

# Building an adaptive selling capability model to improve MSMEs marketing performance

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## Abstract

This study aims to develop a conceptual model of Adaptive Selling Capability (ASC) to improve marketing performance in Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Central Java, Indonesia. MSMEs have a very important role in the national economy, but there are still many obstacles in sales strategies to meet diverse customer needs and dynamic market conditions. Grounded in the Dynamic Capability Theory, this study explores how ASC affects Value-Based Selling (VBS) and Sales Interaction Quality which in turn impacts the marketing performance of MSMEs. Using a survey method with 242 MSME respondents from various sectors, the data was analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM-AMOS). The results show that ASC has a positive effect on VBS and SIQ, both of which significantly improve the marketing performance of MSMEs. This study fills a gap in the literature that shows mixed results regarding the influence of ASC. The practical implications of this research underscore the importance of improving adaptive selling capabilities and value-based communication from MSME actors to customers. MSMEs also need to be encouraged to adopt technology in their sales strategies to improve their competitiveness. This research contributes to the marketing and management literature by expanding the application of Dynamic Capability Theory in the context of MSMEs.

## Keywords

adaptive selling capability; sales interaction quality; value-based selling; marketing performance; MSMEs

## INTRODUCTION

Ensuring improved marketing performance and sustainable profitability is at the core of business activities (Vieira, da Silva, & Gabler, 2019). The literature explains that marketing performance is strongly linked to the personal role of the salesperson, including knowledge, effort, and strategies to “work smarter” in approaching, prospecting, and servicing buyers and potential buyers (Haghighi, 2009; Homburg, Artz, & Wieseke, 2012). Strategic efforts to optimize marketing performance through the exploration of dynamic sales force capabilities is an important issue in business management today (Fusun, Feride Bahar, Murat Hakan, Hans-Rudiger, & Sanem, 2017). Changes in the business competition environment and the complexity of consumer desires for products and services have forced various companies to be able to respond quickly and precisely. Therefore, the ability of

the company's sales force to be responsive and able to capture market desires is the key for companies to be able to maintain and increase growth (Alnakhli, Singh, Agnihotri, & Itani, 2020). The concept of adaptive selling capability of salespeople is crucial to realize the company's goals. Adaptive selling capability is understood as the ability to adapt or change selling behavior effectively, namely by understanding the wants and needs of consumers, as well as the ability to adjust in choosing or using the right sales presentation strategy, according to the demands of the sales situation which includes the form of meeting and the characteristics of the buyer faced at that time (Paolo, Luigi, & Rosann, 2016; Pettijohn, Pettijohn, Talor, & Keillor, 2000; Spiro & Weitz, 1990).

This study is motivated by a research gap in the form of differences in the results of empirical studies in previous research on the adaptive selling capability of MSME actors in

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Received: 16<sup>th</sup> January 2025  
Revised: 19<sup>th</sup> June 2025  
Accepted: 27<sup>th</sup> June 2025

improving their marketing performance. Several studies on the adaptive ability of salespeople to marketing performance still leave differences in results that require further explanation. Some research results find that adaptive selling capability is proven to have a positive effect on marketing performance (Kaynak, Kara, Chow, & Laukkanen, 2016; Kwak, Anderson, Leigh, & Bonifield, 2019; Paolo et al., 2016; Pettijohn et al., 2000; Rakesh, Narendra, & Sandeep, 2017), but other study results do not support it (Hughes, Bon, & Rapp, 2013; Román & Iacobucci, 2009). They found that adaptive selling capability is not significant in improving marketing performance. This condition causes unclear, so there is a need for further studies to explain the relationship process between adaptive selling capability variables and marketing performance.

This paper aims to fill the research gap, by building a new conceptual model framework. Specifically, this paper explains the relationship between adaptive selling capability as an important predictor variable in improving MSME marketing performance by adopting dynamic capability theory. Researchers use this theoretical approach, because it is relevant to encourage the competence and ability of MSME actors in responding to current market developments which are very dynamic. The concepts of value-based selling and sales interaction quality are proposed to complement the relationship between adaptive selling capability and marketing performance. Thus, the novelty of this study is the development of a new conceptual model that focuses on improving the marketing performance of MSMEs with a comprehensive approach to the adaptive selling capability of MSME players.

MSMEs have a very important role in the economic development of a country. Therefore, MSMEs must have an effective ability to serve customer desires, have reliable capabilities, and be able to establish good relationships with customers, to ensure that their businesses gain long-term profits (Singh & Koshy, 2011; Valenzuela, Torres, Hidalgo, & Farías, 2014). Currently, MSMEs in Indonesia

are experiencing increasingly fierce competition. The use of information technology and innovation capabilities is very important in improving the competitive advantage and performance of SMEs (Mihardjo & Ningtyas, 2023; Widyanti & Mahfudz, 2020). This is because there are quite a lot of actors in the sector, and the product categories offered to consumers are relatively the same. Therefore, it is very important for MSMEs to have adaptive and value-based sales capabilities, so as to improve their business performance (Saputra, Utomo, Ariansyah, Wismayanti, & Ansyah, 2024). Thus, MSME actors are very relevant as objects or media for proving the construction of the empirical model built in this study.

Unlike previous studies that generally only tested the direct relationship between Adaptive Selling Capability (ASC) and marketing performance, this study builds a more comprehensive model by including Value-Based Selling (VBS) and Sales Interaction Quality (Siqueira, Webb, & Bruton) as mediating variables. This approach not only explains the influence of ASC in more depth, but also addresses the inconsistency of previous findings by showing indirect mechanisms that are more relevant in the dynamic context of MSMEs. Based on the Dynamic Capability theory, this model offers a more complete framework in understanding the improvement of marketing performance based on adaptive sales capabilities.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT**

The main approach used to fill the research gap and contribution in this paper is to refer to the dynamic capability theory. The following is a general explanation of the relevance of the dynamic capability concept in building the conceptual framework of this study.

### **Dynamic capability**

Conceptually, studies on dynamic capability refer to the Resource-Based View (RBV)

theory. The assumption in RBV theory is how a company is able to compete with other companies, by managing its resources, so that it has a competitive advantage (Albert & Jenny, 2015; Barney, 1991). Dynamic capability can be interpreted as the company's ability to integrate, build, and reconfigure internal and external competencies to deal with a rapidly changing environment (Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997). The advantages of resources, both tangible and intangible, as a determining factor of a company's competitive advantage have been well discussed by researchers (Jones & Tilley, 2009; Musetescu, 2013; Woodruff, 1997). With dynamic resource-based capabilities, it allows the company to be able to provide the best service to its customers on an ongoing basis.

Dynamic capabilities are a response to the need for change. Company management must be proactive in upgrading the capabilities of existing resources to improve strategy implementation while developing new competencies and capabilities to face changes and challenges from external companies. Therefore, an understanding of dynamic capabilities that includes the capacity to identify needs or opportunities for change, formulate appropriate responses to opportunities, and implement actions must be done appropriately (Helfat & Raubitschek, 2018). In line with this, Hernández-Linares, Kellermanns, and López-Fernández (2021) argue that dynamic capabilities are the ability to reconfigure the resources and routines of the firm in ways that can be envisioned and deemed appropriate by strategic decision makers. Furthermore, Helfat and Raubitschek (2018) suggest that for the effectiveness of dynamic capabilities and achieving corporate goals, it is important to adopt a more strategic and tactically focused approach. Furthermore, resource-based capabilities in the form of knowledge, skills, and adaptability are decisive factors in improving performance and competitive advantage (Tajeddini, Gamage, Tajeddini, & Kallmuenzer, 2023).

In view of the concept of dynamic capabilities, companies must continuously perform improvement actions on their

processes and products, including the development of new products in accordance with the dynamics of market demand. Success in responding to market changes depends on the company's ability to convert its knowledge towards innovations that can strengthen the company's competitive advantage. Dynamic capabilities can be analyzed with three main elements, namely adaptive capabilities, absorptive capabilities, and innovative capabilities. Adaptive capabilities are the company's ability to identify and take advantage of emerging markets, including the company's ability to adapt their product-market scope to respond to external opportunities, scan the market, monitor customers and competitors and allocate resources for marketing activities, and to respond quickly to changing market conditions (Biedenbach & Müller, 2012). Absorptive capabilities are the ability of firms to recognize the value of new external information, understand it, and utilize it for commercial purposes (Unal & Donthu, 2014). Therefore, the development of this capability is a separate aspect that requires a continuous investment to maintain technical capabilities in this field. Meanwhile, innovative capability is the company's ability to develop new products and or markets, through the alignment of strategic innovation orientation with innovative processes and behaviors (Biedenbach & Müller, 2012).

### **Adaptive selling capability**

Adaptive Selling Capability (ASC) is a salesperson's ability to adjust their selling approach based on customer needs, market situations, or other external conditions (Kaynak et al., 2016; Spiro & Weitz, 1990). This concept is often emphasized in marketing literature as a key element for improving sales effectiveness, especially in dynamic environments. ASC involves the seller's ability to recognize differences in customer needs, adjust communication strategies, and flexibly convey product value. This literacy is usually supported by three key elements, namely a deep understanding of the customer, the

ability to change communication behavior, and the application of contextually relevant solutions. As such, ASC is not just about selling, but about building responsive and sustainable relationships with customers.

For MSME players, Adaptive Selling Capability has a very high relevance. MSMEs often operate in markets that have high uncertainty and limited resources, so the ability to adapt becomes an important differentiating factor. ASC can help MSME players to respond to these challenges more proactively, for example through personalized interactions with customers or innovations in marketing approaches. A review of the literature shows that MSME players with adaptive selling capabilities are more likely to maintain customer loyalty and respond quickly to market changes. (Charoensukmongkol & Suthatorn, 2021). The synergy between sales force orientation and adaptive selling behavior will improve sales performance (Zheng, Liao, Schrock, Zheng, & Zang, 2023). This ultimately contributes to the sustainability and competitiveness of MSMEs, especially in the context of an increasingly competitive and global market.

MSME players who are adaptive and smart in their sales are believed to be more successful in adjusting to customer wants and needs, which will have an impact on their productivity (Kwak et al., 2019). Adaptive selling is an activity of changing sales behavior during or after interactions with customers, which is carried out based on information received about the sales situation (Alnakhli et al., 2020). A salesperson is said to have a high level of adaptive selling if they can use different sales approaches appropriately during transactions with customers, and when making decisions during sales transactions in different sales situations.

Adaptive sales behavior is very important and is a determining factor in the success of marketing performance (Alnakhli et al., 2020). Therefore, an understanding of adaptive selling is very substantive and fundamental for a salesperson of MSME products. Salespeople are able to adapt to various situations and various types of consumers,

which will have an impact on increasing their marketing performance achievements.

### **The influence of adaptive selling capability on value-based selling, sales interaction quality, and marketing performance of MSMEs**

The salesperson of MSME products acts as an actor in delivering products or services produced by MSMEs, so that they can reach consumers properly. In several studies, evidence has been found that the experience or "flying hours" possessed by MSME actors will greatly affect their way and creativity in responding to very diverse customers (Franke & Park, 2006; Gengler, Howard, & Zolner, 1995; Paolo et al., 2016).

Several studies on adaptive selling (Kaynak et al., 2016; Kwak et al., 2019; Pettijohn et al., 2000) show a positive relationship between adaptive selling and marketing performance. Adaptive selling capability shows the ability and proficiency of sales actors in carrying out certain techniques and approaches appropriately by taking into account the conditions and situations at hand. Sellers will be able to provide satisfaction to customers because they are able to recognize each customer's different needs and wants and provide an appropriate alternative sales approach. In the end, this adaptive selling capability will improve marketing performance (Kara, Andaleeb, Turan, & Cabuk, 2013).

Adaptive selling capability plays an important role in improving Value-Based Selling. ASC enables MSME product salespeople to understand customers' specific needs and offer value that is relevant to their problems or preferences. According to Töytäri and Rajala (2015), VBS emphasizes not only on selling products but on offering solutions that have added value to customers. With ASC, MSME actors can flexibly adjust their communication strategies to convey significant product or service benefits to customers. In the context of MSMEs, this capability helps businesses build more meaningful relationships with customers,

increase their trust in the product, and strengthen customer loyalty.

Adaptive sales skills also contribute positively to Sales Interaction Quality, which is the quality of interactions between salespeople and customers during the sales process. Spiro and Weitz (1990) emphasize that the salesperson's ability to adjust the communication approach based on the customer's situation creates a more personalized and satisfying interaction experience. MSME players who adopt ASC can create a more relevant dialog with customers, identify their hidden needs, and build deeper trust through harmonious reciprocal relationships. Research shows that high SIQ promotes the formation of stronger customer relationships, which in turn contributes to increased customer satisfaction and loyalty, factors that are critical to the sustainability of MSME businesses.

ASC has both direct and indirect impacts on improving the marketing performance of MSMEs. The ability of salespeople to adapt allows them to reach a wider market segment and respond more effectively to market dynamics. According to Ferdinand and Wahyuningsih (2018), ASC increases sales productivity through more flexible and personalized sales strategies. In the context of MSMEs, ASC allows businesses to stay relevant to changing customer preferences, strengthen customer relationships, and increase customer loyalty. This results in increased sales volume, customer growth and market expansion, helping MSMEs compete better in a competitive market. Thus, ASC not only improves customer relationships but also directly contributes to the achievement of marketing goals and business sustainability of MSMEs. In line with this opinion, the findings of Füsün et al. (2017) show that adaptive sales behavior has a dominant effect on marketing performance. A company that has a reliable sales force will find it easier to improve its marketing achievements and performance (Kwak et al., 2019). Several studies have proven that adaptive salespeople have a positive effect on improving marketing

performance. Based on these descriptions, the hypotheses proposed in this study are:

*H1: Adaptive sales ability has a positive effect on MSMEs marketing performance.*

*H2: Adaptive sales ability has a positive effect on value-based selling.*

*H3: Adaptive selling ability has a positive effect on sales interaction quality.*

### **The effect of value-based selling on MSMEs marketing performance**

Customer value has been recognized as an important and fundamental part of business success (Slater, 1997; Verhoef & Lemon, 2013). Researchers agree that creating superior customer value will drive customer satisfaction, loyalty and retention as well as long-term firm survival and success (Salem Khalifa, 2004; Tournois, 2013). Empirical evidence also suggests that selling value-based products will improve marketing performance and partnership relationships (Terho, Eggert, Haas, & Ulaga, 2015).

Value-based product offerings lead to the company's ability to provide reliable information that a product will provide benefits and advantages for buyers (Jaakkola, Frösén, & Tikkanen, 2015). The ability of salespeople to understand the value of the products offered will influence customers to want to use the products or services offered by a company, this will increase customer satisfaction and marketing performance (Terho et al., 2015). Ball, Simões Coelho, and Machás (2004) also suggested that the communication of product value offerings to customers has a considerable influence in improving marketing performance. The complexity of consumer desires that can be fulfilled by the company will have an impact on increasing customer satisfaction, and increasing the achievement of product and service marketing performance.

Various literatures explain that understanding value and creating customer value is an important source of competitive advantage (Anderson & Narus, 2004; O'Cass

& Ngo, 2012; Sánchez-Gutiérrez, Cabanelas, Lampón, & González-Alvarado, 2018). It has also been generally recognized that value-based sales activities and methods that match the characteristics of the firm, have a positive effect on sales success. This is assumed because the indication of explicit value offered to customers makes customer purchasing decisions easier with rational arguments.

According to Terho et al. (2015), salesperson competence is the ability or capability of product sellers based on knowledge about a field that is the domain of activity. In this case, the ability of salespeople to understand the needs and desires of increasingly complex customers and the ability to offer customer value-based products will greatly affect the creation of a bond between them (Terho et al., 2015). Consumers will feel happy when dealing with companies that have capabilities and competencies in their fields (Drucker, 2001). Value-based selling requires a reciprocal orientation and focuses on the value-in-use potential of the offering by describing the effect of the product or service on the customer's business benefits (Saputra & Ferdinand, 2023).

Value-Based Selling (VBS), which emphasizes offering value that is relevant and meaningful to customers, has been shown to have a positive influence on MSME marketing performance. In this approach, MSME product salespeople focus not only on product features but also on solutions that suit customers' specific needs (Töytäri & Rajala, 2015). This approach increases customer satisfaction as they feel they are getting tangible benefits from the product or service offered, which in turn encourages loyalty and long-term relationships. In the context of MSMEs, VBS helps create a competitive advantage through unique value differentiation, thereby attracting more customers and increasing sales. Research shows that when customers perceive significant added value, they are more likely to make repeat purchases and recommend products to others, which expands the market share of MSMEs and strengthens their position in a competitive

market. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis of this study is:

*H4: Value-based selling has a positive effect on MSMEs marketing performance*

### **The influence of sales interaction quality on MSMEs marketing performance**

Sales Interaction Quality, which reflects the quality of interactions between salespeople and customers during the sales process, plays a key role in improving MSME marketing performance. SIQ includes the ability of MSME product salespeople to understand customer needs, communicate effectively, and create positive experiences during sales interactions (Spiro & Weitz, 1990). High-quality interactions increase customer trust in the products or services offered, which ultimately drives customer satisfaction. In the context of MSMEs, research shows that customers who feel cared for and treated personally are more likely to become loyal customers, provide positive feedback, and recommend products to others, thereby expanding the reach of MSME marketing (Ferguson, Gironde, & Petrescu, 2021).

Marketing performance is closely related to the success of building long-term relationships with customers through positive interactions (Saputra & Ferdinand, 2023). High quality sales interactions not only increase customer loyalty but also contribute to sales growth and market share control. With good interaction quality, MSME salespeople can be more effective in identifying market opportunities, responding to changing customer needs, and maintaining stable business relationships. This is especially relevant for MSMEs that often rely on personal relationships to create competitive advantages in competitive markets. Therefore, high SIQ can be considered a strategic factor in ensuring the sustainability of MSME businesses through better marketing performance.

An MSME actor must have a confident attitude and also be able to adapt to different consumer communication styles.

Furthermore, Ferguson et al. (2021) explained that a seller of MSME products who has a high level of interaction ability will show different sales styles and also be able to adjust to the conditions of each meeting with their consumers. Therefore, the fifth hypothesis of this study is:

*H5: The quality of sales interactions has a positive effect on MSMEs marketing performance*

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of this research.

## METHODS

### Sample and data collection

This research is a quantitative study using the survey method. The selection of research locations focused on three districts in Central Java; Purworejo, Magelang, and Kebumen, because all three have a significant number of MSMEs and reflect regional characteristics with diverse competition dynamics and

technology adoption. This makes the three regions representative for testing the sales adaptation model in the context of MSMEs in a relevant and contextual manner. The number of samples in this study was 242 samples. Before the questionnaire was widely distributed, a pretest was conducted on 30 respondents who had similar characteristics to the research population to ensure clarity of language, relevance of indicators, and consistency of answers. The pretest results showed that all questionnaire items were well understood and had an initial reliability value (Cronbach's Alpha) above 0.70, thus being declared suitable for use in primary data collection.

The sampling technique was carried out by purposive sampling. The criteria for respondents in this study are MSME actors who have been running their businesses for a minimum of 2 years. With the assumption that MSME actors who have worked for a minimum of 2 years, these MSME actors have sufficient experience in their fields.

The proportion of respondents based on domicile is; Purworejo district as many as 131

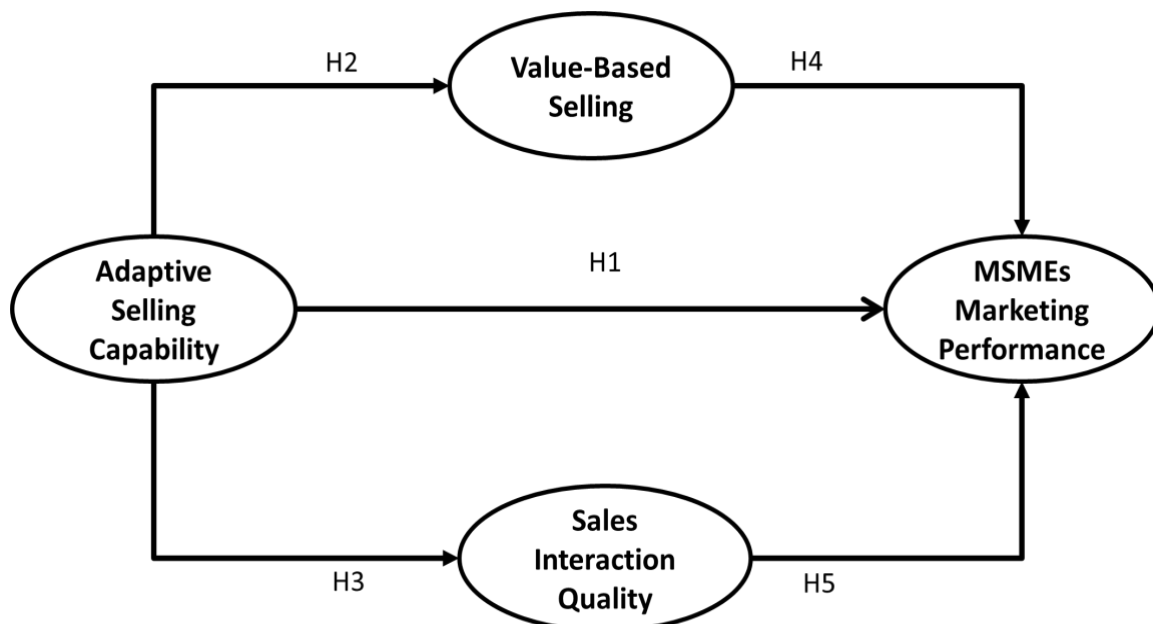


Figure 1.  
Conceptual framework

**Table 1.**  
**Loading factor, average variance extracted, and composite reliability**

<b>Variables and Indicators</b>	<b>Loading Factor</b>
<b>Adaptive Selling Capability</b> (AVE = 0.786; CR = 0.948)	
Has many sales approach options	0.904
Flexible in the use of sales approaches	0.879
Easily adapt to various customers	0.882
Understand how to treat different customers	0.883
Easily use various sales approaches	0.886
<b>Value-Based Selling</b> (AVE = 0.795; CR = 0.951)	
Understand of customer desires	0.926
Ability to offer value	0.891
Ability to minimize business risk of customer	0.862
Ability to offer interesting proposition	0.889
Able to offer long-term solution of customer's business	0.889
<b>Sales Interaction Quality</b> (AVE = 0.804; CR = 0.954)	
Able to exchange useful information	0.920
Communicate that has a positive impact	0.900
Creating relationships that require each other	0.881
There is an active reciprocal relationship	0.897
Growing the trust of other parties to partner	0.885
<b>MSMEs Marketing Performane</b> (AVE = 0.822; CR = 0.949)	
Increased sales volume	0.919
Growth in the number of customers	0.904
Expansion of sales area coverage	0.900
Increased sales of product variants	0.906

Source: processed data (2024)

(54.2%), Kebumen 77 (31.8%), and Magelang 34 (14%).

## Measurements

There are four variables used in this study, namely adaptive selling capability, value-based selling, sales interaction quality, and SMEs marketing performance. The instruments or measuring instruments in this study were adopted from instruments that have been used in previous research. The details are presented in Appendix A. Each indicator and statement item in this study is measured using a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 10 (strongly agree). The Structural Equation Modeling-AMOS (SEM-AMOS) approach was used to test the instruments and hypotheses built in this study. In general, SEM analysis is carried out through two stages, namely measurement model and structural model. Before being used as a measurement tool for research, the research

instrument was first tested for validity and reliability. The validity test is carried out to determine the ability of the instrument to measure the variables under study. Qualitative measurements look at face validity and content validity, while quantitative measurements are carried out by confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). The results of instrument testing can be seen in the following table 1.

CFA testing is used to analyze the measurement model to test the relationship between latent and manifest variables (Chin, 1998). Measurement model will measure convergent validity (factor loading and average variance extracted), determinant validity and reliability (composite reliability). According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), a good instrument must meet the minimum requirements for the average variance extracted (AVE) value above 0.5 and the composite reliability (CR) value above 0.7. Likewise, Hulland (1999) explains that the



**Table 2.**  
**Mean, standard deviation, and discriminant validity**

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>St. Dev.</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
1. Adaptive Selling Capability	8.100	1.785	<b>0.887</b>			
2. Value-Based Selling	7.824	2.048	0.513	<b>0.892</b>		
3. Sales Interaction Quality	7.906	1.714	0.774	0.531	<b>0.897</b>	
5. MSMEs Marketing Performance	8.247	1.635	0.723	0.785	0.629	<b>0.864</b>

factor loading value must be above 0.5 with a critical ratio value > 1.96. In Table I above, all construct indicators have factor loading values > 0.5; this indicates that the measurement model has good convergent validity. Then of all the constructs tested, it shows a relatively high AVE value because it has a minimum level above 0.5. Furthermore, to determine the reliability of the instrument is done by assessing the CR parameter (Nunnally, 1978). The test results show that all constructs have a CR value > 0.7. Based on the results in Table I, it can be explained that all observed variables are able to explain the research constructs, because they have met the principles of validity and reliability. All factor loading, AVE, and composite reliability values are above the required, so it can be concluded that the instrument is valid and reliable.

The test results for the mean value, standard deviation value and correlation between Adaptive Selling Capability, Value-Based Selling, Sales Interaction Quality and Marketing Performance constructs can be seen in Table 2. The table above explains that the instrument has met discriminant validity. Discriminant validity measures how far a construct is really different from other constructs (Malhotra, 2012). Discriminant validity can be tested by comparing the square root of the AVE with the correlation between variables. The instrument is said to be valid if the AVE square root value is higher than the correlation between variables. Thus it can be concluded that all constructs have a high discriminant validity value because the AVE square root value is above the correlation value between these constructs.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

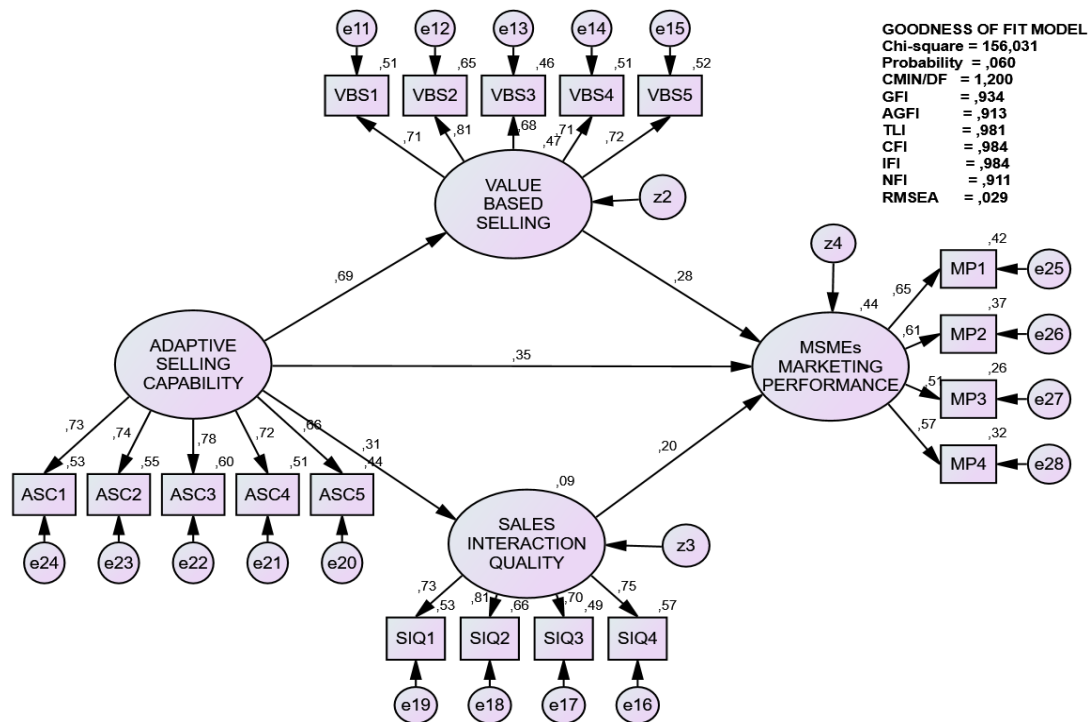
### **Data Analysis and Results**

The data analysis process to test the hypotheses in this study used Structural Equation Modeling with the AMOS program. In the empirical model of the proposed research, Adaptive Selling Capability (ASC) is considered as an exogenous variable, while value-based selling (VBS), Sales Interaction Quality, and Marketing Performance (MP) are considered as endogenous variables. The following is a full picture of the structural model tested in this study.

The results of hypothesis testing in this research can be summarized in Table 3 below.

Based on the results shown in Table 3, the critical ratio values for H1, H2, H3, H4, and H5 are greater than the cut-off value of 1.96, with significance probabilities lower than 5%. So the conclusion is that all hypotheses are well accepted or supported by the data. The feasibility testing of the model proposed in this study is also well supported, with good CFI (0.984), good NFI (0.911), good TLI (0.981), good GFI (0.934), and good RMSEA (0.029). Thus the model has met a good goodness of fit.

Based on the results of the mediation analysis using the bootstrap approach with a 95% confidence level, it was found that Value-Based Selling (VBS) and Sales Interaction



**Figure 2.**  
**Full Structural model analysis**

Quality (Siqueira et al.) act as significant mediators in the relationship between Adaptive Selling Capability (ASC) and MSME Marketing Performance. The indirect effect of ASC on marketing performance through VBS shows a coefficient value of  $\beta = 0.243$  with  $p < 0.01$  and a confidence interval of (0.167 - 0.328), while the mediation effect through SIQ has a value of  $\beta = 0.216$  with  $p < 0.01$  and a confidence interval of (0.139 - 0.298). Since both intervals do not include zero, it can be concluded that the mediation effects of both are statistically significant, indicating that ASC improves marketing performance indirectly by increasing the value of the offering and the quality of sales interactions perceived by customers.

## Discussion

The results of this study indicate that all hypotheses are supported. This study proves that the better MSME actors perform adaptive sales techniques, the more they will improve MSME marketing performance. Thus, the more flexible MSME actors take an approach to selling the products and services they offer, it will have an impact on increasing the

performance achievements of these MSME actors. The ability of MSME actors to understand how to treat one customer differently from another will also make it easier for MSMEs to retain customers and improve their performance (Deborah, 2015). The ease with which MSME actors can adapt to various customers will make it easier for them to maintain and increase company growth (Tiep Le, Ngo, & Aureliano-Silva, 2023).

The elements of adaptive selling capability are confirmed to be able to encourage the achievement of better marketing performance of MSMEs. When one sales approach is not so effective, MSME actors must be able to adjust their sales approach based on different situations, needs, and customer preferences. The logical flow of the influence of Adaptive Selling Capability on improving MSME marketing performance can be explained by understanding that adaptive selling capability is an important skill for MSME players to adjust sales strategies according to dynamic market conditions and customer needs. In the context of MSMEs, the market often experiences rapid changes in trends, and customers have different preferences. MSME players who have adaptive selling capabilities are able to

**Table 3.**  
**Hypothesis testing results**

<b>Goodness of fit index</b>	<b>Result</b>	<b>Meaning</b>
Cmin/DF	1,200	Good Fit
NFI	0,911	Good Fit
IFI	0,984	Good Fit
GFI	0,934	Good Fit
TLI	0,981	Good Fit
CFI	0,984	Good Fit
RMSEA	0,029	Good Fit

ASC: adaptive Selling Capability; SIQ: sales interaction quality; VBS: value-based selling; MP: MSME Marketing Performance. \*\*\*) Significant  $\leq 1\%$  ; \*\*) Significant  $\leq 5\%$  ; \*) Significant  $\leq 10\%$

read these changes quickly, respond to customer needs with the right solutions, and change their sales approach to stay relevant. With these capabilities, MSME players can increase competitiveness in an increasingly competitive market.

This adaptive capability directly impacts the improvement of MSME marketing performance. With flexible sales strategies, MSME players can reach a wider market segment, increase customer satisfaction, and strengthen customer loyalty. As the quality of customer interactions improves, productivity and sales volume will rise, ultimately improving overall marketing performance. The ability to customize sales approaches to various situations and customer types gives MSME players a competitive advantage (Saputra et al., 2024), strengthens brands, and creates more stable and sustainable growth. These results are in line with the opinions and findings of Outi, Dimitrios, and Roger (2007) and Biedenbach and Müller (2012).

In addition, adaptive selling capabilities allow MSME players to flexibly adjust their sales approach based on the needs and values that customers consider important. In value-based selling, the main focus is on providing specific and relevant value according to the unique needs of each customer. Adaptive MSME players can quickly understand customer preferences, identify the values that are most important to them, and then drive sales oriented towards delivering those value-based solutions. This allows for deeper and more meaningful relationships between MSMEs and customers. Along with increased adaptive selling capability, MSME

players will be better able to implement value-based selling more effectively. They do not just sell products or services, but offer solutions that are truly valuable and in line with what customers want. This adaptive selling strategy leads to increased trust, customer satisfaction, and loyalty, as customers feel that their needs are understood and prioritized. Finally, it helps MSMEs build long-term relationships with customers, improve business reputation, and create sustainable sales growth through more personalized and relevant value offerings. These results are in line with the opinions and findings (Saputra & Pratomo, 2023).

A further finding is that with high adaptive selling capability, MSME actors will be able to adjust their responses to different situations in sales interactions with flexibility and effectiveness, which in turn, strengthens the experience and perception of positive harmonization quality with customers. With this adaptive capability, MSME players can improve the quality of sales interactions through more personalized and relevant communication, adjusting language and approach according to customer personality or preferences, and creating a comfortable and pleasant atmosphere. Good interaction quality will in turn increase customer satisfaction and strengthen long-term relationships. Customers who feel cared for and understood tend to be more loyal, and this has a positive impact on the overall marketing performance of MSMEs. These results are in line with the opinions and findings of Franke and Park (2006).

Effective implementation of value-based selling can also improve the marketing

performance of MSMEs. When customers feel that the products or services offered have significant added value, they tend to make repeat purchases and recommend the product to others, thus expanding market reach organically. Finally, this approach not only results in increased sales, but also strengthens MSMEs' position in a competitive market by building a reputation as a business that prioritizes value for customers. These results are in line with the opinions and findings of Salem Khalifa (2004), Töytäri and Rajala (2015).

The findings in this study also explain that quality interactions of MSME actors will make customers feel cared for and valued, thus building a good impression and strengthening the relationship between customers and MSME actors. The quality of these interactions plays an important role in differentiating MSMEs from competitors, especially in a competitive market.

Improving the quality of sales interactions directly impacts the marketing performance of MSMEs. With good interactions, customers are more likely to feel satisfied and trust the products or services offered, so they will make repeat purchases and recommend the MSME to others. This chain effect expands marketing reach through word-of-mouth recommendations, increases customer loyalty, and strengthens brand image. Ultimately, high sales interaction quality creates customer satisfaction and trust, which has a positive impact on increasing sales and business stability of MSMEs (Al-Mutawa & Saeed Al Mubarak, 2024). These results are in line with the opinions and findings of Weitz and Spiro (2002).

Dynamic Capability theory is the main reference theory, which is very relevant to explain the phenomenon studied in this research, namely how Adaptive Selling Capability (ASC) can improve the marketing performance of MSMEs through Value-Based Selling (VBS) and Sales Interaction Quality mechanisms. This theory emphasizes the ability of companies to proactively integrate, build, and reconfigure internal resources and competencies in response to dynamic

environmental changes (Teece et al., 1997). In the context of this study, ASC is considered a form of dynamic capability that enables MSME salespeople to adjust their approach according to customer needs and market changes. As such, ASC aligns with DC principles that require firms to have flexibility and adaptability to maintain a competitive advantage in a rapidly changing market environment. Furthermore, DC theory also explains how VBS and SIQ can mediate between ASC and MSME marketing performance. ASC enables salespeople to understand the value that customers consider important and adapt value-based sales strategies, thereby creating closer customer relationships. In addition, ASC supports high-quality interactions that build customer trust and satisfaction. These two mechanisms strengthen MSME marketing performance, such as increased sales, customer loyalty, and market growth. Therefore, this conceptual model provides a comprehensive framework to explain how ASC can be strategically applied in the context of MSMEs to deal with market dynamics and improve their business sustainability.

The construction of the model built in this study proved to be able to overcome the gap in the results of previous research, in explaining strategies to improve the marketing performance of MSMEs more comprehensively. This research provides empirical evidence that MSME players must be able to improve their adaptive selling capabilities in order to improve their ability to sell value-based MSME products and improve the quality of their interactions with customers so that it will ultimately improve their business performance. The findings in this study also show that to improve marketing performance, value-based selling and sales interaction quality are required.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study reveals the important role of Adaptive Selling Capability (ASC) in improving the marketing performance of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in Central

Java. The results show that ASC variables significantly contribute to the improvement of Value-Based Selling and Sales Interaction Quality, both of which act as key mechanisms in driving better MSME marketing performance. The ability of salespeople to adapt to diverse customer needs and market dynamics enables MSMEs to build stronger customer relationships, increase customer satisfaction and create long-term loyalty.

In addition, this study confirms the importance of delivering customer-relevant value and high-quality interactions. The findings reinforce the relevance of Dynamic Capability Theory, which emphasizes the importance of developing adaptive capabilities for MSMEs to deal with the changing business environment. The practical implications of this study recommend MSME players to invest in sales training and digital technology to improve ASC and related competencies, so as to ensure sustainable competitive advantage. This research provides significant theoretical and practical contributions to the development of marketing and empowerment of MSMEs in Indonesia.

### **Theoretical implications**

This research builds a relatively new concept of the relationship model between variables, to clarify the causal relationship between variables that have been carried out by previous researchers. The results of this study contribute to the development of marketing management concepts, especially on issues regarding adaptive selling capability, value-based selling, sales interaction quality, and MSME Marketing Performance.

The results of the study in this research also provide new insights by complementing the viewpoints and basic assumptions in the Dynamic Capability theory. The results of this study confirm the relevance of Dynamic Capability Theory in managing rapid market changes and highly dynamic competition, especially in the MSME sector. In the context of ASC, the adaptive ability of MSME personnel as a form of dynamic capability shows that MSME actors who are able to

adapt to market changes and customer preferences will achieve better marketing performance. This research extends the concept of dynamic capability by underlining the importance of capabilities that are not only limited to product changes or internal innovations, but also the ability of salespeople to adjust sales strategies based on varying customer needs and preferences.

The originality of this research lies in the exploration of new concepts and constructs through a synthesis process of theories in the relevant marketing field, and the results of a review of empirical evidence from previous studies. The synthesis process is carried out by researchers in a logical and coherent manner. The conceptual model of this research can be used as an important reference in modeling marketing management with a dynamic capability theory approach in the MSME sector. Overall, this research makes a significant contribution to the development of marketing management theory, by confirming that ASC, if applied strategically, can improve the marketing performance of MSMEs through adjusting sales interactions and value offerings that are more in line with customer needs. Thus, this study contributes to filling the research gap puzzle by coming up with a relevant conceptual model.

### **Managerial implications**

This research provides relevant practical guidance for MSME players in adopting Adaptive Selling Capability (ASC), Value-Based Selling (VBS), and increasing Sales Interaction Quality strategies to improve marketing performance. Development of Adaptive Selling Capability for MSME product salespeople. MSME players need to adopt ASC in order to respond more effectively to variations in customer needs and preferences. By training salespeople to be more adaptive, they will be better able to adjust their sales approach in the field, which in turn has the potential to increase sales volume and customer loyalty. This is especially important in a competitive market environment, where

customers tend to have diverse choices. Flexible and adaptive salespeople allow companies to deal with the dynamics of customer demand more responsively.

MSME players can focus product communication on specific benefits that are relevant to customer needs. This strategy requires salespeople to understand what is of primary value to customers, such as cost efficiency, product durability, or ease of use. The quality of interactions between salespeople and customers is critical to creating a positive customer experience. MSME players should encourage their salespeople to interact with a more personalized approach, adjusting the language of communication and the way information is delivered according to customer preferences. This helps to create a comfortable interaction atmosphere, which in turn increases customer satisfaction and loyalty.

The practical implication of this study highlights the need for MSME actors to enhance their adaptive selling skills, particularly in understanding customer needs and delivering value-based product offers. It is recommended that regular sales training be provided by local governments, training institutions, or partner universities. The training should cover effective communication techniques, handling different customer types, and strategies for offering products based on customer-perceived benefits. Field mentoring is also essential to help MSMEs apply flexible and relevant selling approaches directly in their business context.

Policymakers may consider providing support to MSMEs in the form of training or subsidies to adopt technologies that support ASC. In addition, policies that encourage collaboration between MSMEs and business training institutions or innovation centers can help accelerate the development of salespeople's adaptive capabilities.

### Research limitations

This research has limitations in the coverage area which only focuses on MSMEs in Central

Java, so it requires further research, especially the representation of MSMEs outside Java for better generalization of results and representation of Indonesia. In addition, the method used is limited to a survey approach, so it does not deeply explore respondents' perspectives regarding the implementation of Adaptive Selling Capability. External factors such as policy changes or macroeconomic conditions that can affect the marketing performance of MSMEs have also not been thoroughly analyzed. Further research is also recommended to use a mixed method approach to obtain a more holistic and contextual understanding.

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## APPENDIX

### Appendix A. Measurement indicators

Indicators	Source
<b>Adaptive Selling Capability</b>	(Kaynak et al., 2016; Pettijohn et al., 2000)
Has many sales approach options	
Flexible in the use of sales approaches	
Easily adapt to various customers	
Understand how to treat different customers	
Easily use various sales approaches	
<b>Value-Based Selling</b>	(Terho et al., 2015; Töytäri & Rajala, 2015)
Understand of customer desires	
Ability to offer value	
Ability to minimize business risk of customer	
Ability to offer interesting proposition	
Able to offer long-term solution of customer's business	
<b>Sales Interaction Quality</b>	(Ferguson et al., 2021; Weitz, 1981)
Able to exchange useful information	
Communicate that has a positive impact	
Creating relationships that require each other	
There is an active reciprocal relationship	
Growing the trust of other parties to partner	
<b>MSMEs Marketing Performane</b>	(Ferdinand & Wahyuningsih, 2018; Rakesh et al., 2017)
Increased sales volume	
Growth in the number of customers	
Expansion of sales area coverage	
Increased sales of product variants	