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Market Sensing Capability and Export Channel Choice: Unveiling Their Impact on Export Performance in The Indonesian Furniture Industry

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Abstract: This study investigates the relationships between market sensing ability, export channel selection, and export performance in Indonesia's furniture sector, aiming to enhance its global competitiveness. Using a quantitative approach, the research gathers secondary data from trade statistics and industry reports alongside primary data from a questionnaire survey of furniture producers, selected through stratified random sampling. The data is analyzed using partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings indicate that market sensing capability significantly boosts export performance, with export channel choice both directly influencing performance and moderating the relationship between sensing ability and success. Firms that diversify their export channels are better positioned to leverage market insights, improving their global performance. This study contributes to the literature by exploring the combined impact of export channel selection and market sensing ability on export success, particularly within Indonesia's furniture industry. The conclusions underscore the importance of developing strong market sensing skills and making informed export decisions to improve performance. Policymakers are encouraged to foster initiatives that enhance these capabilities, while practitioners should prioritize market intelligence and strategic export channel selection to remain competitive internationally.

Introduction

The Indonesian furniture industry has been a significant contributor to the country's economy, with exports reaching $1.65 billion in 2005 and expected to grow by 7% in the coming years (Anantadjaya & Yudha, 2010). However, the industry faces challenges such as minimum quality standards, inefficient production processes, and inadequate infrastructure (Anantadjaya & Yudha, 2010). To overcome these obstacles and enhance export performance, Indonesian furniture manufacturers need to develop effective strategies that leverage their market sensing capabilities and optimize their export channel choices.

The research phenomenon addressed in this study is the interplay between market sensing capability, export channel choice, and export performance in the context of the Indonesian furniture industry. This topic is crucial due to the increasing global competition and the need for Indonesian furniture manufacturers to enhance their international competitiveness. Previous research has explored these concepts separately or in different contexts, but there is a lack of comprehensive studies examining their combined effects in the Indonesian furniture sector. For instance, (Ozkaya, Droge, Hult, Calantone, & Ozkaya, 2015) examined the connection between Turkish manufacturing companies' export performance and their capacity to sense the market, while (Leonidou, Katsikeas, & Samiee, 2002) examined how export performance is affected by the choice of export route across various industries. However, the specific dynamics of these relationships within the Indonesian furniture industry remain underexplored. This study aims to fill this gap by providing empirical evidence on how market sensing capability and export channel choice interact to influence export performance in this particular context. By doing so, it contributes to the existing literature on international marketing and export strategies, while also offering practical insights for Indonesian furniture manufacturers and policymakers seeking to boost the industry's global competitiveness.

Market sensing Capability describes a company's capacity to obtain and use market information to identify opportunities and threats, as well as to anticipate and respond to customer needs (Yusuf, Indrasta, & Damayanti, 2024). This capability is crucial for firms operating in dynamic and competitive markets, as it allows them to adapt their strategies and offerings to changing market conditions (Liu, Chen, & Ko, 2024). In the context of the Indonesian furniture industry, market sensing capability can help manufacturers better understand the preferences and requirements of international markets, enabling them to develop products that cater to the specific needs of their target customers (Alshanty, Emeagwali, & Knowledge, 2019).

Export channel choice, on the other hand, is the decision regarding the most appropriate way to reach and serve international markets (Duah, Abeeku Bamfo, & Serbe Marfo, 2024). Firms can choose from various export channels, such as direct exporting, indirect exporting, and e-commerce platforms(Hu, Hur, Thomas, & Education, 2024). The choice of export channel can significantly impact a firm's export performance, as it determines the level of control, flexibility, and resources required to serve foreign markets (Arifin, Roosdhani, Komaryatin, Huda, & Management, 2024). In the Indonesian furniture industry, where manufacturers face challenges such as limited resources and infrastructure, selecting an export route can be a crucial factor in determining their success in international markets (Anantadjaya & Yudha, 2010).

While the importance of market sensing capability and export channel choice in enhancing export performance has been recognized in the literature, there is a lack of empirical research that specifically examines their impact on the Indonesian furniture

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industry (Sugiyarti, Ardyan, & Review, 2017). This study aims to fill this gap by investigating the link between export performance, export channel selection, and market sensing ability within the framework of Indonesia's furniture sector.

The study will market sensing capability and export channel choice in enhancing export performance in a specific industry context. The findings will also have practical implications for Indonesian furniture manufacturers, as they will help them develop more effective strategies for competing in international markets.

This is how the rest of the paper is organized. A review of the pertinent literature on export performance, export channel selection, and market sensing abilities is given in Section 2. The research methodology, including the procedures for gathering and analyzing data, is presented in Section 3. The findings of the empirical study are presented in Section 4. The results and their consequences for theory and practice are covered in Section 5. Section 6 wraps up the work and makes some recommendations for further study directions.

Market Sensing Capability and Export Performance

Market sensing capability has been identified as a key driver of export performance in various industries (Yusuf et al., 2024). Businesses with good market sensing skills are more adept at spotting and respond to changes in customer preferences, competitor actions, and market trends, which enables them to develop products and strategies that are better aligned with market needs. In the context of exporting, market sensing capability can help firms better understand the requirements and preferences of foreign markets, allowing them to adapt their offerings and strategies accordingly.

Several studies have empirically examined the relationship between market sensing capability and export performance. For example, (Ozkaya et al., 2015) found that market sensing capability positively influences export performance in a sample of Turkish manufacturing firms. Similarly, (Hosseinzadeh Shahri & Gholami, 2015) showed that the capacity to sense the market is a significant predictor of export performance in an investigation of small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in Ghana. Within the Indonesian setting, (Komaryatin, Roosdhani, Arifin, & Huda, 2024) discovered that one important factor influencing marketing performance in micro, small, and medium-sized businesses (MSMEs) is market sensing abilities (Yusuf et al., 2024).

While these studies provide valuable insights into the function of market awareness in enhancing export performance, they do not specifically address the Indonesian furniture industry. Moreover, most of these studies have focused on the clear connection between export performance and market sensing abilities, without considering the potential moderating or mediating effects of other factors (Yusuf et al., 2024). By investigating the relationship between market sensing capability and export performance in the Indonesian furniture business, this study seeks to add to the body of literature, while also considering the potential moderating effect of export channel choice.

Export Channel Choice and Export Performance

The choice of export channel is another important factor that can impact a company's export performance (Sugiyarti et al., 2017). Firms can choose from various export channels, such as Selling directly to international clients is known as direct exporting; selling to domestic middlemen who then export the products, and e-commerce platforms. Each export channel has its own advantages and disadvantages in terms of control, flexibility, and resources required.

Several studies have investigated the connection between export performance and the choice of export channel. For example, (Rehman, Ding, Noman, & Khan, 2020) found that firms that utilize multiple export channels (e.g., direct and indirect exporting) tend to achieve higher export performance compared to those that rely on a single channel. (Leonidou et al., 2002) shown that the relationship between export strategy and export performance can be moderated by the choice of export channel. In the Indonesian context, (Tambunan & Economy, 2009) indicated that the selection of export channels significantly impacts the export performance of Indonesian SMEs.

Although these studies offer insightful information about how export channel selection can improve export performance, they don't particularly address the Indonesian furniture market. Furthermore, the majority of these research have ignored the possible moderating or mediating impacts of other factors in favor of concentrating on the direct association between export channel selection and export performance. By analyzing the relationship between export channel preference and export performance in the Indonesian furniture sector and taking into account the potential moderating influence of market sensing capability, this study seeks to add to the body of literature.

This study presents a theoretical framework that incorporates market sensing capabilities, export channel choice, and export performance in the context of the Indonesian furniture sector. The framework is based on the literature review. According to the framework, export performance is directly influenced by market sensing capability, and export channel selection modifies this relationship. It is also predicted that export performance is directly impacted by the choice of export channel.

H1: Market sensing capability positively influences export performance in the Indonesian furniture industry.

Rationale: Businesses with good market sensing skills are more able to recognize and respond to changes in customer preferences, competitor actions, and market trends in international markets. This enhanced understanding allows them to develop products and strategies that are better aligned with market needs, leading to improved export performance.

H2: Export channel choice moderates the relationship between market sensing capability and export performance in the Indonesian furniture industry.

Rationale: The effectiveness of market sensing capability in enhancing export performance may vary depending on the chosen export channel. For instance, firms using direct export channels may be better able to leverage their market sensing capabilities compared to those using indirect channels, as they have more direct contact with foreign customers and markets.

H3: The choice of export channel directly influences export performance in the Indonesian furniture industry.

Rationale: Different export channels offer varying levels of control, resource requirements, and market access. The alignment between a firm's chosen export channel and its resources, capabilities, and target market characteristics can significantly impact its export performance.

Research Method

The research methodology reflects the data sources, type of data, and research analysis tools employed in this study. In order to provide a thorough examination of the correlations between market sensing capability, export channel choice, and export performance in the

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Indonesian furniture sector, this research uses a quantitative method and combines primary and secondary data sources.

Data Collection and Sample

The study employs a mix of primary and secondary data sources to get details on market sensing capability, export channel choice, and export performance in the Indonesian furniture industry. Primary data is collected through a structured questionnaire survey of Indonesian furniture manufacturers, while secondary data is obtained from industry reports, trade statistics, and company financial statements. This mixed-method approach allows for a more robust analysis and helps to validate the findings through data triangulation.

The survey is administered to a sample of Indonesian furniture manufacturers selected using a stratified technique of random sampling. The sample is stratified based on factors such as firm size, export intensity, and geographical location to ensure that it is representative of the population. The survey includes questions on market sensing capability, export channel choice, and export performance, as well as control variables such as firm age, industry experience, and resource availability.

Measures

The study will use validated scales from the literature to measure the key constructs of interest:

- Market sensing capability will be measured using a scale adapted from (Ozkaya et al., 2015) and (Komaryatin et al., 2024). The scale includes items such as "Our firm has a good understanding of customer needs in foreign markets" and "Our firm is able to anticipate changes in customer preferences in foreign markets".
- Export channel choice will be measured using a scale adapted from (Rehman et al., 2020) and (Leonidou et al., 2002). The scale includes items such as "Our firm uses direct exporting as the main export channel" and "Our firm uses multiple export channels to serve foreign markets".
- Export performance will be measured using a scale adapted from (Hosseinzadeh Shahri & Gholami, 2015) and (Tambunan & Economy, 2009). The scale includes items such as "Our firm has achieved its export sales targets" and "Our firm has increased its market share in foreign markets".

The survey will also include control variables such as firm age, industry experience, and resource availability, which may influence export performance.

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Data Analysis

Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) is the main research analytic tool used in this work. Because PLS-SEM can handle complex models with multiple latent variables and is appropriate for exploratory research, it is chosen.. The analysis is conducted using SmartPLS version 4.0 software.

There are two stages to the analysis:

- Measuring the validity and reliability of the constructs, such as internal consistency, indicator, convergent, and discriminant validity, is part of the assessment of the measurement model.
- Structural model evaluation: path coefficients are estimated, their significance is determined by bootstrapping methods, and the explanatory capacity of the model is ascertained by looking at the R-square values.

Additionally, mediation analysis is carried out to investigate the potential mediating effect of export channel preference in the connection between export performance and market sensing ability.. This comprehensive methodology enables a thorough examination of the research hypotheses and provides robust insights into the relationships between the key constructs in the context of the Indonesian furniture industry.

Result and Discussion

Result

Outer Model (Measurement Model)

Two measuring models are included in this model, which are the test:

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity refers to the extent to which indicators designed to measure a theoretical construct show a high correlation with each other. In this study, convergent validity was assessed using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values and the outer loading.. As a guideline, While the minimum AVE value is 0.7, the optimum outer loading value is above that. is 0.5 (Ghozali & Ratmono, 2017).

Table 1. Convergent Validity Test

Indicator	Outer loading	AVE	Result
ECC.1	0,989	0,958	Valid
ECC.2	0,982		
ECC.3	0,965		
EP.1	0,942	0,882	Valid
EP.2	0,903		
EP.3	0,972		
MSC.1	0,933	0,83	Valid
MSC.2	0,913		
MSC.3	0,886		

Source: Output data from SmartPLS version 4.0 (Processed)

Based on the test results, all indicators measuring the Export Channel Choice (ECC), Export Performance (EP), and Market Sensing Capability (MSC) variables show outer loading values exceeding 0.7 and AVE values higher than 0.5. For example, the ECC.1 indicator has an outer loading value of 0.989 and an AVE of 0.958, indicating that this indicator has a very strong correlation with the measured variables. Likewise, the MSC.1 indicator has an outer loading value of 0.933 and an AVE of 0.83, indicating high validity in measuring the MSC variable.

These results confirm that all indicators in this study are valid in measuring the relevant variables, so they can be used for further analysis. With convergent validity met, the results of the structural analysis can be interpreted with greater confidence that the indicators actually measure the intended construct.

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Reliability Test

Reliability refers to the internal consistency of a research instrument, which indicates the extent to which indicators in a construct produce consistent results. In this study, reliability was tested using two main measures: composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha. Composite reliability is used to assess the overall reliability of the construct, with a recommended value greater than 0.7 (Wang et al., 2020). Cronbach's alpha is used to evaluate the internal consistency of indicators, where values above 0.7 are considered reliable (Ghozali & Chariri, 2008).

Table 2. *Composite reliability & Cronbach's alpha*

Variabel	Composite reliability	Croncach' alpha	Information
ECC	0,986	0,978	
EP	0,957	0,933	Reliable
MSC	0,936	0,897	

Source: Output data from SmartPLS version 4.0 (Processed)

The results of the reliability test show that all variables tested, namely Export Channel Choice (ECC), Export Performance (EP), and Market Sensing Capability (MSC), have composite reliability values higher than 0.7. For example, ECC has a composite reliability value of 0.986, indicating a very high level of reliability. Likewise with EP and MSC, which each show composite reliability values of 0.957 and 0.936.

In addition, the Cronbach's alpha value for all variables is also above 0.7, indicating that all indicators in these variables have good internal consistency. For example, the Cronbach's alpha value for ECC is 0.978, indicating that the indicators in this variable are very consistent in measuring the ECC construct.

Thus, it can be concluded that this research instrument meets the reliability requirements, which ensure that the data collected is stable and reliable for further analysis.

Inner Model (Measurement Model)

The inner model is a model used to project causal relationships between variables that cannot be measured directly and hidden variables.

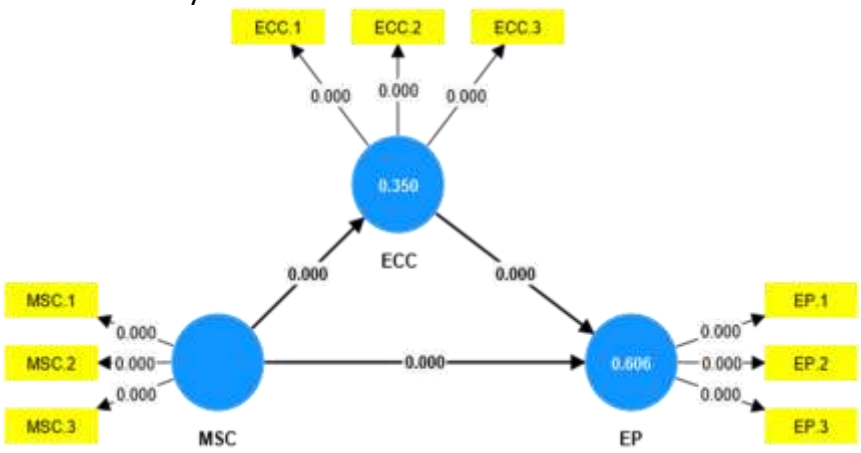

Figure 2. Structural Model

R-square

R-square is a statistical measure that shows how much of the proportion of variability in the dependent variable can be explained by the independent variables in a research model.

In this context, R-square is used to evaluate the explanatory power of a model involving the variables Export Channel Choice (ECC) and Export Performance (EP).

Table 3. *R-square*

Variabel	R-square	R-square adjusted
ECC	0,35	0,339
EP	0,606	0,592

Source: Output data from SmartPLS version 4.0 (Processed)

The results of the analysis show that the R-square value for the ECC variable is 0.35, which means that 35% of the variation in ECC can be explained by the independent variable in this model, namely Market Sensing Capability (MSC). This value indicates that MSC has a moderate influence on ECC, while 65% of the variation in ECC is influenced by other factors not included in this model.

Meanwhile, the R-square value for the EP variable is 0.606, indicating that 60.6% of the variation in EP can be explained by the combination of the ECC and MSC variables. This value shows a fairly strong explanatory power, indicating that ECC and MSC significantly affect export performance (EP). The remaining 39.4% is influenced by other variables not included in this model.

Thus, this R-square value provides an overview of the effectiveness of the model in explaining the variability of the dependent variable, and helps in understanding how much influence the independent variables have on the observed results.

Mediation Test

A mediation test is used to determine whether a mediating variable can explain the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. In this study, Market Sensing Capability (MSC) is tested as a mediating variable in the relationship between Export Channel Choice (ECC) and Export Performance (EP).

Table 4. *Path Coeffient*

Variabel	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P value
ECC -> EP	0,316	0,316	0,089	3,541	0
MSC -> ECC	0,592	0,591	0,071	8,33	0
MSC -> EP	0,549	0,548	0,09	6,083	0

Source: Output data from SmartPLS version 4.0 (Processed)

Table 5. *Specific Indirect Effects*

Variabel	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P value
MSC -> ECC -> EP	0,187	0,188	0,06	3,096	0,002

Source: Output data from SmartPLS version 4.0 (Processed)

Based on the attached tables 4 and 5, the conclusion is:

The results of the mediation test showed that MSC had a significant effect on ECC with a path coefficient of 0.592, a T-statistic of 8.833, and a P-value of 0.000. Furthermore, ECC

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also showed a significant effect on EP with a path coefficient of 0.316, a T-statistic of 3.541, and a P-value of 0.000.

To test the mediation, a specific path analysis (specific indirect effect) was conducted, which showed that MSC fully mediates the relationship between ECC and EP. The coefficient value of the MSC mediation path on the relationship between ECC and EP is 0.187 with a T-statistic of 3.096 and a P-value of 0.0002. Since the P-value <0.05, this indicates that there is significant mediation in this relationship.

Thus, it can be concluded that MSC not only has a direct effect on EP, but also significantly mediates the effect of ECC on EP. These results suggest that to improve export performance, it is important for firms to strengthen market sensing capabilities (MSC) which in turn will improve export channel selection (ECC), and ultimately export performance (EP).

Hypothesis Test

P value and T statistics are visible in hypothesis testing. The hypothesis can be accepted if the P value is less than 0.05. You can find out by looking at the Path Coefficient in the SmartPLS version 4.0 application, which is obtained using the Bootstrapping technique.

Table 6. Hypothesis Test Results

Hypothesis	Analysis
ECC -> EP	Coeffisien = 0,316 P value = 0.000 T statistcs = 3,541 T-tabel = 1,671 T statistics > T-tabel
MSC -> ECC	Coeffisien = 0.000 P value = 0.113 T statistcs = 8,33 T-tabel = 1,671 T statistics > T-tabel
MSC -> EP	Coeffisien = 0,549 P value = 0.000 T statistcs = 6,083 T-tabel = 1,671 T statistics > T-tabel

Source: Output data from SmartPLS version 4.0 (Processed)

Hypothesis 1: The effect of Export channel choice on Export Performance

The path coefficient between Export channel choice and EP is 0.316 with T-statistic 3.541 and P-value 0.000. Since T-statistic > T-table (1.671) and P-value < 0.05, it can be concluded that Export channel choice has a positive and significant influence on Export Performance.

Hypothesis 2: Effect of Market Sensing Capability on Export channel choice

The path coefficient between Market Sensing Capability and Export channel choice is 0.592 with T-statistic 8.833 and P-value 0.000. This shows that Market Sensing Capability has a positive and significant influence on Export channel choice.

Hypothesis 3: The effect of Market Sensing Capability on Export Performance

The path coefficient between Market Sensing Capability and Export Performance is 0.549 with T-statistic 6.083 and P-value 0.000. This shows that Market Sensing Capability has a positive and significant influence on Export Performance.

Discussion

The study's conclusions offer insightful information on how market sensing ability, export channel selection, and export performance interact in the Indonesian furniture sector. The correlation between export success and market sensing competence is positive, indicating that enterprises' capacity to get and analyze market data is essential for improving their competitiveness in global marketplaces. This aligns with recent studies, such as those by (Fauzi & Widiyanto, 2015) and (Komaryatin et al., 2024), which emphasize that businesses possessing higher market sensing abilities are preferable positioned to respond to market dynamics and customer preferences, ultimately leading to improved export outcomes.

Moreover, the moderating impact of export channel choice on the relationship between market sensing capability and export performance highlights the significance of strategic channel selection. Firms that utilize multiple export channels can leverage their market insights more effectively than those relying on a single channel. Research backs up this conclusion from (Leonidou et al., 2002), which suggests that a diversified export strategy enhances firms' ability to adapt to changing market conditions and consumer demands. The results indicate that Indonesian furniture manufacturers should consider adopting a multi-channel approach to maximize their export performance.

The direct influence of export performance on the choice of export channel further underscores the importance of selecting the appropriate channels for reaching international markets. Different channels offer varying levels of control, flexibility, and resource allocation, which can significantly influence a firm's ability to meet market demands. Recent literature, such as the work by (Hosseinzadeh Shahri & Gholami, 2015), reinforces the notion that channel selection is a critical determinant of export success, as it affects not only market access but also the firm's responsiveness to market changes.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study elucidates the interconnected roles of market sensing capability and export channel choice in enhancing export performance within the Indonesian furniture industry. The empirical evidence supports the notion that Businesses with strong market sensing capabilities are more suited to handle the complexities of international markets, ultimately leading to improved export outcomes. Furthermore, the choice of export channels plays a pivotal role in moderating this relationship, emphasizing the need for a strategic approach to channel selection. The findings have practical implications for Indonesian furniture manufacturers, suggesting that investments in market sensing capabilities and the diversification of export channels can lead to significant improvements in export performance. Policymakers should also consider supporting initiatives that enhance the market intelligence and export strategies of local firms to bolster the industry's competitiveness on a global scale. Future research could explore additional variables that influence export performance, such as innovation capability or international experience, and extend the investigation to other sectors or geographical contexts to further validate the findings of this study.

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