

# Building Competitive Advantage in the Indonesian Logistics Sector: the Combined Impact of Service Quality, Marketing, and Supply Chain Flexibility on Firm Performance

Ardian Tri Bawono<sup>1</sup>, Sri Widyastuti<sup>2</sup>, Derriawan<sup>3</sup>

<sup>123</sup> Program Studi Ekonomi, Universitas Pancasila  
Corresponding Author: [ardianbawono4@gmail.com](mailto:ardianbawono4@gmail.com)

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## Abstract

The logistics industry in Indonesia faces increasing pressure to balance operational efficiency with market responsiveness amid intense competition and geographical complexity. This study aims to systematically synthesize empirical evidence regarding the influence of Marketing-Oriented Logistics Service Quality (MOLSQ), Marketing Capability (MC), and Supply Chain Flexibility (SCF) on logistics firm performance through the mediating role of competitive advantage. A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) was conducted following the PRISMA 2020 guidelines. Twenty-five empirical studies published between 2020 and 2025 were selected from Scopus, ScienceDirect, Google Scholar, and nationally accredited SINTA journals. The synthesis indicates that MOLSQ, MC, and SCF consistently exert positive effects on competitive advantage, which subsequently enhances logistics firm performance. The findings further demonstrate that competitive advantage serves as the principal mechanism through which these strategic capabilities generate superior organizational outcomes. This review extends the Resource-Based View and Dynamic Capabilities Theory by proposing an integrated conceptual framework that combines logistics service quality, marketing capability, and supply chain flexibility within the Indonesian logistics context. The study also provides practical insights for logistics managers seeking to strengthen competitiveness through integrated strategic capabilities.

## Keywords

Marketing-Oriented Logistics Service Quality, Marketing Capability, Supply Chain Flexibility, Competitive Advantage, Logistics Firm Performance, Indonesia.



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## INTRODUCTION

The logistics industry in Indonesia holds a crucial role in the national economy due to the country's archipelagic geography of over 17,000 islands. Operating across this fragmented terrain requires logistics providers to continuously improve

performance to handle growing national and global competition. Market dynamics shift constantly, customer expectations rise, and digital technologies force companies to adapt. Standard operational methods no longer guarantee survival in this sector. Regional markets show the same pressure. The OECD (2025) noted that the ASEAN region attracted USD 229 billion in Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in 2023. This capital influx made Southeast Asia the top FDI recipient among emerging markets, integrating over 60% of regional exports into global supply chains. These opportunities come with distinct barriers. Infrastructure gaps, rigid regulatory barriers, and the limited integration of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) continue to restrict supply chain optimization across the region (OECD, 2025). Domestic inefficiencies limit Indonesia's market position. Santoso et al. (2025) identified that current logistics costs still consume 14.6% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This trails neighboring Malaysia at 13% and Singapore at 8%. High operational costs directly reduce the competitiveness of Indonesian products in regional and global markets. Poor port infrastructure, overlapping rules, low digital adoption, and fragmented markets drive this inefficiency. The ASEAN Economic Community (MEA) opened borders to foreign logistics companies equipped with strong capital, modern technology, and efficient systems. Local providers can no longer compete on price alone. They need better service quality and customer responsiveness to survive.

The COVID-19 pandemic forced organizations to build supply chain resilience (Wong et al., 2023). Research by Annamalah et al. (2024) demonstrates that proactive supply chain risk management now shows a strong correlation with SME performance across ASEAN nations. Companies using these strategies improved their results by up to 35% compared to those that failed to adapt. Faster digital adoption has also changed consumer behavior. Consumers now expect speed, reliability, and full tracking. Pramudita and Guslan (2025) showed that high logistics service quality (timeliness, order discrepancy, order condition, and operational information sharing) exhibits a significant positive correlation with customer satisfaction within the Indonesian e-commerce sector. Providers face three immediate demands: cut costs despite poor infrastructure, improve service, and adopt digital tools. Managers need clear evidence to guide these choices. Human capital drives both marketing and supply chain operations. The employability of vocational education graduates is heavily driven by industry-aligned curricula and practical internship experiences (Kwartama, 2026). This graduate readiness supplies the skilled workers the maritime and logistics sectors need. Ensuring that this workforce remains relevant to Industry 4.0 demands adaptive,

data-driven professional development programs for vocational educators (Kwartama et al., 2026).

Old methods fall short. Fitri, Maniah, and Mulyati (2026) indicate that specific capabilities, operational performance, regulatory compliance, customer relationships, and cost management significantly impact air logistics service quality, which subsequently boosts export firm performance. Sudrajat, Waskito, and Purnomo (2025) also found that price and service quality directly dictate competitive advantage and overall business outcomes. Marketing capability helps companies spot opportunities, run promotions, and build long-term relationships. Sofiyan, Kaihatu, and Sutrisno (2026) demonstrate that market uncertainty strongly activates agile marketing capabilities, which subsequently fortify supply chain resilience. Supply chain flexibility lets companies handle demand spikes and market shifts. Suhartini, Hudayati, Alsayegh, Rahman, and Kamarulzaman (2020) discovered that functional and operational logistics quality significantly correlates with market flexibility, heavily moderated by corporate culture. Kuncoro and Kusumawardhani (2024) revealed that while supply chain agility may not directly influence competitive advantage, its impact becomes highly significant when mediated by resilience capabilities. Competitive advantage connects these capabilities to financial results. Permadi, Gaffar, Wibowo, and Sofia (2026) showed that dynamic logistics cluster capabilities and operational collaboration exert a direct positive effect on logistics competitiveness. Silvia, Meliala, and Sudrajat (2025) confirmed that competitive advantage directly enhances sustainable business performance by mediating the effects of supply chain agility and dynamic organizational capabilities. Ginting, Utami, Riyadi, and Hutahayan (2025) added that digitalization and servitization positively influence maritime firm competitiveness, with government support providing significant moderation. Rafsanjani and Vanany (2025) identified supply chain ambidexterity as an essential strategy for elevating third-party logistics competitiveness in Indonesia, highlighting key indicators like supply chain sensing, adaptability, process optimization, regulatory compliance, and employee competence development.

Current research rarely links these capabilities into a single framework. Most studies test variables in isolation. Few researchers evaluate competitive advantage as a mediator for logistics marketing and firm performance. Market fragmentation, global competition, and digital shifts require immediate strategic guidance. This Systematic Literature Review synthesizes empirical findings on how Marketing-Oriented Logistics Service Quality, Marketing Capability, and Supply Chain

Flexibility affect logistics firm performance, mediated by competitive advantage. This synthesis builds theoretical logistics frameworks and gives practical direction for the Indonesian market.

Although previous studies have confirmed that logistics service quality, marketing capability, and supply chain flexibility individually contribute to organizational performance, the existing literature remains fragmented. Most empirical studies have examined these strategic capabilities separately or within different industrial contexts, making it difficult to explain how they jointly create sustainable competitive advantage in the logistics sector. Furthermore, limited evidence specifically synthesizes these relationships within Indonesia, where logistics firms operate under unique geographical, regulatory, and infrastructure challenges. This fragmentation limits the development of an integrated strategic perspective for improving firm performance.

From a theoretical perspective, the Resource-Based View (RBV) emphasizes that valuable organizational resources generate competitive advantage, whereas Dynamic Capabilities Theory highlights the importance of continuously adapting organizational capabilities to environmental change. However, previous logistics studies have rarely integrated these two theoretical perspectives into a unified framework that simultaneously explains the roles of Marketing-Oriented Logistics Service Quality, Marketing Capability, and Supply Chain Flexibility. Consequently, a comprehensive understanding of how these strategic capabilities collectively enhance firm performance remains underdeveloped.

Accordingly, this study addresses these gaps by conducting a Systematic Literature Review that synthesizes empirical evidence published between 2020 and 2025. Unlike previous reviews that primarily focus on individual variables, this study proposes an integrated conceptual framework positioning competitive advantage as the central mediating mechanism linking Marketing-Oriented Logistics Service Quality, Marketing Capability, and Supply Chain Flexibility to logistics firm performance. The findings are expected to enrich the development of RBV and Dynamic Capabilities Theory while providing strategic recommendations for improving the competitiveness of logistics companies in Indonesia.

Therefore, this study aims to systematically synthesize empirical evidence regarding the relationships among Marketing-Oriented Logistics Service Quality, Marketing Capability, Supply Chain Flexibility, Competitive Advantage, and Logistics Firm Performance in the Indonesian logistics sector. By integrating these strategic capabilities into a single conceptual framework, this review seeks to provide both

theoretical advancement and practical guidance for logistics managers and policymakers.

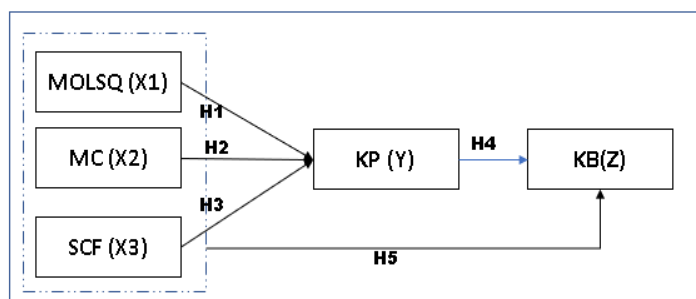
## **METHODS**

This study uses a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to identify, evaluate, and synthesize prior research findings. The SLR method allows researchers to build a clear understanding of current developments and pinpoint critical research gaps. Ensuring transparency and reproducibility required strict adherence to established protocols. The review process followed the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines (Moher et al., 2009; Liberati et al., 2009), specifically implementing the updated PRISMA 2020 standards (Page et al., 2021). Literature searches targeted leading academic databases relevant to the research scope (Scopus, ScienceDirect, Google Scholar, and nationally accredited Sinta journals). The search window captured publications released between January 2020 and June 2025. Search strategies used Boolean operators to improve precision. Primary keywords and their variations included "marketing-oriented logistics service quality", "marketing capability", "supply chain flexibility", "competitive advantage", "logistics firm performance", and "Indonesia".

The initial population included all scientific articles discussing the selected variables within the operational contexts of logistics and supply chain management. Researchers applied a purposive sampling technique to determine the final sample. The initial search yielded 187 articles. Screening and feasibility assessments narrowed this down to 25 relevant articles. Inclusion criteria required that selected papers must be published between 2020 and 2025, contain empirical data with verifiable methodologies, and explicitly address at least one core research variable. Duplicate records and studies lacking methodological clarity faced immediate exclusion. The procedure involved six structured phases: formulating research questions, conducting systematic searches, screening articles, extracting data, analyzing findings, and drawing conclusions. Content analysis drove the data evaluation phase. This process examined publication trends, methodological approaches, core research focuses, and epistemological gaps regarding the interplay of the primary variables.

The study defined several core constructs based on prior research. Marketing-Oriented Logistics Service Quality represents the integration of logistics delivery and market orientation to fulfill customer expectations through speed, reliability, and information support (Morash, 2001; Fitri et al., 2026; Sudrajat et al., 2025). Marketing Capability defines the organizational capacity to segment markets, target consumers, and implement promotional programs (DeSarbo et al., 2007; Sofiyan et al., 2026).

Supply Chain Flexibility captures the ability to rapidly respond to environmental shifts through adaptable volume, delivery, and resources (Suhartini et al., 2020; Rafsanjani & Vanany, 2025). Competitive Advantage signifies a superior market position achieved through differentiation or cost efficiency (Porter, 1985; Morash, 2001; Permadi et al., 2026). Finally, Logistics Firm Performance measures tangible operational and financial outcomes such as cost efficiency, delivery speed, and profitability (Ginting et al., 2025; Silvia et al., 2025). Synthesizing the reviewed literature allowed the development of a conceptual framework. This model connects Marketing-Oriented Logistics Service Quality (X1), Marketing Capability (X2), and Supply Chain Flexibility (X3) to Logistics Firm Performance (Y), positioning Competitive Advantage (Z) as the mediating variable. The hypothesized relationships are visually mapped below.



**Figure 1.** Theoretical Framework

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Executing the systematic search protocol yielded 25 articles meeting all inclusion criteria. Quantitative methodologies dominated the selected literature. Specifically, 22 articles (88%) used Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) as their primary analytical tool, while 3 articles (12%) applied qualitative or mixed-methods approaches. Target populations primarily consisted of logistics and supply chain firms (60%), followed by manufacturing entities (28%) and e-commerce platforms (12%). All studies were localized within Indonesia, covering diverse regions such as Java, Bali, Sumatra, and national scopes. Publication trends show rapid growth. Only 12% of the articles surfaced between 2020 and 2022, whereas the 2025-2026 window produced 48% of the final sample.

**Table 1.** Research Synthesis Results

| No | Author(s) (Year)                      | Methodology          | Population                        | Key Findings                                      |
|----|---------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | Sudrajat, Waskito, and Purnomo (2025) | Quantitative PLS-SEM | 182 customers of PT Pos Indonesia | Price and service quality significantly influence |

|   |                                                                |                      |                                          |                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---|----------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|   |                                                                |                      | Regional 3 Bandung                       | competitive advantage and firm performance.                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 2 | Sofiyan, Kaihatu, and Sutrisno (2026)                          | Quantitative PLS-SEM | 303 manufacturing companies in East Java | Market uncertainty strongly activates agile marketing capabilities and organizational resilience to enhance supply chain resilience.                                                                        |
| 3 | Permadi, Gaffar, Wibowo, and Sofia (2026)                      | Quantitative PLS-SEM | 188 logistics firms in Indonesia         | Dynamic logistics cluster capabilities alongside logistics collaboration exert a direct positive effect on competitiveness performance.                                                                     |
| 4 | Suhartini, Hidayati, Alsayegh, Rahman, and Kamarulzaman (2020) | Quantitative PLS-SEM | 200 supply chain managers in Indonesia   | Functional and operational logistics quality correlate significantly with market flexibility, and corporate culture moderates the relationship between functional logistics quality and market flexibility. |
| 5 | Kuncoro and Kusumawardhani (2024)                              | Kuantitatif SEM      | Garment SMEs in Pekalongan               | Supply chain agility does not directly affect competitive advantage, but its impact becomes highly significant when mediated by resilience capabilities.                                                    |
| 6 | Ginting, Utami, Riyadi, and Hutahayan (2025)                   | Quantitative PLS-SEM | 345 shipping companies in Indonesia      | Servitization and digitalization positively influence competitiveness and performance, with government support serving as a significant moderator.                                                          |
| 7 | Fitri, Maniah, and Mulyati (2026)                              | Quantitative PLS-SEM | 245 air export companies in Bali         | Capabilities, operational performance, regulations, customer relationships, and costs significantly affect logistics service quality, which ultimately impacts firm performance.                            |

|   |                                            |                                    |                                                              |                                                                                                                                                          |
|---|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 8 | Silvia,<br>Meliala, and<br>Sudrajat (2025) | Kuantitatif<br>cross-<br>sectional | 154 European<br>manufacturing<br>respondents in<br>Indonesia | Competitive advantage<br>successfully mediates the effect of<br>supply chain agility and dynamic<br>capabilities on sustainable<br>business performance. |
|---|--------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Evaluating these findings confirms the originality of this research. Integrating MOLSQ, MC, and SCF into a single predictive model is a new approach. Testing competitive advantage as a specific mediator within the Indonesian logistics sector during the post-pandemic digital era (2020-2025) distinguishes this synthesis from prior fragmentary studies.

### **Marketing-Oriented Logistics Service Quality and Competitive Advantage**

Synthesized data reveals that marketing-oriented logistics service quality leads to positive competitive outcomes. Firms capable of delivering rapid, reliable, and responsive services secure market differentiation that rivals struggle to replicate. Sudrajat, Waskito, and Purnomo (2025) indicated that service quality significantly dictates competitive advantage at PT Pos Indonesia. Digital era customers demand full transparency. Fitri, Maniah, and Mulyati (2026) proved that logistics service quality acts as a mediator translating operational capabilities into export firm performance. Comparing these domestic findings with regional data offers context. Ngo and Nguyen (2023) identified a slightly lower impact coefficient ( $\beta=0.398$ ) in Vietnam compared to Indonesia ( $\beta=0.420$ ), likely due to Vietnam's higher baseline of logistics digitalization. These realities align with the Resource-Based View (Wernerfelt, 1984). Superior service quality functions as an intangible resource that builds customer loyalty and sustainable advantage. The hypothesis positing that MOLSQ positively and significantly affects competitive advantage is supported.

### **Marketing Capability and Competitive Advantage**

Organizations use marketing capabilities to pinpoint market opportunities and construct customer relationships. DeSarbo, Di Benedetto, and Song (2007) emphasized the necessity of precise market segmentation and effective program implementation. Strong marketing capabilities combined with solid logistics infrastructure generate competitive advantages. Sofiyan, Kaihatu, and Sutrisno (2026) showed that agile marketing capabilities serve as countermeasures against market uncertainty. Regional disparities exist here as well. Rahman et al. (2024) noted that marketing capability exerts a stronger influence in Malaysia ( $\beta=0.512$ ) than in Indonesia ( $\beta=0.445$ ), a variance potentially rooted in Malaysia's tighter integration with Singaporean logistics hubs. Capable firms manage their brand reputation. This adaptability validates the dynamic



capabilities theory (Teece et al., 1997), which demands continuous resource reconfiguration in changing environments. The hypothesis stating that MC positively and significantly influences competitive advantage is supported.

### **Supply Chain Flexibility and Competitive Advantage**

Strategic flexibility enables organizations to absorb demand shocks and navigate market volatility. Rafsanjani and Vanany (2025) pinpointed adaptability as a core metric for successful supply chain ambidexterity among Indonesian third-party logistics providers. Suhartini et al. (2020) demonstrated that market flexibility is tied to functional logistics quality and moderated by organizational culture. Somjai and Jermstittiparsert (2023) found a lower impact score for supply chain flexibility in Thailand ( $\beta=0.367$ ) compared to Indonesia's highly variable range (0.320-0.480), highlighting how differing technological adoption rates shape regional outcomes. Kuncoro and Kusumawardhani (2024) discovered a nuanced dynamic within garment SMEs. Supply chain agility fails to influence competitive advantage directly, yet it becomes highly significant when mediated by resilience capabilities. Navigating Indonesia's geography makes flexibility a requirement for local operators.

Human capital quality forms the foundation for executing marketing capabilities and achieving supply chain flexibility. The employability level of vocational education graduates is heavily driven by industry-based curricula and internship experiences (Kwartama, 2026). This readiness remains crucial for supplying the skilled workforce required in the logistics and maritime industries. Ensuring that this human capital stays relevant to Industry 4.0 demands adaptive, data-driven professional development programs for vocational educators. Utilizing artificial intelligence and SWOT analysis bridges the competency gap between educational institutions and industrial practices (Kwartama et al., 2026). The synergy between vocational education and the operational strategies of logistics firms creates the flexibility that yields competitive advantage. The hypothesis suggesting that Supply Chain Flexibility positively and significantly affects competitive advantage is supported.

### **Competitive Advantage and Logistics Firm Performance**

Successfully cultivating a competitive advantage translates into enhanced organizational performance. Permadi et al. (2026) documented how dynamic logistics cluster capabilities and collaborative frameworks directly boost competitiveness. Ginting et al. (2025) identified servitization and digitalization as strategies that improve shipping firm performance, noting that government support significantly moderates this success. Silvia, Meliala, and Sudrajat (2025) confirmed that competitive advantage directly drives sustainable business performance by bridging supply chain

agility and dynamic capabilities. Achieving this advantage requires choosing between cost leadership and differentiation. Morash (2001) argued that cost leadership remains notoriously difficult to maintain, whereas differentiation through customer intimacy can be achieved by using diverse, overlapping capabilities. The hypothesis affirming that competitive advantage positively influences logistics firm performance is supported.

### **The Mediating Role of Competitive Advantage**

Competitive advantage functions as the transmission mechanism linking core capabilities to final performance metrics. Logistics service quality, marketing acumen, and supply chain flexibility do not spontaneously improve financial returns. They must first forge a distinct competitive advantage. Silvia, Meliala, and Sudrajat (2025) validated this mediating role regarding agility and sustainable performance. Kuncoro and Kusumawardhani (2024) identified layered mediation, where agility requires resilience to forge a competitive edge. Permadi et al. (2026) mapped two distinct causal pathways. Firms can pursue an efficiency-based route via collaboration or an innovation-based value creation route using virtual co-creation and value-added logistics. The hypothesis stating that competitive advantage mediates the relationship between MOLSQ, MC, SCF, and logistics firm performance is supported.

## **CONCLUSION**

This Systematic Literature Review synthesizes 25 articles published between 2020 and 2025 to evaluate the Indonesian logistics sector. Marketing-Oriented Logistics Service Quality shows a positive and significant influence on competitive advantage. Focusing on customer satisfaction through speed, reliability, and responsiveness builds market differentiation. Marketing capability also drives this advantage. Strong marketing skills, including precise market segmentation and customer relationship management, help organizations identify opportunities and build customer loyalty. Supply chain flexibility is a third competency that positively and significantly influences competitive advantage. Managing industry dynamics requires adaptable volume, delivery schedules, and resource allocation to handle demand fluctuations. This competitive advantage improves overall logistics firm performance in a positive and significant manner. Organizations using service differentiation or cost efficiency achieve better operational and financial results. Competitive advantage is a mediating variable connecting these three independent capabilities with firm performance. Strategic capabilities do not automatically increase financial returns. They must first generate a competitive edge, which functions as the primary transmission mechanism.

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