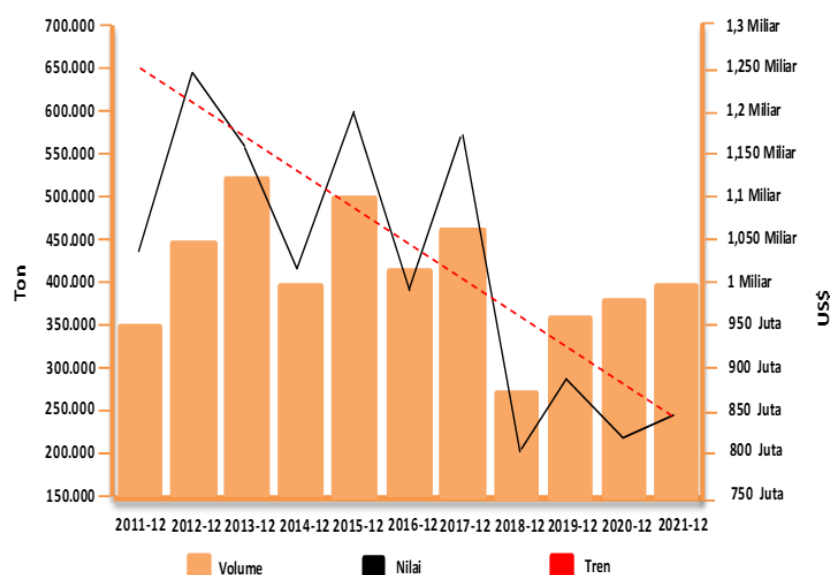


Figure 1: Chart of Indonesian coffee export sales trends to abroad 2011-2021.

Table 1: Trend in Indonesian coffee export sales 2011-2021.

No.	Periode 5 Tahun Ke-1 (Tahun 2012 - 2016)					Periode 5 Tahun Ke-2 (Tahun 2017 - 2021)				
	Tahun	Vol (Ribu Ton)	% Vol (+/-)	Nilai (Milyar U\$)	% Nilai (+/-)	Tahun	Vol (Ribu Ton)	% Vol (+/-)	Nilai (Milyar U\$)	% Nilai (+/-)
Th.Dasar	2011	346,06	-	1.000,00	-	2016	412,37	-	1.000,00	-
1	2012	447,01	29,17%	1.200,00	20,00%	2017	464,16	12,56%	1.200,00	20,00%
2	2013	532,14	19,04%	1.200,00	0,00%	2018	277,4	-40,24%	806,90	-32,76%
3	2014	382,75	-28,07%	1.000,00	-16,67%	2019	355,8	28,26%	872,40	8,12%
4	2015	499,61	30,53%	1.200,00	20,00%	2020	375,6	5,56%	809,20	-7,24%
5	2016	412,37	-17,46%	1.000,00	-16,67%	2021	375,5	-0,03%	808,16	-0,13%
Rata-rata Penjualan		454,78	6,64%	1.120,00	1,33%		369,69	1,22%	899,332	-2,40%

Source: <https://databooks> (2022).

SMEs will always be faced with changes, and strategies to achieve competitive advantage are important to achieve so that businesses can survive in the competition, companies are faced with challenges and opportunities including coffee SMEs, this is triggered by the complexity of environmental changes (Christantyo & Shiratina, 2023). Companies must be able to respond to challenges that occur, and make strategic decisions through effective resource planning and management that will contribute to marketing performance (Nissen et al., 2020). The changes that occur require each company to have adequate readiness in order to survive and continue to generate long-term profits (Sardanto et al., 2018). Marketing performance in the view of Ainin et al., (2015) focuses on a dynamic process involving important dimensions to achieve the goals of the company's marketing activities; can also be operationalized as a company's ability directed at achieving marketing goals (Alrubaiee et al, 2016); Mathur (2013) emphasizes market share, sales growth, innovative product launches while Sharma, Davcik & Pillai (2016) emphasize activities that are more directed at meeting customer expectations. In the scope of exports, marketing performance by Keegan (2016) emphasizes sales achieved by SMEs abroad related to price as a driver or promotional strategy. Export performance by Acikdilli (2015) requires a capability and strategy to achieve it because it is an important element. Zuhdi et al., (2021) also reported the importance of management and strategic plans if a company wants to achieve good export performance, this success is marked by sales and profit growth and increasingly quality management. Market orientation (MO) is an important element for companies to drive export performance, therefore understanding consumer needs and competitor strategies will be the focus of MO (Suwandana, 2023). The MO strategy implemented has a positive link to company performance, both in marketing results, but also customer share and growth (Dahmiri et al., 2024). The components of market orientation include customer orientation with a focus on understanding consumers, competitor orientation which focuses on competitors and inter-functional coordination components which focus on coordinating company resources to meet consumer needs (Kohli & Jaworski, 1990; Narver & Slater, 1990).

Positive results of MO with company performance are proven from previous research such as Cross et al., (2007); Fatonah et al., (2021); Frambach et al., (2016); Jeong et al., (2014); specifically the findings of Zhou, Brown & Dev (2009); Suwandana (2023); Dahmiri et al., (2024) prove that MO has a positive link to marketing performance; positive link between MO and export performance Acikdilli (2015). MO can also directly and indirectly influence marketing performance through competitive advantage (Zhou, Brown & Dev, 2009). Several studies have tested the positive link from competitive advantage to marketing performance (Al-Murad, 2022; Zhou et al., 2009; Chong & Ali, 2022; Hang et al., 2022; Abdullah & Rosliyati, 2020). However, there is a gap in the relationship between MO and marketing performance, such as the findings of Han et al. (1998); Widiartanto and Suhadak (2013); Novi & Murwatiningsih (2018). Zhou et al., (2009) responded to the debate on MO with marketing performance, that companies must understand competitive advantage as a means of improving marketing performance, therefore MO can improve marketing performance through this competitive advantage.

MO and competitive advantage are important elements in achieving marketing success. Competitive advantage is an advantage that a company has because it is able to provide superior value from its competitors. This factor can be achieved if the resources used produce superior value compared to the low costs incurred (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). MO is considered an effective strategy for achieving competitive advantage in conditions of high competition (Nursal et al., 2022). Several studies have proven the positive link between MO and competitive advantage (Zhou et al., 2009; Suwandana, 2023), market-oriented companies tend to provide superior value so that they have the opportunity to have a competitive advantage over their competitors (Dahmiri et al., 2024).

The phenomenon of suboptimal export marketing performance by coffee SMEs in Central Java, Indonesia is caused by several factors. Zuhdi et al., (2021) responded that the main obstacle was due to the high international market competition and the internal side of SMEs did not yet have innovation capabilities, even though globalization requires the ability to respond to change and explore resources to create competitiveness. Siudek & Zawojnska (2014) also highlighted the low competitiveness of SMEs in the international market causing

suboptimal export performance, therefore this obstacle requires a strategy to strengthen innovation capabilities (Amperawati, Rahmawati, et al., 2024). The interaction of competitive advantage and innovation capabilities is an important element to drive optimal export performance. Capability emphasizes more on how SMEs are able to manage resources and competitiveness emphasizes how products can be accepted and satisfy international customers. Innovation in the view of Mello et al., (2008) is an important element of a company because it can increase competitive advantage, but to achieve it requires innovation capabilities that overall show the ability of both knowledge and skills according to the characteristics of the company concerned, this is called innovation capacity. Innovation capability in increasing competitive advantage is proven by the results of previous studies such as Mello et al., (2008); Praditya & Purwanto (2024); Feriady & Farliana (2022). Innovation capability can also improve company performance such as Zhou et al., (2009); Kareem et al., (2024). Research by Isfianadewi et al., (2019) proves that the role of innovation capability in addition to driving competitive advantage also affects company performance. Competitive advantage is a challenge for coffee exporting SMEs that must be achieved because not all entrepreneurs are able to achieve optimal marketing performance. To overcome these weaknesses, innovation is needed and this innovation can only be realized if SMEs have innovation capabilities (Amperawati, Hariningsih, et al., 2024; Dwi Amperawati et al., 2024). The urgency of this research, innovation capabilities are very much needed to overcome low competitive advantage. The role of innovation capabilities is expected to strengthen the influence of competitive advantage on marketing performance. The interaction of competitive advantage with innovation capabilities will provide greater benefits to marketing performance.

The novelty of this study provides strategic insight for Central Java Indonesian coffee SMEs, the importance of exploring the resources they have to solve competitive advantage problems that impact marketing performance. The strategy for achieving this, companies need to develop innovation capabilities by increasing knowledge and skills to encourage development in products, services and production processes.

MO studies from various previous studies still have a gap in direct findings of MO on export performance, therefore this model framework is important to test the direct and indirect effects of MO on export marketing performance in Indonesian coffee SMEs through competitive advantage. This model explores the moderating role of innovation capabilities whether the interaction of competitive advantage with innovation capabilities can optimize export marketing performance.

2. METHOD

Quantitative descriptive study with a population of 241 Indonesian Central Java coffee SMEs (distanbun.jatengprov.go.id). The involvement of SMEs in this research will be selected using a purposive technique, namely being involved in export activities with a maximum capital of IDR 10 billion, but from the characteristics of the selected sample of 212 SMEs, the details are in Table 2.

Table 2: Population and sample.

No.	Initial Population	Characteristics of SMEs		Final Sample	
		Not Exported Yet	Can't be reached		
1.	Banjarnegara	1	(1)	-	0
2.	Banyumas	3	(2)	-	1
3.	Batang	2	-	-	2
4.	Boyolali	5	(3)	-	2
5.	Cilacap	2	-	-	2
6.	Jepara	2	(2)	-	0
7.	Karanganyar	2	(2)	-	0
8.	Kebumen	3	(1)	-	2
9.	Kendal	12	(2)	(1)	9
10.	Kudus	22	(1)	(1)	20
11.	Magelang	11	-	(2)	9
12.	Pati	21	(1)	-	20
13.	Pekalongan	1	(1)	-	0
14.	Pemalang	5	-	-	5
15.	Purbalingga	2	(2)	-	0
16.	Purworejo	3	(1)	-	2
17.	Semarang	22	(1)	0	21
18.	Sukoharjo	1	(1)	-	0
19.	Tegal	3	-	(1)	2
20.	Temanggung	106	0	(2)	104
21.	Wonosobo	12	(1)	-	11
	Total	241	(22)	(7)	212

Source: distanbun.jatengprov.go.id

Table 3: Operational definition and variable measurement.

Definisi Operasional Variabel	Indicators	Reference
Customer orientation is an organizational culture that focuses on customer commitment, needs and satisfaction.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The company drives customer satisfaction (CSO1) 2. The company measures customer satisfaction systematically and frequently (CSO1) 3. The company committed to creating value for customers (CSO3) 4. The company strategy is based on understanding customer needs (CSO4) 	Narver & Slater (1990)
Competitor orientation is a sufficient understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of current and potential competitors in the future, both short-term and long-term strategies to create a sustainable competitive advantage for the company.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The company collects information on competitors' weaknesses/strengths regularly (CMO1) 2. The company responds quickly to competitors' actions that threaten the company (CMO2) 3. The company discusses competitors' strategies (CMO3) 4. The company targets opportunities for competitive advantage (CMO4) 	Narver & Slater (1990).
Competitive advantage is the ability gained through a company's resources and unique characteristics to produce superior performance over competitors.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The company has skilled employees (CA1). 2. The company has superior knowledge (CA2). 3. The company implements the best management (CA3). 4. The company creates high-quality products (CA4). 5. The company uses new technology (CA5). 	Leonard-Barton (2011)
Innovation capability is the ability of a company to develop products or services through an effective process to adapt to market demand, technological changes and outperform competitors.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The company's ability to create new products (IC1). 2. The ability to develop new ideas to capture market opportunities (IC2). 3. The company's ability to implement new production processes (IC3). 4. The company's ability to develop digital marketing strategies (IC4). 5. The ability to collaborate between processing units to achieve optimal results (IC5). 	Chang et al., (2012)
Export Marketing Performance is defined as the level of achievement of company goals, both economic goals and strategic goals, as a result of implementing coffee export marketing programs and activities.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase in export profits (EMP1) 2. Growth in export sales (EMP2) 3. Increasing the frequency of export sales (EMP3) 4. Export marketing area (EMP4) 	Julian & Ahmed (2004)

The questionnaire as primary data refers to the Likert scale with a rating of 5. The process of implementing this research begins with distribution to all respondents. Of all the questionnaires that can be used as data and analyzed, only 212 need to be continued with scoring. As a continuation, an analysis will be carried out to test the hypothesis with SEM-PLS, and the decision from the statistical results will be an important conclusion of this research.

3. RESULT DAN DISCUSSION

3.1. Evaluation Outer Model

3.1.1. Convergent Validity

Test of convergent validity of all research constructs meets the assumption criteria that should be met, because the factor loading is > 0.7 .

Table 4: Convergent validity test.

	Outer loading
CSO1	0.913
CSO2	0.896
CSO3	0.840
CSO4	0.916
CMO1	0.869
CMO2	0.876
CMO3	0.777
CMO4	0.921
CA1	0.871
CA2	0.846
CA3	0.788
CA4	0.888
CA5	0.900
IC1	0.832
IC2	0.849
IC3	0.895
IC4	0.853
IC5	0.884
MP1	0.851
MP2	0.862
MP3	0.826
MP4	0.842

3.1.2. Discriminant Validity

Likewise, with the test of discriminant validity, valid results were obtained by fulfilling the assumption of $AVE > 0.5$.

Table 5: Average variance extracted value.

	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Results
Customer Orientation (CSO)	0.795	Valid
Competitor Orientation (CMO)	0.743	Valid
Competitive Advantage (CA)	0.739	Valid
Innovation Capability (IC)	0.745	Valid
Export Marketing Performance (EMP)	0.714	Valid

3.1.3. Reliability Test

An instrument also tests its reliability, such as this research, all constructs also have good reliability results on the composite aspect > 0.7 and Alpha value > 0.6 .

Table 6: Composite reliability.

Variable	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
Customer Orientation (CSO)	0.939	0.914
Competitor Orientation (CMO)	0.920	0.883
Competitive Advantage (CA)	0.934	0.911
Innovation Capability (IC)	0.936	0.915
Export Marketing Performance (EMP)	0.909	0.867

3.2. Evaluation Inner Model

3.2.1. Goodness-of-Fit Test

Table 6 show R-Square value.

Table 6: R-Square value.

	R-Square
CA	0.645
EMP	0.784

Both endogenous variables in this model show good fit, as shown by the R^2 value of each model (CA and EMP).

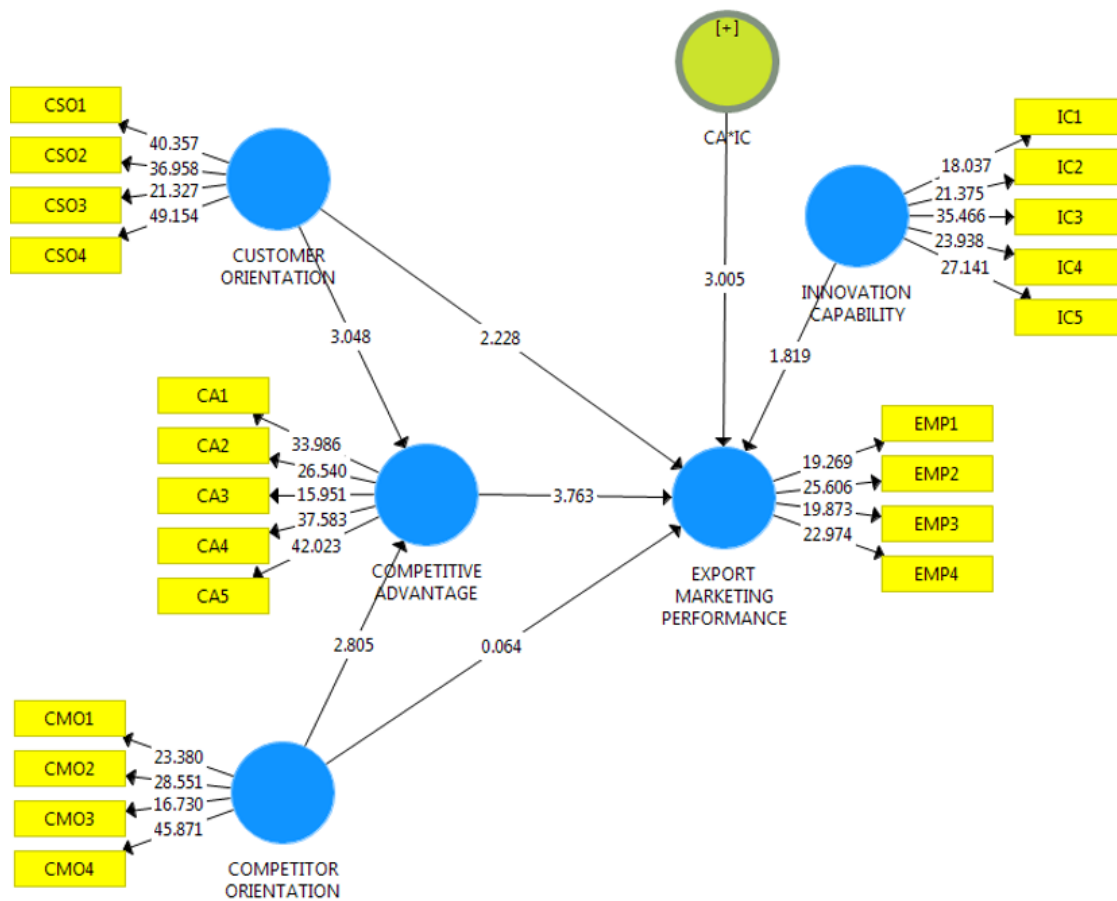


Figure 2: Inner Model.

3.3. Path Coefficient Test

When viewed from the image above, it appears that all hypothesized paths in this research show a positive link, this indicates a positive effect for all paths. The table that appears below is a test of all hypotheses with the results.

Table 7: Hypothesis testing.

	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values
CSO->CA	3.048	0.002
CMO->CA	2.805	0.005
CSO->EMP	2.228	0.026
CMO->EMP	0.064	0.949
CA->EMP	3.763	0.000
CSO->CA->EMP	2.429	0.016
CMO->CA->EMP	2.156	0.032
CA*IC->EMP	3.005	0.003

CSO->CA (p 0.002), this result accepts H1 indicating a positive link between the two constructs. CMO->CA (p 0.005), this result accepts H2 indicating a positive link between the two constructs. CSO->EMP (p 0.026), this result accepts H3 indicating a positive link between the two constructs.. CMO->EMP (p 0.949), this result rejects H4 indicating both constructs are not significant. CA->EMP (p 0.000), this result accepts H5 indicating a positive link between the two constructs. CSO->CA->EMP (p 0.016), this result accepts H6 indicating CSO has an indirect effect on EMP through CA. CMO->CA->EMP (p 0.032), this result accepts H7 indicating CMO has an indirect effect on EMP through CA. CA*IC (p 0.003), this result accepts H8 indicating IC can moderate the effect CA on EMP. Market orientation (MO) studied in this study as a predictor variable is measured on the dimensions of customer orientation and competitor orientation. Customer and competitor orientation, both have a positive influence on competitive advantage. Export customer-oriented coffee SMEs will strive to encourage customer satisfaction, will measure customer satisfaction more often systematically, have a commitment to creating value for customers, and strive to create effective service strategies through understanding the needs of export customers. Another result, competitor orientation also has a positive and significant influence on competitive advantage. Competitor-oriented coffee SMEs will strive to collect information on competitor weaknesses/strengths routinely, respond quickly to competitor actions that threaten the organization, the involvement of entrepreneurs in discussing competitor strategies and targeting opportunities for competitive advantage (Dwianto et al., 2024). This finding confirms previous research (Nursal et al., 2022; Zhou et al., 2009;

Suwandana, 2023; Dahmiri et al., 2024) The MO implemented by the company is directed at providing value to customers that can outperform competitors, so the implementation of this MO is important to achieve competitive advantage. This finding obtained positive results related to the influence of CSO on EMP, customer orientation has a significant impact on export marketing performance, while CMO is not significant on EMP. Previous research by Frambach et al., (2016); Jeong et al., (2014) also proved that there is a positive link between market orientation and company performance while Zhou et al., (2009); Suwandana (2023); Dahmiri et al., (2024) proved that MO has a positive link on marketing performance.

Other evidence obtained positive results related to the influence of CA on EMP, the competitive advantages possessed by coffee SMEs in Indonesia have an influence on increasing export marketing performance which provides positive benefits on profits, sales results, and export customer growth. The influence of these two constructs is also in line with the results of previous studies (Al-Murad, 2022; Zhou et al., 2009; Hang et al., 2022; Chong & Ali, 2022; Abdullah & Rosliyati, 2020) that competitive advantage is an important element in achieving marketing success, if the competitive advantage is higher, the marketing performance achieved will be better.

The indirect effect of both MO dimensions, both CSO and CMO, can affect EMP through CA, this is proven by the role of CA mediating the influence of CSO and CMO on EMP (Dwianto et al., 2024). Coffee SMEs need to implement an orientation strategy, especially an MO strategy by paying attention to the needs of their customers and the strengths and weaknesses of competitors that are always monitored. If MO is implemented effectively, it will produce a competitive advantage that will contribute to improving export marketing performance. From previous findings, Zhou et al., (2009) also proved the role of competitive advantage in mediating the influence of MO on company performance. An important implication for Indonesian coffee SMEs is that the orientation strategy, especially in this case MO, which is measured by the CSA and CMO dimensions, is important to apply to create customer value above its competitors so that the company will gain a competitive advantage that can overcome the tight competition, and this factor will have an impact on increasingly better export marketing performance (Kantus et al., 2025). The role of innovation capability (IC) in this study was also proven to moderate the influence of CA on EMP. Important implications for Indonesian Central Java coffee SMEs, companies that integrate competitive advantages with innovation capabilities will generate greater benefits in export marketing performance, so that higher CA and IC interactions will be able to optimize their export performance (Setiawati et al., 2024). This finding confirms the view of Mello et al., (2008), to achieve competitive advantage it needs to be supported by innovation capabilities because this factor is needed to encourage the creation of company value and competitiveness, so that in the end it will provide a greater contribution to marketing performance. Zhou et al., (2009) and Kareem et al., (2024) also agree that innovation capabilities are a means to improve company performance, thus Isfianadewi et al., (2019) emphasize the importance of innovation capabilities that companies must have in high competition because in addition to encouraging competitive advantages, it also affects company performance.

4. CONCLUSION

The test results of both MO dimensions (CSO and CMO) significantly have a positive relationship to competitive advantage (CA), but its influence on export marketing performance (EMP) is only significant for CSO, while the influence of CA on EMP is also significant. Further evidence, CA can link both MO dimensions to EMP. The role of innovation capability is proven to strengthen the influence of CA on EMP.

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