



THE ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL AMBIDEXTERITY IN ENHANCING INNOVATION IN MSME MARKETING PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

This study examines the effects of organizational ambidexterity and innovation on the marketing performance of Indonesian coffee shop MSMEs. Using survey data from 203 MSMEs and analyzed with SEM-PLS, the findings reveal that innovation has a strong and significant positive effect on marketing performance, reflected in sales growth, customer satisfaction, and market expansion. In contrast, organizational ambidexterity does not have a significant direct impact on marketing performance. This result indicates that, in resource-constrained MSMEs, ambidexterity functions primarily as a supporting capability that sustains innovation rather than as a direct driver of market outcomes. The novelty of this study lies in demonstrating that ambidexterity's contribution to MSME performance is predominantly indirect and context-dependent, particularly in service-based MSMEs within developing economies. The findings suggest that MSMEs should prioritize innovation as a core strategy to enhance marketing performance while maintaining ambidexterity to support long-term innovation sustainability.

Keywords: ambidexterity organization; innovation; marketing performance; MSMEs

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INTRODUCTION

Innovation has become a central mechanism for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to enhance competitiveness and marketing performance in increasingly dynamic markets (Kumalaningrum et al., 2023; Molina-Castillo et al., 2023). Recent MSME studies emphasize that innovation is no longer limited to product development, but also includes service innovation, process improvement, and digital marketing practices that directly affect customer acquisition and retention (Alghamdi, 2018; Buisson et al., 2021). In the food-and-beverage sector, particularly coffee shop MSMEs, innovation commonly takes the form of new menu variants, experiential store concepts, digital payment systems, and active engagement through social media platforms. These innovations are closely associated with improved customer satisfaction and sales growth.

Despite its importance, the ability of MSMEs to sustain innovation remains constrained by limited financial resources, managerial capacity, and technological readiness (Ramdan et al., 2022). Empirical evidence shows that MSME owners often face trade-offs between maintaining daily operational efficiency and

experimenting with new ideas or (Makona et al., 2023). In coffee shop MSMEs, this tension is visible when owners attempt to ensure consistent service quality while simultaneously introducing digital ordering systems, promotional campaigns, or new product offerings. Such conditions highlight the managerial challenges inherent in small, resource-constrained firms.

Organizational ambidexterity has been widely discussed in recent literature as a capability that enables firms to manage this balance between operational efficiency and innovation (Sun & Zhao, 2023). In MSMEs, ambidexterity is reflected in the ability to refine existing routines while exploring new opportunities, often under conditions of uncertainty and competitive pressure. However, recent empirical studies increasingly suggest that the impact of ambidexterity on performance in MSMEs is context-dependent and not always direct (Hafizullah Mosavi & Fadli Agus Triansyah, 2023). Several recent studies argue that ambidexterity primarily functions as an enabling capability that supports innovation rather than acting as a direct driver of market or marketing performance (Jacob et al., 2022). Innovation capability especially digital and service-based innovation has been shown to exert a more immediate and visible influence on marketing performance, including sales growth, customer satisfaction, and market expansion (Çelik & Uzunçarşılı, 2023; Jing et al., 2023; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013). This suggests that, for MSMEs, innovation may serve as the key mechanism through which organizational capabilities are translated into market outcomes.

This issue is particularly relevant in the coffee shop MSME sector, where competition is intense and differentiation is easily imitated. Recent hospitality and MSME studies highlight that coffee shops must continuously innovate not only in products but also in service delivery and digital engagement to remain competitive (Jacob et al., 2022; Primadasa et al., 2025). In such environments, the role of ambidexterity may be more supportive, helping firms sustain innovation efforts rather than directly improving marketing results.

Although recent literature has increasingly examined innovation and ambidexterity in MSMEs, empirical evidence on their joint effects on marketing performance remains limited, particularly in developing-economy contexts such as Indonesia (Batra et al., 2022; Chakma & Dhir, 2024). Moreover, existing findings show mixed results regarding whether organizational ambidexterity directly enhances marketing performance or operates indirectly through innovation capability (Cao et al., 2009; Jaidi et al., 2022; Ramdan et al., 2022).

Therefore, this study investigates the effects of organizational ambidexterity and innovation on marketing performance among Indonesian coffee shop MSMEs. By focusing on a service-based MSME sector operating under high competitive pressure and resource constraints, this study aims to clarify the role of ambidexterity in supporting innovation and its implications for marketing performance. The findings are expected to contribute to recent MSME and innovation literature by providing context-specific evidence and offering practical insights for MSME owners in prioritizing innovation strategies while maintaining operational stability.

METHOD

This study employs a quantitative research design, with data collected through the distribution of structured questionnaires. The research focuses on MSMEs in the coffee shop sector in Bandung. The selection of Bandung as the research location is motivated by the rapid expansion of Indonesia's coffee shop industry and the resulting competitive pressure in urban markets, which provides a relevant setting for examining ambidexterity and innovation among MSMEs (Toffin, 2020). Evidence from Bandung-based studies also indicates increasing numbers of similar coffee shop businesses and heightened competitive pressure in this sector. Such conditions create strong innovation pressure, requiring coffee shop MSMEs to continuously refine existing operations while simultaneously exploring new offerings, service experiences, and digital marketing channels.

From a theoretical perspective, this competitive environment provides a suitable context to examine organizational ambidexterity, as firms are required to balance exploitation, such as efficiency, consistency, and cost control, with exploration, including menu experimentation, concept differentiation, and technology adoption (Birkinshaw & Gibson, 2004; March, 1991). Consequently, Bandung represents an appropriate empirical setting for analyzing how ambidexterity and innovation interact to influence marketing performance under high competitive pressure (Birkinshaw & Gibson, 2004; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013).

The sampling technique used in this research was purposive sampling, based on the following criteria: (1) Coffee shop MSMEs that have been operating for at least two years; (2) Have a minimum of five employees; and (3) Owners or managers who are willing to participate in the study.

Based on these criteria, the final sample consisted of 203 coffee shops, which is considered adequate for generating statistically significant results. The organizational ambidexterity variable was measured through two primary dimensions exploitation and exploration using a scale adapted from He & Wong (2004), The research instruments were adapted to align with the characteristics of coffee shop MSMEs. The innovation construct was measured using dimensions of product and process innovation, drawing on the framework proposed by Jansen et al., (2006). Marketing performance was evaluated using indicators such as sales volume, sales growth, expansion of the customer base, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty, which were modified from the models of (Ernawati et al., 2021; Sinaga et al., 2021). All questionnaire items employed a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to capture respondents' perceptions and agreement levels.

The data obtained were processed using quantitative techniques and analyzed with the support of PLS-SEM statistical software. This research was carried out in several stages and is considered successful if it can provide meaningful benefits to MSMEs specifically by helping them compete with larger businesses and enhance their business performance. Additionally, this study is expected to offer recommendations on effective and creative innovation models suitable for MSMEs.

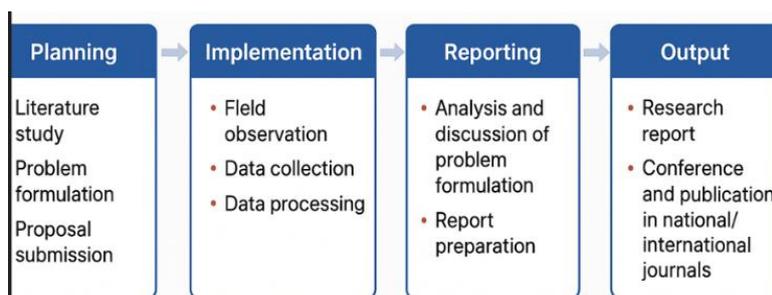


Figure 1. Conceptual and Operational Definitions of Variables

The dependent variable in this study is innovation, and the independent variable is MSME performance, with organizational ambidexterity as the moderating variable. The following is a table of the operational variables in this study:

Table 1. Operational Definitions and Measurement of Variables

No.	Variable	Definition	Indicators	Scale
1	Organizational Ambidexterity	Organizational ambidexterity refers to the ability of MSMEs to simultaneously apply exploratory and exploitative competencies in order to create value and achieve long-term performance (Wang & Rafiq, 2014).	a. Exploration b. Exploitation	Interval
2	Innovation	Innovation is defined as the introduction and development of new types of products or services that differ from previous offerings and complement existing products, with greater emphasis on quality improvement (Sinaga et al., 2021).	a. Changes in product design b. Changes in service techniques c. Product development d. Product utilization	Interval
3	MSME Marketing Performance	MSME marketing performance refers to indicators commonly used to measure the impact of a firm's marketing strategy on business outcomes.	a. Sales volume b. Sales growth c. Customer growth d. Business profit growth e. Customer satisfaction	Interval

Source: Processed Data (2024)

RESULTS

The demographic data of the respondents indicate a relatively balanced and representative distribution across several categories, including age, gender, business duration, and organizational position. The age distribution shows that the largest proportion of respondents falls within the 30–35 age range (19.2%), followed by the 42–47 age group (18.7%). Most respondents are within the productive adult age range, typically characterized by substantial business experience. This enhances the relevance of the research findings, as they capture perspectives from individuals who are more seasoned in managing business activities.

Table 2. Respondent Demographics

Category	Subcategory	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Age	18-23 years	35	17.2
	24-29 years	27	13.3
	30-35 years	39	19.2
	36-41 years	28	13.8
	42-47 years	38	18.7
	Over 47 years old	36	17.7
Gender	Male	102	50.2
	Female	101	49.8
Length of Business	Less than 1 year	43	21.2
	2-5 years	49	24.1
	6-9 years	24	11.8
	10-13 years	47	23.2
	Over 15 years old	40	19.7
Position	Owner	100	49.3
	Employees	103	50.7

Source: Processed Data (2024)

In terms of gender, the nearly equal distribution between male (50.2%) and female respondents (49.8%) strengthens the reliability of the data by allowing the study to incorporate potential differences in perspectives or experiences between genders, particularly in business contexts and decision-making processes.

The distribution of business age indicates that most respondents operate businesses that are either in the growth or stabilization stages, particularly those running for 2–5 years (24.1%) and 10–13 years (23.2%). This distribution offers insight into the challenges and dynamics faced by businesses at various maturity levels. Younger businesses may still encounter foundational challenges, while more established ones tend to experience greater operational and managerial stability.

Regarding organizational position, the almost equal distribution between business owners (49.3%) and employees (50.7%) allows for diverse viewpoints to be represented. Owners tend to contribute perspectives related to strategic direction and business sustainability, while employees provide insights on day-to-day operational realities.

On the Ambidexterity Organization variable, the average response shows a value that tends to be neutral or even disagree, especially on indicators related to the organization's ability to explore (develop new ideas or processes) and exploit (make optimal use of existing resources). This indicates that most respondents feel their organizations have not fully encouraged a balance between exploration and exploitation or are less focused on applying ambidexterity in daily practices. This indicates that respondents perceived ambidexterity practices as less emphasized in daily operations.

On the other hand, the Innovation variable received more positive responses from respondents, reflecting that most organizations have focused on developing innovation in their products or services. Indicators such as the ability to create new products, use of the latest technology, and improvement of business processes received high scores, showing that innovation is an important priority for organizations to remain relevant and competitive. The high response value for innovation indicates that companies consider innovation a key element in facing market dynamics and meeting evolving consumer needs. This positive response shows that many organizations understand the importance of adapting to new technologies and implementing innovative strategies to support marketing success.

In the Marketing Performance variable, the questionnaire results show variation in responses, with fairly good scores on indicators related to sales growth, market share, and customer satisfaction. This indicates that most respondents feel the positive impact of marketing efforts, as seen in the improvement in performance in these aspects. However, there are also several indicators, such as marketing budget effectiveness and increased competitiveness compared to competitors, which tend to receive lower scores. This could be an indication that organizations still face challenges in optimizing marketing budget allocation and maintaining competitiveness in an increasingly competitive market.

Overall, this analysis shows that Innovation is the variable that received the most positive responses from respondents, indicating that innovation plays a key role in the organization's efforts to improve marketing performance. On the other hand, an Ambidexterity Organization needs more attention in order to create a better balance between exploration and exploitation, which supports stability while also supporting an innovative environment. Marketing performance has shown fairly good results, but there are still several areas that need improvement, particularly regarding budget effectiveness and efforts to compete in the market. These results indicate that innovation does play a major role in improving marketing performance, but support from optimal ambidexterity can create a more stable foundation for the sustainability of innovation within the organization.

Overall, the respondent composition provides a strong foundation for the study. The diversity in age, business duration, gender, and organizational roles ensures that the findings are more representative and comprehensive. The balance in gender and position further enriches the analysis by capturing perspectives from various groups regarding innovation, business strategies, and organizational performance.

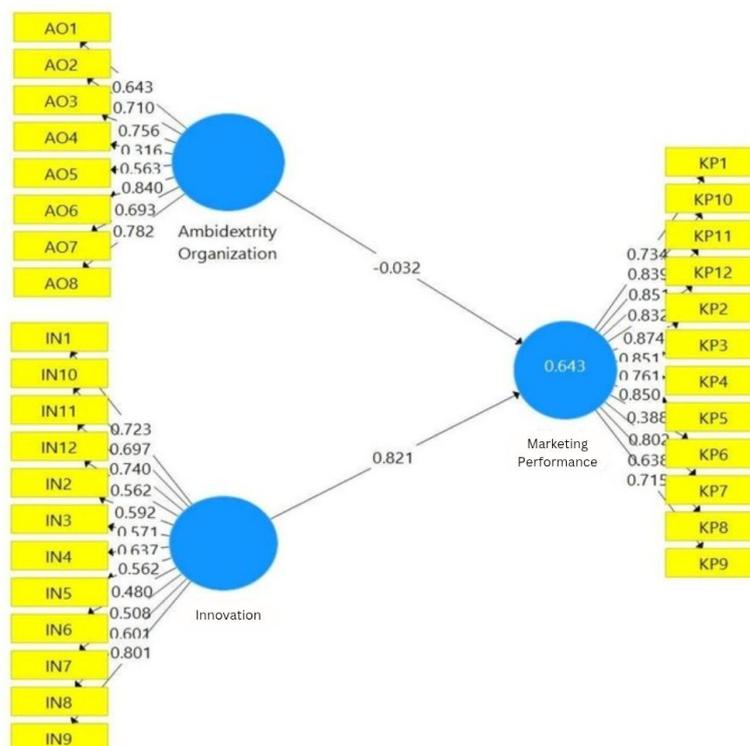


Figure 2. Model PLS

The results of this study confirm a strong and statistically meaningful relationship between innovation and marketing performance, while organizational ambidexterity does not exhibit a significant direct effect on marketing performance. The path coefficient of 0.821 indicates a strong practical effect, suggesting that innovation is highly effective in translating organizational efforts into improved sales growth, customer satisfaction, and market expansion. Moreover, the R² value of 0.643 indicates that innovation explains approximately 64% of the variance in marketing performance, reflecting high predictive power in the context of MSME research, where explanatory values are often moderate (Calantone et al., 2002; Ozkaya et al., 2015).

These findings are consistent with prior studies that position innovation as a primary driver of marketing and business performance, particularly in competitive and rapidly changing markets (Calantone et al., 2002; Ozkaya et al., 2015). Similar to previous research, this study demonstrates that innovation enhances firms' ability to respond to evolving customer preferences and technological change. However, this study extends earlier findings by showing that the effect of innovation is especially strong in service-based MSMEs, such as coffee shops, where differentiation is easily imitated and customer demand is highly sensitive to novelty and experience quality.

In contrast, organizational ambidexterity does not show a significant direct effect on marketing performance ($\beta = -0.032$). This finding differs from some studies conducted in large or resource-rich organizations, which report a positive relationship between ambidexterity and performance outcomes (Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013). The divergence can be explained by contextual differences. In coffee shop MSMEs, managerial capacity, human resources, and organizational structures are limited, making it difficult to systematically balance exploration and exploitation. As a result, ambidexterity tends to contribute more to internal efficiency and operational stability rather than to market-facing outcomes that directly influence customers.

Importantly, the findings suggest an indirect relationship between organizational ambidexterity and marketing performance through innovation. This aligns with studies arguing that ambidexterity often functions as an enabling capability that supports innovation activities rather than acting as a direct source of competitive advantage (Gibson & Birkinshaw, 2004; Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008). In the context of coffee shop MSMEs, ambidexterity allows firms to maintain stable routines—such as consistent service quality and cost control while allocating limited resources toward innovation. These innovations, in turn, become the main drivers of marketing performance.

From a practical standpoint, the strong effect of innovation highlights that incremental and accessible innovations—such as new menu offerings, service process improvements, social media engagement, and collaboration with online delivery platforms can generate substantial marketing benefits for MSMEs. While previous studies often emphasize advanced digital technologies, this study shows that even modest innovations can produce significant performance gains in small service businesses (Ozkaya et al., 2015).

Overall, this study synthesizes prior literature by demonstrating that innovation and ambidexterity play complementary but asymmetric roles in MSMEs. Innovation exerts a direct and dominant influence on marketing performance, whereas ambidexterity contributes indirectly by sustaining innovation capability and organizational stability. This nuanced understanding helps reconcile mixed findings in earlier studies and provides clearer strategic guidance for MSME owners operating in highly competitive service markets.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that innovation plays a central and decisive role in improving marketing performance among coffee shop MSMEs, while organizational ambidexterity does not have a significant direct effect. The strong path coefficient between innovation and marketing performance ($\beta = 0.821$) suggests a substantively high practical impact, indicating that innovation-related activities are quickly translated into better sales outcomes, customer satisfaction, and market expansion. Furthermore, the R^2 value of 0.643 demonstrates that innovation explains a considerable proportion of marketing performance variance, which is relatively high compared to prior MSME studies and reinforces the strategic importance of innovation in competitive service industries (Calantone et al., 2002; Ozkaya et al., 2015).

In the context of Indonesian coffee shop MSMEs, this strong effect of innovation can be attributed to intense competition and rapidly changing consumer preferences. Coffee shops operate in highly dynamic markets where product and service differentiation is easily imitated, requiring continuous innovation to sustain customer interest. Innovations such as new menu variants, improvements in service speed and consistency, adoption of digital ordering systems, and social media-based promotions directly influence customer purchase decisions and brand perception. This finding aligns with prior studies emphasizing innovation as a key driver of marketing performance in service-based MSMEs (Calantone et al., 2002; Jing et al., 2023; Wang & Rafiq, 2014).

Conversely, organizational ambidexterity does not exhibit a significant direct relationship with marketing performance ($\beta = -0.032$). This result suggests that, in coffee shop MSMEs, ambidexterity primarily functions as an internal managerial capability rather than a market-facing driver. Many MSMEs operate with

limited human resources, centralized decision-making, and constrained managerial bandwidth, which restrict their ability to systematically balance exploration and exploitation (Birkinshaw & Gibson, 2004; March, 1991). As a result, ambidexterity may contribute more to internal efficiency and operational stability than to immediate marketing outcomes, a pattern also observed in previous ambidexterity studies (Birkinshaw & Gibson, 2004; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013).

Importantly, the findings suggest an indirect relationship between ambidexterity and marketing performance through innovation. Organizational ambidexterity enables MSMEs to maintain stable routines while allocating limited resources toward innovative activities. These innovations rather than ambidexterity itself become the primary mechanisms driving marketing performance. This interpretation is consistent with prior research indicating that ambidexterity often supports innovation capability, which subsequently influences performance outcomes, particularly in smaller and resource-constrained firms (Birkinshaw & Gibson, 2004; Jansen et al., 2006).

From a digital marketing perspective, innovation in coffee shop MSMEs tends to be incremental and practical rather than technologically advanced. While large firms may adopt artificial intelligence or sophisticated analytics, MSMEs typically benefit more from accessible digital innovations such as social media engagement, online delivery platforms, digital payment systems, and basic customer data analysis. These forms of innovation enhance customer interaction and market visibility, thereby strengthening marketing performance without requiring substantial investment (Ozkaya et al., 2015).

Overall, this study highlights that innovation constitutes the most immediate and effective strategy for enhancing marketing performance in coffee shop MSMEs, whereas organizational ambidexterity plays a supportive role by sustaining internal stability and enabling continuous innovation. This contextualized understanding helps explain why innovation exerts a stronger direct influence on marketing performance, while the contribution of ambidexterity is more indirect and long-term in nature (Batra et al., 2022; Birkinshaw & Gibson, 2004; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013). Although ambidexterity did not have a significant effect in this study, it should be noted that the role of ambidexterity was not completely ignored. Several studies, such as those conducted by Gibson and Birkinshaw (2004), show that the ambidexterity of a good organization can actually be a supporting factor for innovation. In this case, ambidexterity provides the stability necessary for companies to innovate sustainably. By creating a balanced environment between exploration and exploitation, companies can allocate resources for innovation without sacrificing well-established operational processes. Thus, ambidexterity may have an indirect influence on marketing performance through innovation. This means that even though ambidexterity may not contribute directly to marketing results, it can still support innovation by providing a stable internal foundation.

Overall, the results of this study emphasize the importance of innovation in improving marketing performance and are consistent with prior literature showing that innovative firms tend to be more successful in responding to market challenges and sustaining competitiveness (Calantone et al., 2002; Ozkaya et al., 2015). In this context, innovation is not limited to creating new products, but also reflects how firms adapt to change and respond to evolving consumer needs (Jansen et al., 2006). Innovative firms are generally better positioned to adjust to shifts in consumer preferences and technology trends, thereby creating superior customer value. Therefore, to achieve competitive advantage, organizations should prioritize resources toward innovation initiatives that provide direct added value to customers (Calantone et al., 2002).

For decision makers, these results can serve as a guide for reassessing the role of ambidexterity in organizations. While ambidexterity can function as a supporting capability that helps maintain internal stability and long-term adaptability, innovation should be prioritized as a key strategy for improving marketing performance (Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013). This implies that firms need to actively foster an innovation-oriented culture across departments and create a work environment that supports creativity and continuous improvement (Calantone et al., 2002). In addition, the findings underline the importance of adapting to digital technologies and implementing customer-focused marketing strategies to enhance market outcomes (Ozkaya et al., 2015).

In the context of marketing, innovation not only increases the appeal of products or services but also opens up new opportunities for more personalized and relevant marketing approaches for consumers

(Calantone et al., 2002). Through innovation, firms can build stronger relationships with customers, which in turn enhances customer loyalty and strengthens brand positioning (Ozkaya et al., 2015). With the development of digital technologies, such as social media, data analytics, and artificial intelligence, firms are better able to understand and anticipate customer needs, enabling them to create superior customer experiences and improve marketing efficiency (Ozkaya et al., 2015).

This study contributes to the literature on organizational ambidexterity and innovation by examining their effects on marketing performance in resource-constrained MSMEs, particularly within the coffee shop sector (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013; Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008). Drawing on the ambidexterity perspective and a dynamic capability view, the findings demonstrate that innovation plays a direct and significant role in enhancing marketing performance, whereas organizational ambidexterity does not exert a direct effect (Calantone et al., 2002; Jansen et al., 2006). This result suggests that, in MSME contexts, ambidexterity may function more as a supporting capability that enables innovation rather than as a direct driver of market outcomes (March, 1991; Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008). From a capability perspective, this supports the view that such higher-order capabilities are developed through deliberate learning mechanisms, which may strengthen innovation capability over time (Zollo & Winter, 2002).

The strong effect of innovation on marketing performance ($\beta = 0.821$) indicates that product and process innovations are critical mechanisms through which MSMEs enhance customer value, sales growth, and market reach. This finding supports prior studies that position innovation as a central dynamic capability enabling firms to adapt to changing market demands (Calantone et al., 2002; Ozkaya et al., 2015). This implies that firms need to actively foster an innovation-oriented culture across departments and create a work environment that supports creativity and continuous improvement (Hurley & Hult, 1998).

The non-significant direct effect of organizational ambidexterity on marketing performance ($\beta = -0.032$) suggests that balancing exploration and exploitation does not automatically translate into superior market outcomes for MSMEs. Consistent with ambidexterity theory, this capability may primarily enhance internal stability and learning, which indirectly supports innovation rather than directly influencing marketing performance (Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013). This pattern is also consistent with prior empirical work suggesting the relationship between ambidexterity and performance can be contingent on organizational context and may not always translate into direct market outcomes, particularly for smaller firms (Wang & Rafiq, 2014).

This study extends ambidexterity research by demonstrating that, in resource-constrained MSMEs, the impact of ambidexterity on marketing performance is predominantly indirect and mediated through innovation capability (Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008; O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013). Unlike prior studies conducted in larger organizations, where ambidexterity often exhibits a more direct performance effect, the findings highlight the contextual importance of firm size, resource availability, and market pressure (Jansen et al., 2006; Cao et al., 2009). By empirically testing this relationship in the coffee shop MSME sector, this study refines the application of ambidexterity and dynamic capability. This interpretation is also consistent with the dynamic capability view, which emphasizes that firms rely on higher-order capabilities to adapt and reconfigure resources under changing market conditions (Eisenhardt, 1989; Levinthal & March, 1993), perspectives within emerging-economy service contexts (O'Reilly & Tushman, 2013).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that innovation plays a decisive role in enhancing marketing performance among coffee shop MSMEs in Indonesia. Innovation significantly improves sales growth, customer satisfaction, and market expansion, whereas organizational ambidexterity does not demonstrate a direct effect on marketing performance. These findings indicate that, in resource-constrained MSMEs, ambidexterity primarily functions as a supporting capability that enables innovation rather than acting as an immediate driver of market outcomes. This study has several limitations. First, the sample is limited to coffee shop MSMEs in a single city, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings to other sectors or regions. Second, the use of questionnaire-based data relies on respondents' perceptions and may be subject to response bias. Third, this study focuses on a limited set of variables and does not incorporate external factors such as market turbulence,

digital maturity, or competitive intensity. Future research is encouraged to expand the scope by examining different MSME sectors, incorporating longitudinal or mixed-method approaches, and exploring mediating or moderating variables that may strengthen the relationship between organizational ambidexterity, innovation, and marketing performance. Such efforts may provide a more comprehensive understanding of how MSMEs can sustain innovation and competitiveness in dynamic market environments.

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