

## **Development of a Performance Model for SMEs to Go International in Aceh Barat Regency to Strengthen the Coastal Economy**

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### **Abstract**

This study examines the relationships between export orientation, social capital, strategic competitiveness, and export performance within the context of firms operating in international markets. Utilizing a theoretical framework based on the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Cadogan's epistemology, the research explores the role of social capital as an intangible resource that can enhance export performance and the contribution of export orientation as a driver of strategic competitiveness. The analysis results reveal a significant impact of export orientation on strategic competitiveness (P-Value 0.000), yet it does not demonstrate a direct significant effect on export performance (P-Value 0.139). Conversely, social capital has a highly significant impact on export performance (P-Value 0.000) and export orientation (P-Value 0.000), but it does not significantly influence strategic competitiveness (P-Value 0.249). Furthermore, strategic competitiveness significantly affects export performance (P-Value 0.000). These findings suggest that while both export orientation and social capital play vital roles in enhancing export performance, firms must develop robust strategic competitiveness to achieve success in the global market. This research provides insights into the importance of integrating social resources, export orientation, and competitive strategies to achieve optimal export performance.

**Keywords:** Export Orientation, Social Capital, Strategic Competitiveness

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## INTRODUCTION

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are a sector that has been significantly impacted during the pandemic, contributing to Indonesia's economic downturn. With 64.2 million SME units absorbing 97% of the labour force in the business sector, SMEs' contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP) reached 61.1%. However, the contribution of SMEs to non-oil and gas exports is only 14.37%. The huge potential of SMEs in Indonesia encourages the government to improve the competitiveness and exports of this sector. The main challenge for SMEs in penetrating international markets is increasing complexity and global competition (Maksum et al., 2020; Tarihoran et al., 2023). This research aims to explore the factors that influence SMEs' performance in the global market, identify the causes of exporters' success or failure, as well as provide strategic insights to company managers to compete in the increasingly fierce international market.

SMEs face financial, resource, and network limitations compared to large companies (Anggraeni et al., 2013). However, e-commerce has opened up opportunities for SMEs to enter international markets (Maharani & Ulum, 2019; Tarihoran et al., 2023). Access to social capital through social networks has proven to be an important resource that can improve SMEs' competitiveness. Social capital, established through informal relationships between SMEs, enables collaboration to achieve common goals and overcome individual limitations. SMEs' export performance has been studied from both a micro and macro perspective. At the micro level, SMEs' challenges in exporting are related to internal limitations such as financial, information, and resource issues (Bostan et al., 2019; Maksum et al., 2020). At the macro level, research highlights the role of national policies in supporting the increase of SME exports (Tarihoran et al., 2023). However, studies on how SMEs in developing countries utilize social capital are limited and results vary (Kamal et al., 2023; Ngo, 2022; Yoshino & Taghizadeh-Hesary, 2019). This study focuses on firms' internal resources, specifically export market orientation and social capital, and their impact on SMEs' export performance. Competitive strategy will be included as a moderating variable in the relationship between export market orientation and organizational export performance.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Social Capital

Ozdemir et al. (2023) explained that in the Resource-Based View (RBV) perspective, social capital is seen as one of the strategic resources that can provide sustainable competitive advantage for organizations. Huang et al. (2023) argued that competitive advantage can be achieved by RBV if the company has valuable, rare, difficult to imitate, and irreplaceable resources (VRIN). Social capital, which consists of the network of social relations that individuals or organizations have, meets these criteria as it provides access to information, knowledge, and opportunities that enhance performance (He et al., 2023; Huang et al., 2023). Effective networks are also scarce, as not all organizations have equal access to strategic relationships (Ascani et al., 2020). In addition, social capital is difficult to replicate, as these relationships are built through trust and long-term interactions that cannot be replicated quickly by competitors (He et al., 2023; Ozdemir et al., 2023). The advantages gained from social capital are also difficult to replace with other resources such as financial capital or technology, as the unique benefits of social relationships are not easily obtained through other means (Ahn et al., 2022; Eller et al., 2020). Social capital supports firms in accessing external resources, lowering transaction costs, and strengthening collaboration and innovation, thus playing an important role in driving sustainable competitive advantage.

The RBV model helps analyze existing resources and identify or stabilize internal resources to take advantage of external opportunities (Maksum et al., 2020). In RBV, resources are central in helping companies achieve higher performance and growth. These resources are divided into two types; tangible and intangible (Harjoto et al., 2022; Huang et al., 2023). Tangible resources are physical assets such as buildings, materials, equipment, and so on.

Tangible assets alone provide little benefit to the company as they are easily bought or acquired by competitors. In contrast, intangible assets are the logical ownership of the company, such as *talent*, brands, and intellectual property (Estensoro et al., 2022). These assets are acquired with greater effort and are not easily acquired by competitors, except through the acquisition of the company that owns the asset. Acquisitions are often made to acquire patents, licenses, or talent (*acquire*). If managed well, intangible assets can be a major source of competitive advantage (Hagen et al., 2022).

Another assumption in RBV is that resources should be heterogeneous and non-transferable. Heterogeneity means that each firm has different resources and capabilities (Ascani et al., 2020). This explains why two firms competing in the same market segment usedifferent resources and capabilities to outperform competitors. Immobility refers to the assumption that resources cannot be easily replicated or transferred from one firm to another. As a result, firms cannot easily access resources to match their competitors' strategies (Estensoro et al., 2022; Hagen et al., 2022). This RBV assumption emphasizes that firms cannot quickly access competitors' resources through acquisitions. However, having the right resources and capabilities alone is not enough to gain a competitive advantage. The key question is how well the firm is organized to harness the value of those resources. The VRIO framework helps classify resources and capabilities into five different categories.

The VRIO framework is an analytical tool derived from the Resource-Based View (RBV) used to evaluate a company's resource potential and capabilities in creating sustainable competitive advantage. The acronym VRIO consists of four main components; *Value*, *Rarity*, *Imitability*, and *Organisation*. Resources are categorized as valuable if they can capitalize on opportunities or overcome threats, while rarity refers to the extent to which the resource is not commonly possessed by competitors. To ensure a sustainable competitive advantage, resources are also it must be difficult for competitors to replicate, which can be due to factors such as unique history or internal complexity. Finally, the company must have the right structures andsystems in place to utilize these resources effectively. Through VRIO analysis, a company can identify which resources can provide a competitive advantage and how to maximize that potential in its business strategy.

The VRIO and VRIN frameworks are both used to analyze a company's resources and capabilities in the context of the Resource-Based View (RBV), but there are importantdifferences between them (Estensoro et al., 2022). VRIO consists of four components: Value, Rarity, Imitability, and Organization, which emphasize the importance of structures andsystems within the firm to utilize resources effectively. In contrast, VRIN also has four components, namely Value, Rarity, Imitability, and Non-substitutability, where the non-substitutability component replaces the organizational aspect in VRIO. As such, VRIO focuses more on the readiness of the organization to utilize the resource, whereas VRIN assesses the intrinsic nature of the resource itself, including whether it can be substituted (Eller et al., 2020; Hagen et al., 2022). Overall, while both aim to assist companies in achieving competitive advantage, the approach and focus of each is different, with VRIO highlighting the importance of management and organizational structure, while VRIN focuseson the underlying characteristics of resources.

### **Export Orientation**

Epistemology in the context of Cadogan et al.'s (2002) theory of export marketing orientation relates to the way knowledge and understanding are acquired and utilized in managing marketing strategies in international markets. Cadogan et al. (2012) emphasize the importance of market intelligence as a basis for informational and strategic decision-making. In this regard, Cadogan's epistemology focuses on the process of collecting, analyzing, and disseminating relevant information about export markets (Cadogan et al., 2002, 2012). Firstly, knowledge is generated through market research, which includes monitoring consumer needs, industry trends, and competitor analyses. Through these activities, companies can identify opportunities and challenges that exist in international markets. Secondly, the distribution of

knowledge within the organization is important; the information gained must be disseminated to all team members so that it can be accessed and used in decision-making. This includes training and effective communication between departments. Thirdly, responsiveness to acquired information is another key aspect of Cadogan's epistemology. Companies need to have systems in place that allow them to respond quickly to changes in the market, both in terms of products offered and marketing strategies (Cadogan et al., 2009; Dong et al., 2022; Kasema, 2023). Thus, knowledge is not just collected, but also processed and used proactively to create value for customers and improve export performance.

Export orientation in MSMEs (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) is an effort made to expand the market for products or services to the international level involving a series of strategies aimed at making MSME products competitive in the global market. Fernando et al. (2017) explained that one of the key factors supporting export orientation is product innovation, where MSMEs must be able to produce unique products that meet international standards. In addition, access to global market information, regulations, and foreign consumer preferences also play an important role. Managerial capabilities and qualified human resources are required to ensure efficient management and skilled labor in the export field. Fernando et al. (2017) added that support from the government through incentives, training, and access to labor market information also plays an important role.

Financing helps encourage MSMEs to expand into international markets. Collaboration with international business networks, such as through trade shows or business associations, is also an important factor in opening up export opportunities (Gripsrud et al., 2023; Ngo, 2022). In the digital era, the use of technology and e-commerce platforms has made it easier for MSMEs to reach global consumers. However, MSMEs face many challenges in export orientation, such as limited capital, lack of understanding of international trade regulations, and logistical constraints (Fernando et al., 2017; Kasema, 2023).

In Cadogan's perspective, export orientation is understood as a strategic approach that not only targets international markets but also involves a long-term commitment to maintaining a presence and competitiveness in global markets. Its ontology emphasizes the importance of the dimensions of international commitment, global customer orientation, and adaptation of products and marketing strategies according to different market needs. This orientation involves not only reactive readiness to foreign demand but also a proactive approach that encourages firms to actively seek new opportunities through international market research and product innovation (İpek & Bıçakcıoğlu-Peynirci, 2020; Rua & Santos, 2022). Typical terminologies such as proactive export commitment and export market-oriented behavior suggest that export-oriented firms not only conduct cross-border trade transactions but systematically build internal capacity to navigate the complexities of the international environment (Faroque et al., 2022; Ngo, 2022). Managerial capabilities in understanding international market dynamics, business culture, and global regulations are crucial in sustaining successful international market-entry strategies (Gripsrud et al., 2023; Rua & Santos, 2022). Within this framework, export orientation is more than just an expansion strategy, but an integral part of strategic internationalization that integrates exports as a fundamental element in the company's sustainability and growth in the global arena.

In the context of export orientation for MSMEs, several aspects must be done to compete effectively in international markets, as well as some things that should be avoided. Academically, the literature emphasizes that innovation capacity is one of the key elements that MSMEs must strengthen. MSMEs must be able to adapt their products to suit regulations, standards, and consumer preferences in the global market (Dong et al., 2022; Khan & Khan, 2021). This includes adjustments to product quality, design, packaging, and international certifications required in export destination countries (Gripsrud et al., 2023; Khan et al., 2023). Market knowledge is also an important aspect; MSMEs must conduct in-depth research on market conditions, consumer needs, and competition at the international level. In this case, mastering information related to cultural, economic, and social differences in export destination countries

is very important so that export strategies become more targeted and effective (Faroque et al., 2022; Tarihoran et al., 2023).

One mistake that MSMEs often make and should avoid is a lack of long-term commitment to foreign markets. According to Cadogan et al. (2002), export orientation requires patience and continuous investment, while many MSMEs are often opportunistic, responding only to short-term export opportunities without a sustainable strategy. This can lead to failure to achieve stability in international markets (Gripsrud et al., 2023; Khan & Khan, 2021). In addition, the lack of diversification of export markets is also a common mistake that should be avoided. Relying on a single export market without taking into account external risks, such as economic fluctuations or protectionist policies, can make MSMEs vulnerable to market shocks (Gripsrud et al., 2023; Khan et al., 2023). Another thing that must be avoided is the absence of marketing strategy adaptation. Strategies that are too standardized or not adapted to the characteristics of international markets can result in MSME products being less competitive (İpek & Bıçakcıoğlu-Peynirci, 2020; K. H. Lin et al., 2014). MSMEs should understand the importance of marketing adaptations that take into account the different languages, cultures, and consumer behaviors in each market.

### Competitive Strategy

Business strategy can be understood as a collection of principles that direct decisions within an organization and, when properly implemented, enable the effective distribution of resources to achieve the organization's main objectives. In the epistemology of strategic management, strategy acts as a practical guide that influences corporate decisions, determines the business steps to be taken, and sets priorities for their implementation. Ruzzier et al. (2006) point out that export-focused firms often employ cost-reduction strategies as they take advantage of lower labor and raw material costs in some countries. Export performance is not only determined by cost factors, but also by strategic collaboration with other business partners. Developing these partnerships allows firms to expand their capacity and add new knowledge, which ultimately improves export performance outcomes (Leonidou et al., 2010). Cadogan et al. (2002) explain that the relationship between marketing orientation and export performance may vary in strength depending on the typology of business strategy applied, as outlined by Miles and Snow. Furthermore, Morgan et al. (2010) mentioned that competitive strategy can act as a moderator in the relationship between market orientation and economic performance. That is, the type of strategy a firm adopts will influence the extent to which export orientation contributes to successful export performance.

Miles and Snow developed a typology of organizational strategies that explains how firms adapt to the external environment and formulate competitive strategies. Miles et al., (1978) identified four main strategy types: Prospector, Defender, Analyser, and Reactor. Companies with a Prospector strategy focus on innovation and exploration of new markets, proactively seeking opportunities and often being pioneers in product or service development (C. Lin et al., 2014; Miles et al., 1978). Defender firms, on the other hand, emphasize maintaining a stable market position, tend to avoid major changes and seek to improve operational efficiency to protect their core market from competitors.

Meanwhile, companies with an Analyser strategy try to combine the characteristics of the previous two types by innovating and exploring new markets, but also maintaining stability in existing markets. Finally, Reactor firms do not have a consistent strategy, often reacting to environmental changes in an *ad hoc* manner without clear planning. The epistemology underlying this typology argues that firms must adapt their strategies to the dynamics of the external environment to remain relevant and competitive (Evans & Green, 2000; Gangata et al., 2024; Morais & Graça, 2013). Each strategy typology has implications for firms' resource allocation, innovation, and response to market dynamics, thus providing a framework for understanding organizational adaptation strategies and helping firms evaluate the consistency of their strategic orientation in the face of existing challenges.

## Export Performance

Export performance in the RBV framework is based on the premise that a firm's competitive advantage and export success depend on managing its resources. Internal resources that are unique and not easily replicated by competitors (Eller et al., 2020; Valentin, 2001). RBV focuses on how a firm's tangible resources such as physical assets and technology, as well as intangible ones such as managerial capabilities, knowledge, and reputation can be the main foundation for achieving superior export performance. RBV emphasizes that firms that possess rare, valuable, inimitable, and difficult-to-substitute resources (VRIN resources) tend to be more successful in international markets (Ozdemir et al., 2023; Tarihoran et al., 2023). For example, companies that have innovative technologies or highly differentiated products can overcome the challenges of global competition and offer unique value to customers in export markets. In addition, according to Ngo, (2022), organizational capabilities such as knowledge of international markets, ability to adapt to local regulations, and global supply chain efficiency also play an important role in improving export performance.

Peteraf, (1993) underlines the importance of *dynamic capabilities*, i.e. the ability of a firm to continuously update and develop its internal resources to match the changing international market environment. The ability to identify opportunities in new markets, allocate resources efficiently, and innovate products and business processes are important aspects that can influence success in export activities. Thus, good export performance depends not only on access to resources but also on a firm's ability to use those resources effectively and adaptively according to global market dynamics (Ahn et al., 2022; Eller et al., 2020).

The RBV ontology refers to basic assumptions about the nature of firm resources and their role in achieving competitive advantage and superior performance, including in export performance (Harjoto et al., 2022). Ontologically, RBV views the firm as a unique collection of resources and capabilities that are determinants of success in market competition (Hagen et al., 2022; Priem & Butler, 2001). These resources can be physical, financial, and technological assets, as well as managerial capabilities, knowledge, and network relationships. The RBV ontology assumes that if a firm possesses resources that are rare, valuable, difficult to imitate, and unsubstitutable (VRIN), it will find it easier to achieve competitive advantage, both in domestic and export markets. One of the main criticisms of the RBV ontology is its static assumption of resources. Critics such as Priem & Butler, (2001) argue that RBV focuses too much on identifying resources that are considered valuable and unique but pays less attention to the dynamics of the external environment and market changes. In international markets, changes in regulation, technology, and consumer preferences can quickly reduce the value of a resource (Hagen et al., 2022; Ozdemir et al., 2023). Therefore, RBV is often criticized for not being able to explain how firms should develop and replicate resources sustainably to remain competitive.

Another criticism is related to the internal focus of RBV. Peteraf, (1993) highlighted that RBV overemphasizes the internal resources of the firm, while external factors such as market conditions, competition, and industry dynamics also play a very important role in determining performance. In export practices, reliance on internal resources without considering adaptation to local regulations and cultural preferences in international markets may limit the effectiveness of export strategies (Ascani et al., 2020; Guo et al., 2024). *Dynamic capabilities* emerged as a response to this criticism, introducing the concept that firms should continuously reconfigure their resources and capabilities to respond to changes in the external environment. In other words, competitive advantage is not just a matter of having unique resources, but also the ability to adapt and develop new resources as the global market changes.

## RESEARCH METHODS

The study was conducted between April 2024 and June 2024 where the sample was recruited using *convenience sampling* technique. Questionnaires were distributed through an online survey distributed by university students. The inclusion criteria in this study were MSME entrepreneurs in Aceh Barat who had been in business for more than 5 years and gave consent

to participate. Participation was voluntary. A total of 107 questionnaire responses were collected, with each item requiring completion before proceeding to the next section, so there were no incomplete entries. All participants met the inclusion criteria, except three participants who were excluded due to anomalous responses detected during questionnaire completion.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

**Table 1.** Research Respondents

	Q	%
<b>Gender</b>		
Men	41	38,32
Women	66	61,68
<b>Last education</b>		
Graduate	11	10,28
Diploma	11	10,28
High School	56	52,34
Junior High School	29	27,10
<b>Monthly turnover</b>		
< 60.000.000	67	62,62
60.000.000 - 90.000.000	9	8,41
91.000.000 - 120.000.000	3	2,80
121.000.000 - 150.000.000	2	1,87
151.000.000 - 200.000.000	11	10,28
201.000.000 - 300.000.000	15	14,02
	107	100,00

The data shows the distribution of respondents based on gender, latest education, and monthly turnover. Out of a total of 107 respondents, the majority are women, as many as 66 people (61.68%), while men totaled 41 people (38.32%). Based on the latest level of education, the majority of respondents (52.34%) had a high school education, followed by those with a junior high school education (29 people (27.10%). Respondents with higher educational backgrounds, namely Graduate and Diploma, totaled 11 people (10.28%) each. In terms of monthly turnover, the majority of respondents (62.62 percent) had an income of less than Rp60 million. A small number were in the range of 60 to 90 million rupiahs (8.41%), and only 2.80% had a turnover between 91 to 120 million rupiahs. A total of 1.87 percent of respondents had a turnover between Indonesian rupiah 121 and 150 million, while the group with a higher turnover of Indonesian rupiah 151 to 200 million totaled 10.28 percent. The group with the largest turnover (201 to 300 million rupiah) accounted for 14.02 percent of the total respondents.

To qualify for the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) test according to Hair et al. (2022, 2023), several important aspects need to be considered. First, sample size is a critical factor in SEM. The recommended minimum sample size is 100 to 200 respondents, with a ratio of between 5 to 10 observations per estimated parameter. In addition, data normality, both univariate and multivariate, is an important prerequisite, as SEM is sensitive to non-normal data distribution. In the case of non-normal data, the bootstrapping technique can be used as an alternative. In addition, Hair et al. (2012) explained that handling multivariate outliers using Mahalanobis distance needs to be done so that parameter estimates are not biased. Multicollinearity, or high correlation between independent variables, should also be avoided as it can interfere with model estimation. To assess model fit, some recommended goodness-of-fit indices include Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ ), Goodness-of-Fit Index (GFI) with a value  $> 0.90$ , Comparative Fit Index (CFI) with a value  $\geq 0.90$ , Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) below 0.08, and Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) below 0.08. Hair et al. (2019) explain that construct validity is tested through convergent and discriminant validity.

Convergent validity is evaluated by the required Average Variance Extracted (AVE)  $\geq 0.50$ , while discriminant validity is tested by comparing the AVE value with the square of the inter-construct correlation. Reliability must also fulfill a composite reliability value  $\geq 0.70$  to ensure internal consistency. Finally, the relationship between latent variables and their indicators is considered linear to keep the interpretation of the model accurate.

*Convenience sampling* in research using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is often criticized for not fully representing the intended population. However, the use of this method can be justified in an academic context with some justification, especially when there are constraints of time, resources, or difficulty in accessing a wider population. *Convenience sampling* offers practical efficiency, especially in exploratory research or when the research objective is to gain initial insight into the relationships between variables in the SEM model. Hair et al. (2021) state that although *random sampling* is considered the ideal standard for ensuring the generalization of results in SEM, *convenience sampling* can still be used if the research aims to understand phenomena in a particular context without the need to generalize the results to a larger population. However, in this situation, researchers should recognize the limitations of *convenience sampling* and explain that the results of the study may not be directly applicable to the wider population. To minimize the potential bias generated by *convenience sampling*, researchers can apply additional statistical tests, such as *bootstrapping*, which is useful for improving and checking the reliability of parameter estimation results (Hair et al., 2021, 2022). In addition, even if the sample is not randomly drawn, if the sample includes a variety of respondents who adequately represent the characteristics of the population under study, the research results can still provide significant insights (Hair et al., 2023). *Convenience sampling* in SEM research is acceptable in the right context, as long as researchers openly communicate the limitations of this methodology and use analytical approaches that can reduce bias (Dash & Paul, 2021; Kurtaliqui et al., 2024). Thus, *convenience sampling* still contributes to the initial understanding of latent construct relationship patterns, albeit with certain limitations regarding the generalisability of the results.



**Table 1.** Research Questionnaire

Variables	Indicators	Statement	<i>rpearson</i>
Social capital $\alpha = .779$	Social Networks	I have a good relationship with other MSME entrepreneurs in my area.	.444
		I often communicate with other entrepreneurs to exchange business-related information.	.534
	Trust	I believe that other MSME entrepreneurs in my region will fulfill their commitments in cooperation.	.653
		I feel safe sharing business information with my fellow MSME entrepreneurs.	.784
		I am confident that other MSME entrepreneurs will not abuse the trust placed in them. I gave it to you.	.620
	Norms and Obligations	I feel that there is an unwritten norm that encourages MSME entrepreneurs to work with each other in favor.	.732
		I feel responsible for helping my fellow MSME entrepreneurs when they need assistance.	.841
	Knowledge Sharing	I often share knowledge related to my business with other MSME entrepreneurs in the neighborhood around me.	.648
		Other MSME entrepreneurs often share their experiences and ideas with me.	.532
	Reputation	I am known as a reliable entrepreneur among MSME entrepreneurs.	.940
		My reputation among MSME entrepreneurs made it easy for me to get business support.	.541
		My reputation amongst other entrepreneurs helped me build trust in business cooperation.	.732
	Collaboration and Cooperation	Collaboration with other MSME entrepreneurs helps me to grow my business.	.752
		I feel that co-operation with other MSME entrepreneurs provides benefits for my business.	.731
	Co-Innovation	I and other MSME entrepreneurs often co-create innovative ideas for our business.	.825
		Innovations resulting from collaboration with other entrepreneurs are beneficial to my business.	.730
	Access to External Resources	I often succeed in innovating when working with other MSME entrepreneurs.	.723
		Through my social network, I can access resources that support my business. me, such as financing or marketing.	.532
		My relationships with other MSME entrepreneurs give me access to resources and external factors that I need to develop my business.	.713

Variables	Indicators	Statement	<i>rpearson</i>
Export orientation $\alpha = .802$	Market Intelligence	We routinely monitor information on international market trends to develop the product.	.730
		Our company has sufficient resources to conduct market research internationally.	.533
		We often keep up to date with global competition in our sector.	.754
	Proactiveness	Our company is actively seeking new export opportunities to other countries.	.740
		We had the initiative to enter the export market before other local competitors.	.632
	Risk Attitude	We are willing to take risks to enter into overseas markets that we have never entered.	.543
		Our company does not hesitate to invest in risky export projects High.	.654
		We are comfortable with the uncertainty associated with expanding into export markets New.	.639
	Relationship Building	We are actively building relationships with overseas business partners to expand our business	.651
		Our company endeavors to maintain good relationships with distributors and agents internationally.	.799
		We often attend international trade shows to expand our export market network.	.898
	Innovation in Export Activities	Our company regularly develops new products that meet the needs of our customers. overseas markets.	.932
		We innovate in the marketing methods we use to reach the market internationally.	.524
Competitive strategy $\alpha = .751$	Prospector	We often try new strategies to improve our competitiveness in the market. export.	.500
		Product and service innovation is a top priority in my company's strategy.	.654
		I am comfortable with the rapid changes in the business environment.	.943
	Analyser	I tend to analyze the market in depth before entering a new export market.	.432
		My company tries to strike a balance between innovations and market maintenance that already exist.	.409
		We often wait until there is solid evidence before adopting technology. or new products.	.507
		My company's strategy relies on in-depth analyses of market trends.	.543
		We rarely make big changes unless we are confident in the outcome.	.656
	Defender	We would rather strengthen existing markets than seek new export opportunities.	.643
		I prioritize efficiency and cost savings over product innovation.	.540
		My company tends to avoid high risks in expanding export markets.	.643

Variables	Indicators	Statement	<i>rpearson</i>
Export Performance $\alpha =$ .788	Adaptive Capability	We optimize internal operations more often than pursuing new markets.	.653
		Our MSMEs are quick to respond to changes in demand in the export market.	.723
		We can customize products according to the needs of overseas customers.	.752
		Our MSMEs frequently review and adjust our export strategy based on global market conditions.	.756
		We can shift business priorities quickly when there are regulatory changes in international trade.	.632
	Absorptive Capability	We can quickly utilize new information related to regulations and standards export.	.754
		We regularly obtain and utilize feedback from overseas customers to improve export performance.	.726
		We are open to adopting new technologies to improve process efficiency. export.	.747
		Our MSMEs have successfully applied technological innovation to support export activities.	.959
	Innovative Capability	Our MSMEs regularly develop new products to meet market needs internationally.	.435
		We were able to introduce innovative products that were in demand by the export market.	.535
		We actively collaborate with external parties, such as universities or partners. International, to develop export products.	.634
		Our MSMEs are involved in collaboration networks that help accelerate the development of innovations for the export market.	.532
	Export Performance	The export volume of our MSMEs has increased in recent years.	.524
		We have achieved the export growth target set.	.542
		The total value of our exports has increased significantly over the past few years.	.735
		We experienced growth in revenue from exports.	.502
		Profits from export activities have become an important part of MSME income.	.664
		We have successfully entered new export markets in recent years.	.630
		Our MSMEs continue to expand their distribution network in international markets.	.753

**Table 2.** Outer loadings

	<b>Export orientation</b>	<b>Export performance</b>	<b>Social capital</b>	<b>Strategic competitive</b>
Absorptive Capability		0,939		
Access to External Resources			0,887	
Adaptive Capability		0,865		
Analyser				0,914
Co-Innovation			0,826	
Collaboration and Cooperation			0,841	
Defender				0,857
Export Performance		0,911		
Innovation in Export Activities	0,902			
Innovative Capability		0,917		
Knowledge Sharing			0,797	
Market Intelligence	0,877			
Norms and Obligations			0,897	
Proactiveness	0,904			
Prospector				0,863
Relationship Building	0,905			
Reputation			0,743	
Risk Attitude	0,876			
Social Networks			0,774	
Trust			0,869	

The outer loadings value above illustrates the strength of the relationship between indicators (measured variables) and latent constructs (variables that are not directly measured). The higher the outer loading value (close to 1), the stronger the indicator reflects or represents the latent construct. Numbers such as 0.939 or 0.911 indicate that the indicators are very strong in reflecting the related latent variable (e.g., innovation, collaboration, or export performance).

**Table 3.** R Square

	<b>R Square</b>	<b>R Square Adjusted</b>
Export orientation	0,763	0,761
Export performance	0,821	0,816
Strategic competitive	0,779	0,775

Models with R Square values above 0.7 are considered very good in the context of PLS-SEM. All the dependent variables studied have an R Square above 0.75, which indicates that the model can explain the majority of the variance of these variables. This model can be said to have very high predictive power, meaning that the independent variables included in the model are relevant and have a significant influence on the dependent variable. The Adjusted R Square value which is only slightly different from the R Square also shows that there are not much bias or insignificant independent variables in the model. This means that the model is quite stable, both in number of variables and complexity. Overall, these R Square and Adjusted R Square figures indicate that the model used in the PLS-SEM is very strong in explaining the variance of the dependent variables such as export orientation, export performance, and export performance. Strategic competitive. The model can be considered reliable for prediction and analysis and has a strong ability to help identify factors that influence these variables.

**Table 4. F Square**

	<b>Export orientation</b>	<b>Export performance</b>	<b>Social capital</b>	<b>Strategic competitive</b>
Export orientation		0,021		0,554
Export performance				
Social capital	3,226	0,162		0,036
Strategic competitive		0,241		

Social capital has a significant and strong influence on export orientation (t-statistic 3.226), but its influence on export performance and strategic competitiveness appears weaker insignificant. Export orientation has a strong influence on strategic competitiveness (0.554), but its influence on export performance is very weak (0.021). Strategic competitiveness seems to have a moderate influence on export performance (0.241), which means that improving strategic competitiveness will slightly improve export performance, although the effect is not very large. From this table, there is no direct effect of other variables on export performance, except for strategic competitiveness and a slight effect of export orientation. The model shows that export orientation and social capital are important factors in improving strategic competitiveness. However, the direct effect of export orientation on export performance appears to be insignificant, and social capital has a stronger effect on export orientation than other variables. Strategic competitiveness exerts a positive influence on export performance, but it is not very dominant.

**Table 5. Construct Reliability and Validity**

	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>rho_A</b>	<b>Composite Reliability</b>	<b>Average Variance Extracted (AVE)</b>
Export orientation	0,937	0,939	0,952	0,797
Export performance	0,929	0,929	0,950	0,825
Social capital	0,935	0,941	0,947	0,690
Strategic competitive	0,852	0,856	0,910	0,771

Overall, the results of these reliability and validity tests show that all constructs in the Export orientation, Export performance, social capital, and Strategic competitive models have excellent reliability and validity. Cronbach's Alpha and rho\_A show that internal consistency between indicators is very strong for each construct (all values above 0.85). Composite Reliability reinforces these results by showing that all constructs have very high reliability (values > 0.9). AVE shows that each construct has good convergent validity, meaning that the selected indicators can capture most of the relevant variance (AVE > 0.5). Thus, the analyzed model shows high strength and reliability in explaining the relationship between constructs, so it can be considered valid and credible for use in further analysis.

**Table 6. Mean, STDEV, T-Values, P-Values**

	<b>Standard Deviation(STDEV)</b>	<b>P Values</b>
Export orientation -> Export performance	0,107	0,139
Export orientation -> Strategic competitive	0,153	0,000
Social capital -> Export orientation	0,033	0,000
Social capital -> Export performance	0,101	0,000
Social capital -> Strategic competitive	0,159	0,249
Strategic competitive -> Export performance	0,113	0,000

The relationship between export orientation and export performance has a P-value of 0.139, which is greater than 0.05. This means that this relationship is not statistically significant,

so export orientation may not have a strong or real effect on export performance in this model. Although export orientation is important, other factors may be more dominant in determining export performance. The relationship between export orientation and strategic competitiveness has a P-value of 0.000, which indicates this relationship is highly statistically significant. Export orientation has a significant influence on strategic competitiveness, and this supports that export orientation contributes strongly to firm competitiveness. A P-value of 0.000 indicates that social capital has a highly significant influence on export orientation, with a low standard deviation (0.033). This means that social capital is very stable and contributes greatly to improving a firm's export orientation. The relationship between social capital and export performance is also statistically significant (P-value 0.000). This means that social capital has a significant impact on improving export performance, so firms with strong social capital tend to be more successful in export performance. The relationship between social capital and strategic competitiveness is not statistically significant (P-value 0.249). Although social capital is important, in this model it does not seem to have a significant effect on strategic competitiveness. Other variables may be more relevant in influencing competitiveness. The relationship between strategic competitiveness and export performance is highly significant (P-Value 0.000). This means that firms with higher strategic competitiveness tend to have better export performance. Strategic competitiveness is an important factor that drives export success.

The analysis showed a significant relationship between several variables. Export orientation has a significant influence on strategic competitiveness (P-value 0.000), while social capital plays an important role in improving export orientation (P-value 0.000) and export performance (P-value 0.000). In addition, strategic competitiveness was shown to significantly influence export performance (P-Value 0.000). These findings indicate that export orientation and social capital are important factors that support the improvement of strategic competitiveness and export performance in the analyzed model. In contrast, some relationships did not show statistical significance. The relationships between export orientation and export performance (P-Value 0.139), as well as social capital and strategic competitiveness (P-Value 0.249), were not significant, indicating that these two variables may not be direct determinants. Other factors seem to be more relevant in strengthening the relationship between these variables. Overall, the model highlights the importance of social capital in enhancing export orientation, while strategic competitiveness is positioned as the main factor influencing export performance directly.

**Table 7.** Total Indirect Effect

	<b>T Statistics ( O/STDEV )</b>	<b>P Values</b>
Export orientation -> Export performance	2,897	0,004
Export orientation -> Strategic competitive		
Social capital -> Export orientation		
Social capital -> Export performance	5,310	0,000
Social capital -> Strategic competitive	4,181	0,000
Strategic competitive -> Export performance		

The original sample value of 0.317 indicates the indirect effect of export orientation on export performance. The T-statistic of 2.897 indicates this relationship is significant, as the P-value of 0.004 is less than 0.05. This shows that export orientation has a positive and significant influence on export performance. The original sample value of 0.496 shows the indirect effect of social capital on export performance. The T-statistic of 5.310 indicates this relationship is highly significant, as the P-value of 0.000 is far below 0.05. This indicates that social capital has a strong positive influence on export performance. The original sample value of 0.628 shows the indirect effect of social capital on strategic competitiveness. The T-statistic of 4.181 shows that this relationship is highly significant (P-value of 0.000), indicating that social capital substantially contributes to the improvement of strategic competitiveness. From the results shown in this

table, it can be concluded that export orientation significantly affects export performance. Social capital has a significant impact on both export performance and strategic competitiveness. Other relationships that are not presented show that not all interactions between variables have a significant effect in this model. This model shows that social capital plays an important role in improving export performance and strategic competitiveness, while export orientation also contributes positively to export performance.

## Discussion

The analysis shows that the relationship between export orientation and export performance is not significant (P-value 0.139). This indicates that export orientation may not have a strong direct impact on export performance in this context. According to RBV theory, export orientation can be considered one of the strategic resources underlying a firm's success in international markets (Ozdemir et al., 2023). However, orientation alone is not enough; firms need to integrate this orientation with a more holistic and dynamic strategy that considers external factors. Cadogan et al., (2012) stated that his epistemology emphasizes the importance of context and external influences on export orientation. In this case, companies may need to pay attention to other aspects such as cultural adaptation, market conditions, and more aggressive marketing strategies to optimize export performance. This reflects the understanding that export orientation should be integrated with strategies that respond more comprehensively to market dynamics.

Meanwhile, the relationship between export orientation and strategic competitiveness shows high significance (P-value 0.000). This suggests that export orientation is not only important in determining export strategy but also as a key driver in improving firm competitiveness. According to Ahn et al., (2022) referring to the RBV view, export orientation can be considered an asset that enhances a firm's ability to explore international market opportunities. Export orientation enables firms to build the capabilities needed to compete in global markets, including market knowledge, understanding of consumer needs, and adaptability to change. Research conducted by Tarihoran et al., (2023) shows that firms that adopt an export orientation are more likely to recognize the benefits of exporting strongly and tend to be more innovative and responsive to market needs, which in turn increases their competitiveness.

Social capital has a highly significant effect on export performance (P-value 0.000), highlighting the importance of social networks and collaboration in the export context. In RBV theory, social capital can be viewed as an intangible resource that provides a competitive advantage. Tarihoran et al., (2023) stated that strong social networks allow firms to access important information, share knowledge, and build trust with business partners, all of which are critical for success in international markets. Firms with strong social capital can more easily find and access new market opportunities, as well as overcome barriers they may face when entering international markets. As such, social capital serves as a significant driver of export performance.

While social capital showed a significant influence on export orientation and export performance, its relationship with strategic competitiveness was not significant (P-value 0.249). This finding suggests that while social capital is important, in this context, there may be other factors that are more dominant in enhancing strategic competitiveness. These could include product innovation, internal capability development, and more effective marketing strategies. RBV theory suggests that social capital alone is not enough to build competitiveness; firms need to combine it with other resources and capabilities to create a sustainable competitive advantage (Huang et al., 2023; Ozdemir et al., 2023).

The results of the analysis showing a significant relationship between strategic competitiveness and export performance (P-Value 0.000) confirm that firms that have higher strategic competitiveness tend to have better export performance. In RBV theory, strategic competitiveness is often seen as the result of effective resource management and capability development that enables firms to optimally capitalise on market opportunities. This suggests

that firms need to not only build export orientation and social capital but also develop strategic competitiveness that can translate into better performance in international markets. In this context, firms should focus on developing resources and capabilities that are unique and not easily replicated by competitors.

## CONCLUSIONS

Overall, this analysis shows that social capital plays an important role in improving export performance and export orientation, while strategic competitiveness serves as a key factor in driving export performance success. Although export orientation does not show a significant direct effect on export performance, its strong role in strategic competitiveness indicates the importance of a clear and targeted strategy in achieving success. This analysis provides insight that firms should pay attention to social capital development and export orientation in strategic decision-making, while continuously improving strategic competitiveness. This will enable firms to not only adapt to market challenges but also to capitalize effectively on existing opportunities. As a practical implication, firms need to integrate social network development, innovation, and sustainable resource management to create a sustainable competitive advantage in the global market.

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