



Original article

Agile marketing and its role in achieving marketing Recovery. A Field Study of the Opinion of a Sample of Managers in A Number of Commercial Companies in Zakho Independent Administration

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the impact of lean marketing on marketing recovery in commercial companies operating under the Zakho Autonomous Administration amid unstable market conditions and a lack of guiding scientific research. The study focuses on five lean marketing practices: waste reduction, agility, communication, cost reduction, and innovation with continuous learning. A quantitative research approach was adopted, using a field survey conducted among 79 managers and department heads from 30 companies across various sectors. Data were collected through a standardized questionnaire. The measurement model was assessed using SmartPLS, while descriptive statistics and hypothesis testing were performed with SPSS. Structural equation modeling and direct effects analysis were also applied. The findings reveal a statistically significant positive relationship between lean marketing and marketing recovery, indicating that increased adoption of lean marketing practices enhances companies' ability to recover from market disruptions. Overall, the results confirm that lean marketing strengthens organizational maturity by improving responsiveness, operational performance, and competitive advantage.

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Keywords: Agile Marketing, Marketing Recovery, Commercial Companies, Zakho Independent Administration

التسويق الرشيق ودوره في تحقيق التعافي التسويقي: دراسة ميدانية لآراء عينة من المديرين في عدد من الشركات التجارية في زاخو، إدارة مستقلة

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المُستخلص

تسعى هذه الدراسة الى معرفة تأثير التسويق الرشيق على تعافي التسويق في الشركات التجارية التابعة لإدارة زاخو المستقلة، في ظل ظروف السوق غير المستقرة وقلّة الأبحاث العلمية التي تُوجه ممارسات التسويق نحو التعافي. درس الباحثون خمس ممارسات للتسويق الرشيق قد تُسهم في تعافي التسويق، وهي: الحد من الهدر، والمرونة، والتواصل، وخفض التكاليف، والابتكار والتعلم المستمر. واعتمدوا منهجًا بحثيًا كميًا، وجمع البيانات من خلال مسح ميداني شمل 79 مديرًا ورئيس قسم من 30 شركات تعمل في قطاعات مختلفة. استُخدم استبيان موحد لجمع البيانات، وقُيّم نموذج القياس باستخدام برنامج SmartPLS، بينما أُجريت الإحصاءات الوصفية واختبار الفرضيات باستخدام برنامج SPSS. كما استخدم نمذجة المعادلات الهيكلية وتحليل التأثيرات المباشرة. أظهرت النتائج تأثيرًا إيجابيًا ذا دلالة إحصائية للتسويق الرشيق على تعافي التسويق، ما يعني أنه كلما زاد تبني الشركات لممارسات التسويق الرشيق، تحسّنت قدرتها على التعافي بعد اضطرابات السوق. مما يؤكد أن التسويق الرشيق يعزز نضج المؤسسات من حيث الاستجابة والأداء التشغيلي والميزة التنافسية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: التسويق الرشيق، التعافي التسويقي، الشركات التجارية، إدارة زاخو المستقلة.

1.Introduction

Today's business world is increasingly characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity (VUCA). Constant changes in these conditions, both favorable and unfavorable, force companies to continually adapt their strategies to survive and gain a competitive edge (Moy, 2021). Consequently, traditional marketing approaches based on rigid, long-term planning are becoming less effective, particularly in these constantly turbulent market environments. In contrast, organizations are now expected to adopt more agile, fast-paced, and effective marketing strategies than ever before.

Agile marketing is one of the key strategies that has emerged from this context, applying agile principles such as iterative processes, data-driven decision-making, and cross-functional collaboration to various marketing activities (Kalainanam et al., 2020). Previous research indicates that flexible marketing enhances companies' ability to adapt their marketing campaigns in real time, responding to customer needs and environmental changes through effective responsiveness (Visser et al., 2018; Balamurugan et al., 2025). However, most research to date has been conducted in stable or developed market conditions, while insufficient empirical attention has been paid to the role of flexible marketing during periods of market disruption or recovery.

Market recovery refers to the series of actions taken by struggling companies to win back customers, regain market share, and restore their performance to a stable level after crises or recessions (Schwarz, 2010). Theoretical links have been established between organizational resilience and recovery outcomes (Chalooob & Said, 2024), but evidence demonstrating that flexible marketing practices directly contribute to market recovery remains insufficient.

This gap is particularly pronounced in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, where businesses face a challenging environment characterized by political instability, economic fluctuations, and complex regulations (World Scientific, 2025). These factors lead to deeper and more frequent market disruptions, making market resilience a critical issue for businesses. However, the impact of flexible marketing on market resilience in this specific context has not been adequately researched. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap through a qualitative analysis of the relationship between flexible marketing practices and market resilience among businesses operating in the Zakho Autonomous Administration of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

1.1 Problem Statement

On the one hand, agile marketing is receiving increasing attention from academic and management circles, while on the other hand, its role in supporting market recovery still lacks strong empirical evidence to explain it. More specifically, there is no direct and specific empirical study exploring how agile marketing practices contribute to the market recovery mechanisms of businesses in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, particularly those in the Zakho Independent administration. Businesses in this region constantly face economic instability, declining consumer confidence, and inadequate marketing infrastructure (International Finance Corporation, 2023), making them more vulnerable to market disruptions. Furthermore, cultural and social norms have a significant influence and continue to limit the use of modern marketing practices and agile decision-making processes (Hassan, 2015). Consequently, there is a lack of contextual evidence detailing how businesses in the region apply agile marketing principles to maintain sales, recover from crises, and cope with economic downturns. As a result, the current study intends to fill the gap by providing an empirical, field-based analytical perspective on the mentioned relationship through seeking to answer the question (Does agile Marketing relates to Recovery Marketing in commercial companies in Zakho Independent administration, Kurdistan region of Iraq?).

1.2 Significance of the study

This study represents a significant milestone, empirically combining agile marketing and marketing recovery, thus extending the scope of current marketing theory to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, a developing and volatile region. It also indirectly reveals a significant gap in previous research, which has largely focused on advanced economies, while enhancing the external validity and contextual relevance of existing marketing strategy models. Furthermore, the research highlights agility as a key organizational competency for resilience and recovery, enriching the theoretical understanding of how businesses respond to crises under conditions of uncertainty.

In practical terms, the findings of this research are important not only for business owners and managers but also for policymakers in the Kurdistan Region and similar developing economies. The study identifies the most impactful agile marketing practices for recovery, thereby providing evidence-based guidance for improving crisis response, optimizing resource allocation, and enhancing long-term business sustainability. These findings contribute to more informed decision-making within local business networks and provide insights that are often lacking in global marketing research. The study also lays the groundwork for future comparative studies across other unstable and emerging fields, thus expanding the scope and importance of studies related to crisis marketing.

1.3 Aim of the Study

The primary aim of this study is to investigate and assess the role of agile marketing in achieving marketing recovery in the commercial marketing sector of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The research will be carried out under specific objectives as follows:

1. To identify the key dimensions and practices of agile marketing currently adopted by businesses in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.
2. To assess the current status and key indicators of marketing recovery among the commercial entities surveyed.
3. To empirically determine the nature and extent of the relationship between agile marketing practices and the achievement of marketing recovery.

This paper offers practical recommendations for commercial marketing managers in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq on how to utilize agile marketing to improve resilience and recovery capabilities.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Agile Marketing

The concept of agility aims to achieve perfection, build reliability, and eliminate all processes that do not add value in order to meet customer needs and expectations (Fricke 2010, p41). In agile systems, waste and inefficiency were considered any activity that does not directly contribute to creating goods, services, or value for the customer (Nasiri, 2009, p. 43). Womack and Jones introduced the term "agile systems" to the world in 1990 in their famous book, "The Machine That Changed the World," which led to its popularity in the world of agility. However, the person who actually coined the term "Lean" was Krafcik, a researcher at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who formulated the term "lean" in an article published in 1988 about the shift from mass production to lean production, in which processes are improved by saving time and operating costs" (Al-Aqabi, 2020, p. 59).

From here, the journey of agility began, extending to various other management sciences, including strategic agility, agile human resources, and agile organizations, and permeating their other aspects. The researchers observe that the spread of the principle of agility in all fields, including agile marketing, is evident in the significant attention given to agile marketing in contemporary academic sources. According to researchers, this began with the appearance of the book "The Lean Startup" by Ries (2011), which was a bestseller. In it, he defined the principles of agile marketing, which we will discuss later, along with other interesting points (Umezurike et al., 2025). Organizations that mainly provide services usually encounter a multitude of problems and difficulties, such as competition in the market, unpredictable changes in the marketing environment, and high risks that come from constant and unpredictable technology innovation.

This requires the companies to forecast the changes and prepare for them as a part of their survival, growth, and competitive advantage strategies in the markets through the process of dealing with weaknesses and also taking advantage of suitable market opportunities (Al-Janabi & Al-Jabouri, 2020, p. 68). (The meaning of the term "marketing efficiency" is associated with the idea of utilizing resources without any wastage, therefore, it refers to the ultimate level of efficiency in resources

utilization). “The content of the agile system generally revolves around achieving high levels of performance while minimizing the use of time, storage, labor, and capital. In other words, it aims to achieve the greatest possible output using the least possible input. It has many concepts according to the researchers' perspectives and different schools of thought and management, including agile marketing. It represents a new approach to management aimed at reducing waste and extravagance” (Gera et al., 2019, p. 40). Moi and Cabiddu (2020) believe that it is a collaborative approach focused on achieving objectives, centered around customer needs, and regularly checking for weak or unnecessary steps to modify and improve processes. Accordingly, Ali et al. (2021) mentioned that it is the tool used by the organization for the operational definition of agile marketing.

Ahmed and Baiz (2024) concluded that agile marketing as a set of methods through which the organization eliminates all forms of waste that do not add value, unifies efforts, and reorganizes all marketing efforts in the shortest possible time to adapt to the rapid changes in the market and effectively meet customer aspirations and expectations.

Most dimensions of agile marketing have been identified and discussed in contemporary marketing literature. These dimensions have emerged as the result of a long process of interpreting and analyzing the theoretical and empirical frameworks that support agile practices, especially the ones about adapting to unstable organizational environments and using them in marketing contexts. Hoogveld and Koster (2016) stated that the primary dimensions of agile marketing reflect the main behavioral and structural features of marketing teams that make it possible for them to react quickly and efficiently to changes in the market. Other researchers, including Moy (2020) and Moy et al. (2018), have taken the dimensions further by continually adopting and developing them to make sure they are suitable for both strategic and operational marketing contexts. Therefore, this research drew on the already existing dimensions of agile marketing which comprise five major concepts:

Reducing waste by getting rid of unnecessary processes and activities that do not create any value. **Adaptability**, meaning the organization's capability to rapidly change in line with market dynamics. **Communication**: promoting the effective, clear, and ongoing exchange of information within marketing teams. **Cost reduction** without sacrifice of value creation, concentrating on efficiency and not at the cost of customer or organizational value. **Innovation and continuous learning**: focusing on iterative improvement and the development of organizational knowledge as a key element in this regard.

Recent empirical studies have confirmed these core dimensions of agile marketing. A case study by Aramburu and Sainz (2020) on an international digital company, for instance, points out the main theoretical dimensions: adaptability, speed, and iterative learning as the essential ones of agile marketing capability.

2.2 Marketing Recovery

“Marketing recovery is an indispensable strategy for an organization's service performance to keep or even enhance the customer satisfaction. It is very hard to provide perfect service all the time due to the chance of service breakdowns and thus it is necessary for service providers to have a well-grounded plan for recovering from and compensating for these failures” (Mattsson & Remin, 2014). Hence, it is that process which is intentionally and methodically conducted by the organization to restore the dissatisfied customers to a state of satisfaction after a service failure which does not meet

expectations (Komunda and Ousarenkhai, 2012). To put it differently, the term covers all the actions which are taken by service providers in the wake of service failure or poor service quality (Sciarelli et al., 2017). In the same manner, Msosa (2019) sees service recovery as the organization's set of actions and strategies that are to deal with the problems set off by service failures affecting the customers' views of the organization and then compensating them, offering discounts or free services, or apologizing for any adverse effects that customers may have experienced in their dealings with the organization concerning its products or services. Ultimately, Cao et al. (2021) term it as the procedures through which organizations take steps to reimburse customers who have suffered due to errors made in the service and to help regain their trust.

The majority of the scholars (Sciarelli et al., 2017; Dietrich 2019; Inyang, 2015; Mahmoud, Lotfa, 2021) have come to an agreement to use the four main dimensions of compensation, apology, responsiveness, and the interpretation of the customer's voice for evaluating marketing recovery. The four major aspects that most researchers (Sciarelli et al., 2017 ; Dietrich 2019; Inyang, 2015; Mahmoud, Lotfa, 2021) have reached a consensus on in the context of marketing recovery evaluation are compensation, which consists of providing solutions, either tangible or intangible, to cater to customer dissatisfaction; apology, which is the organization's recognition of the issue and showing of regret; responsiveness, which is a company's speed and effectiveness during service failure; and problem-solving, which deals with identifying the root cause and applying lasting solutions. The mentioned elements combined create an extensive framework that can both assess and enhance the customer service recovery strategies, ultimately leading to the restoration of customer's trust and loyalty. The following explained these dimensions:

1. Compensation: One of the methods that can be used to achieve service recovery is compensating affected customers. However, it is important for service employees to engage in proactive behavior throughout the service recovery process. These actions may therefore reduce the financial burden on the organization or the loss of resources that could have been avoided if other methods of achieving service recovery had been discovered and implemented (Inyang, 2015).

2. Apology: "An apology is the first step in achieving service recovery and thus restoring equity from the service provider's perspective. This is done by at least acknowledging that the customer has been inconvenienced, even if the service organization is not responsible for the transgression. Therefore, apologies indicate the service organization's acceptance of responsibility for negative events and include some expression of regret. They also indicate an apology from the employee rather than an apology from the organization" (Sciarelli, 2017, p. 25). Dietrich (2019) suggests that an apology is better than remaining silent, denying, or justifying, and also emphasizes that an apology is more effective in increasing customer satisfaction than compensation.

3. Quick Responsiveness: This is considered one of the basic criteria for achieving service recovery and thus achieving quality in banking services, due to its ability to perform correctly, accurately, and consistently. Responsiveness means urging the reduction of time spent on activities, but also allocating sufficient time that each activity deserves (Mahmoud, Lotfa, 2021). Therefore, Siarelli et al., (2017) confirms that this strategy refers to the service provider's quick response to a service failure or customer complaint.

4. Assistance and Problem Solving: Levesque and McDougall (2000) indicate that assistance involves taking action to resolve a problem, and it is considered one of the most effective strategies

in service recovery because it provides customers with the original purpose for purchasing the service. “Assistance includes actions taken to correct an unsatisfactory service, and therefore, the assistance strategy is considered by many organizations to be the most effective because it can restore the customer's original intention to consume a particular service offered to them” (Andersson, 2018).

2.3 Agile Marketing and Achieving Marketing Recovery

The use of agile marketing principles is very important for the effective marketing recovery during the crises or the major market fall periods. The agile marketing practices are very effective in the recovery process because of their basic features which are speed, flexibility, and data-driven decision-making (Ewel, 2020). For instance, when a business that is operating in a very unstable environment like the Kurdistan Region of Iraq faces market shock, such as sudden contraction or political instability, the traditional marketing response which is often slow is not only inadequate but could also worsen the situation by increasing the losses (Schwarz, 2010).

In this context, agile marketing gives the marketing department the crisis management tool to act, by almost instantly responding through the reallocation and prioritization of resources, plus the launching of several small and targeted campaigns to test the new market reality (Ngoc, 2025). The iterative and experimental aspect of this method leads to less risk of large-scale, pre-planned recovery efforts while at the same time allowing the firm to discover and enhance the most effective methods of regaining lost market share and rapidly restoring customer trust (Hill Web Creations, 2025).

“On top of that, employing agile marketing in cross-functional teams would make it possible for the recovery plan to be in line with the sales, product development, and customer service departments of the company. Such a situation would mean that the fast and unified response from the entire organization would be the key factor for both recovery and building resilience in the long run” (Katara, 2022, p. 99).

Agile marketing, by its nature, constantly keeps an eye on the market situation after the crisis and adjusts the marketing mix in very short terms, thus, changing the marketing function from a mere “cost center” to a dynamic capability that actively drives the company back to its fullest potential (Chalob & Saeed, 2024; IGI Global, 2025). In the light of the above-explained situation, the subsequent major hypothesis is put forward:

H1: The Agile marketing positively and significantly impacts marketing recovery?

H1_a: Reducing waste positively and significantly impacts marketing recovery?

H1_b: Adaptability positively and significantly impacts marketing recovery?

H1_c: Communication positively and significantly impacts marketing recovery?

H1_c: Cost reduction positively and significantly impacts marketing recovery?

H1_d: Innovation and continuous learning positively and significantly impacts marketing recovery?

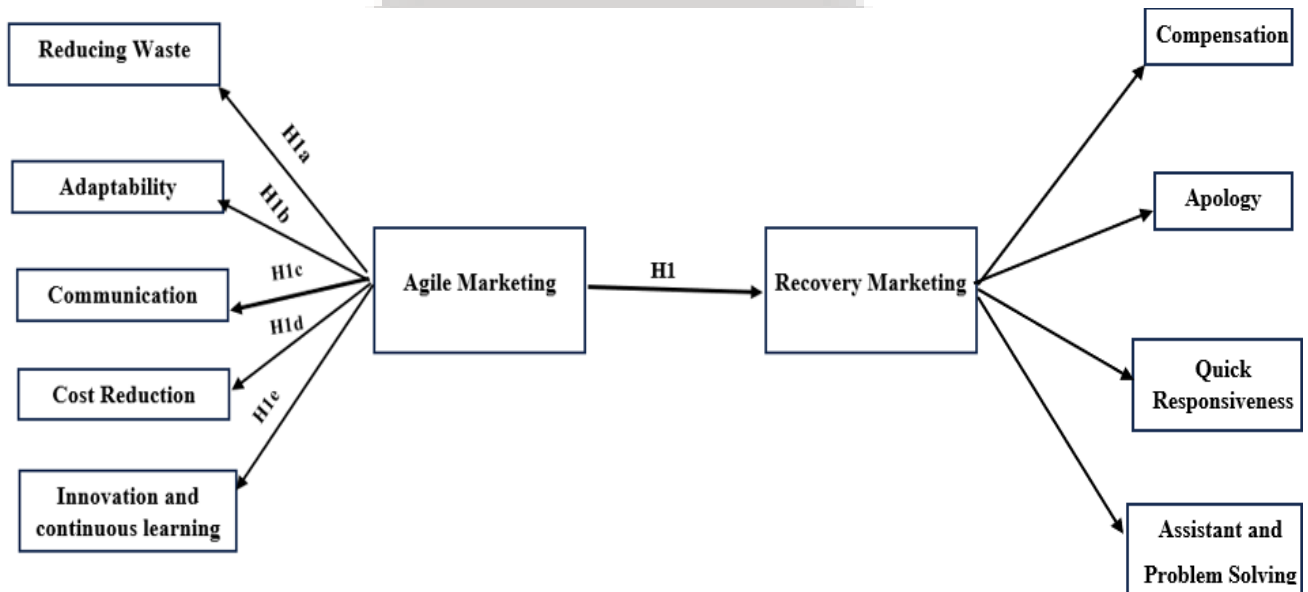


Figure 1. Proposed Model

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This research adopts a quantitative, cross-sectional, field-based approach to examine the connection between marketing recovery and agile marketing in commercial firms located in Zakho, Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The use of a quantitative methodology allows for the statistical analysis of the relationship between the two main variables and the systematic evaluation of the respondents' perceptions. The descriptive analysis was employed to outline the attributes of the research population, while the inferential statistics were applied to test the causal relationships.

3.2 Population and Sample

This research is specifically aimed at the medium and large-sized commercial companies of different sectors that are operating in the independent region of Zakho in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. The reason for selecting this area is due to the fact that it has a large and diverse number of these companies, as it is a border region with Turkey, the source being the Central Statistical Organization (2023). The research sample consisted of 78 managers and administrative leaders from 30 companies that were selected accordingly with the following criteria: (1) The company must have been in existence for a minimum period of 3 years, (2) it must have at least a basic organizational structure that includes a marketing department, and (3) it must be a member of the Zakho Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

In this research, a sample size of 50 respondents has been determined; nonetheless, the selected method is in line with the study's exploratory nature and the use of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) as the analytical technique. Hair et al. (2014) described this method as being particularly suitable for small sample sizes when the model is complex. Thus, it is a viable solution for studies of this kind, mainly for real-life situations like micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), where it is difficult to collect data. Provided that the model has shown reliability and validity at acceptable levels, which this research has done for all variables, the outcomes can be interpreted as strong and significant. Consequently, the number of participants involved is thought to be adequate for the analysis and the conclusions reached concerning trading companies in the self-governing administration of Zakho, Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

3.3 Data Collection and Procedures

The success of research depends on the tools used to collect and analyze data to answer its questions. Therefore, it should rely on one of the scientific research tools to arrive at accurate results. "The questionnaire is an effective tool for collecting quantitative and qualitative data from a large sample of respondents" (Dahirsh, 2025, p. 527). The primary tool for data collection in this research was a questionnaire, together with Google Forms for online data collection as a secondary tool aimed at getting as many responses as possible. The questionnaire was given to seventy-eight (78) managers and administrative leaders from commercial companies in the independent administration of Zakho. The purpose of this data collection was to evaluate how the two research variables agile marketing and marketing recovery were applied in the business environment context.

The respondents who filled out the questionnaire were the general managers of each company and the heads of administrative departments such as marketing, sales, purchasing, and production who were directly involved in this field and were considered the most knowledgeable about the company's marketing and operational activities. The selection of respondents was made to guarantee that the provided answers were relevant and indicative of the company's situation.

The data was collected through three different parts of a structured questionnaire. The initial part was a demographic section that consisted of age, gender, educational level, and marketing experience in years. The second part, which was taken from the works of Hoogveld and Koster (2016), Moy et al. (2018), and Ewel (2020) with some modifications, measured the dimensions of agile marketing through five main key areas: waste elimination, flexibility, communication, cost cutting with greater value, and ever-newness and learning. A five-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) was used for rating purposes on each item. The third section, which was based on the studies of Schwarz (2010, p. 24) and Chaloob and Saeed (2024, 57), evaluated marketing recovery with the perspective of the company's capability to regain market share and to trust the consumer by making an apology and operating the product through rapid responsiveness. Regular follow-up to address problems was also evaluated. The items in this section were also rated on a five-point Likert scale.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The demographic findings in Table (1) reveal that the male participants were the majority (62.8%), while the females represented 37.2% of the sample. Most of the participants (43.6%) were in the 30-

39 age group, which constitutes a relatively young and active workforce for businesses in Zakho. The majority (85%) had bachelor's degrees, followed by 21.5% with master's degrees, which indicates a well-educated sample capable of participating in strategic marketing practices. In terms of their time in the current job, 47.4% of the total participants had two to five years of experience, while 33.4% had more than five years, which points to a good mix of junior and experienced people. In the same vein, 51.3% of the participants had been with their company for between three and six years, which is an indicator of stability in the organization and the availability of institutional knowledge. From the perspective of job titles, the sales staff were the largest group, with 25.6%, followed by administrative staff with 23.1%, and marketing staff with 21.8%. Hence, the sample consisted of a large number of persons who were directly involved in marketing, sales, and decision-making, which is a key factor for the study of agile marketing and marketing recovery.

Table 1. Demographic information of Respondents

Category	Subcategory	Frequency (n=78)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	49	62.8%
	Female	29	37.2%
Age (Years)	20–29 years	21	26.9%
	30–39 years	34	43.6%
	40 years and above	23	29.5%
Academic Qualification	High school or less	5	6.41%
	Diploma	10	12.8%
	Bachelor's Degree	51	65.4%
	Postgraduate	12	15.38%
Experience in Current Position	Less than 2 years	15	19.2%
	2–5 years	37	47.4%
	More than 5 years	26	33.4%
Experience in the Company	Less than 3 years	12	15.4%
	3–6 years	40	51.3%
	More than 6 years	26	33.3%
Job Title	Manager	18	23.1%
	Head of Administration Department	13	16.7%
	Marketing Officer	17	21.8%
	Sales Officer	20	25.6%

Table 1. Demographic information of Respondents

Category	Subcategory	Frequency (n=78)	Percentage (%)
	Purchasing Officer	10	12.8%

Source: SPSS v. 27

4.2 Measurement Model Assessment

Table 4 displays the results for the outer loadings of the measurement model. This indicates the reliability and convergent validity of all the variables measured in this study. The loadings for all the items are above the minimum threshold of 0.70, with a range from 0.788 to 0.889. This means that every indicator is a very good representation of its corresponding latent variable. All Cronbach's alpha values for all variables range between 0.827 and 0.888, and the composite reliability coefficients range between 0.885 and 0.929, which are well above the recommended levels of 0.70 and 0.80, respectively. Thus, these results confirm internal consistency reliability. Similarly, the average variance extracted (AVE) values range between 0.658 and 0.767, exceeding the threshold of 0.50, indicating sufficient convergent validity. These results support the fact that more than 65% of the variance within the indicators of each variable is explained by the underlying latent variable. Among all the variables, the helping, problem-solving, and communication variables showed the highest measurement quality (CR = 0.929, AVE = 0.767) and (CR = 0.920, AVE = 0.742), respectively. The overall results indicate that all variables within the model demonstrate sufficient reliability and validity. Therefore, the measurement model was deemed appropriate for structural model analysis.

Table 2. Outer Loading

Variables	Code	Outer Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Reducing Waste	RW1	0.812	0.846	0.893	0.676
	RW2	0.834			
	RW4	0.795			
	RW5	0.839			
Adaptability	A1	0.816	0.858	0.904	0.703
	A2	0.842			
	A3	0.875			
	A4	0.806			
Communication	Co1	0.822	0.879	0.920	0.742

	Co2	0.887			
	Co3	0.851			
	Co4	0.872			
Cost Reduction	CR1	0.788			
	CR2	0.826	0.836	0.890	0.670
	CR3	0.851			
	CR4	0.804			
Continuous innovation and learning	CIL1	0.867			
	CIL2	0.846	0.873	0.918	0.737
	CIL3	0.889			
	CIL4	0.837			
Compensation	C1	0.791			
	C2	0.835	0.827	0.885	0.658
	C3	0.818			
	C4	0.801			
Apology	A1	0.844			
	A2	0.889	0.871	0.915	0.728
	A3	0.851			
	A4	0.835			
Quick Responsiveness	QR1	0.812			
	QR2	0.847	0.853	0.902	0.698
	QR3	0.859			
	QR4	0.816			
Assistance and Problem Solving	APS1	0.867			
	APS2	0.889	0.888	0.929	0.767
	APS3	0.867			
	APS4	0.879			

Source: SMART PLS v. 4.1.1

4.3 Discriminant Validity

Table 3 presents the discriminant validity of the variables using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. Accordingly, the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE), shown on the diagonal in bold, is greater than any of the correlation coefficients between the variables in the corresponding rows and columns. This means that each variable shares more variance with its own indicators than with the other variables in the model. The values on the diagonals (0.811–0.876) were all higher than the inter-variable correlation coefficients (0.496–0.662). These results indicate that discriminant validity is established. This confirms that the variables are empirically distinct in this study, and that the measurement model exhibits sufficient construct validity to proceed to the structural model assessment.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity (Fornell-Larcker Criterion)

Constru cts	R W	A	Co	C R	CI L	C	Ap	Q R	A PS
RW	0.822								
A	0.598	0.838							
Co	0.542	0.611	0.861						
CR	0.607	0.584	0.566	0.819					
CIL	0.571	0.637	0.621	0.589	0.858				
C	0.523	0.541	0.564	0.508	0.555	0.811			
Ap	0.496	0.557	0.579	0.524	0.586	0.512	0.853		
QR	0.539	0.584	0.632	0.598	0.609	0.548	0.601	0.836	
APS	0.512	0.573	0.655	0.586	0.628	0.563	0.609	0.662	0.876

Source: SMART PLS v. 4.1.1

Note: RW (Reducing Waste) A (Adaptability) Co (Communication) CR (Cost Reduction), CIL (Continuous Innovation and Learning), C (Compensation), Ap (Apology), QR (Quick Responsiveness), APS (Assistance and Problem Solving).

4.4 Structural Model and Testing Hypotheses

The testing of this structural model aims to examine the level of significance and strength of the direct relationships between the variables. “The T-statistic value being higher than 1.96 and the p-value being less than 0.05 (Hair et al., 2021, p. 117; Latan et al., 2017, p. 71). indicate that all hypotheses were supported as Per their summary in Table 6. The path coefficients indicate that waste reduction ($\beta = 0.312$, $p < 0.001$), adaptability ($\beta = 0.298$, $p < 0.001$), communication ($\beta = 0.341$, $p < 0.001$), cost reduction ($\beta = 0.287$, $p < 0.001$), and continuous innovation and learning ($\beta = 0.356$, $p < 0.001$) all have positive and significant effects on marketing performance recovery. Of all these factors, the most significant were continuous innovation and learning as well as communication, and they seem to be essential in boosting the marketing performance recovery attempts.

The R^2 value of 0.72 shows that the five dimensions of agile marketing account for 72% of the variation in marketing recovery, which is considered very excellent explanatory power (Chin, 1998, p. 323; Hair et al., 2021, p. 118). ‘The f^2 effect sizes range from 0.071 to 0.104, which means that the contribution of each variable is small to medium. In addition, the Q^2 value of 0.48 for predictive relevance is positive, indicating that the model is quite effective in terms of prediction’ (Henseler et al., 2009, p. 301). Thus, the findings combined give an indication of the strength of the structural model and prove that the dimensions of agile marketing are key factors in the marketing recovery process.

Table 6. Structural Model and Testing Hypotheses

Hypotheses	Relationship Between Variables	Path Coefficient (β)	T-Statistics	P-Value	f^2	R^2	Q^2
H1	Agile Marketing → Marketing Recovery	0.612	9.274	0.000	0.388	0.72	0.48
H1a	Reducing Waste → Marketing Recovery	0.312	4.873	0.000	0.082		
H1b	Adaptability → Marketing Recovery	0.298	4.612	0.000	0.076		
H1c	Communication → Marketing Recovery	0.341	5.224	0.000	0.097		

H1d	Cost Reduction → Marketing Recovery	0.287	4.336	0.0 00	0. 071
H1e	Continuous innovation and learning → Marketing Recovery	0.356	5.507	0.0 00	0. 104

Source: SMART PLS v. 4.1.1

5. Discussion

The results of this study highlight that agile marketing has a strong and positive impact on the marketing recovery of businesses in the Zakho Independent Administration. In other words, the adoption of agile marketing practices was found to be directly proportional to market recovery after disruptions, which in turn contributes to the continued performance of businesses under unstable conditions. More specifically, businesses that implement agile planning, continuous learning, effective communication, and waste reduction practices are better able to respond to market shocks and recover their marketing performance.

This finding is consistent with previous empirical studies that have indicated that agile marketing can be an important factor in a company's competitive advantage during periods of uncertainty (Moy, 2021; Katari, 2022). These results reinforce the view that resilience and adaptability are recovery-oriented capabilities that enable businesses to adapt quickly to environmental changes and mitigate the negative impact of market disruptions.

Moreover, the analysis confirms that all the dimensions of agile marketing examined (waste reduction, adaptability, communication, cost reduction, innovation, and continuous learning) significantly contribute to marketing recovery. This implies that marketing recovery is not the result of a single practice, but rather a combination of agile capabilities belonging to an integrated set. The emphasis placed on adaptability aligns with dynamic capability theory, which considers responsiveness and resilience as the two key mechanisms for managing disruptive environments (Kao, 2011). Similarly, the benefits of innovation and continuous learning underscore the necessity of knowledge generation and methodological improvement in the process of sustaining recovery procedures (Eol, 2020; Ngoc, 2025; IGI Global, 2025).

Furthermore, the strong impact of communication and cost reduction reinforces previous studies that have highlighted the importance of coordinated messaging, optimal resource utilization, and trust restoration during marketing recovery periods (Schwartz, 2010; Ciarelli et al., 2017). The findings also support those of Shallup and Saeed (2024), indicating that decentralized decision-making and team autonomy—key features of agile marketing—contribute to successful strategic market recovery. Overall, the study underscores the importance of agile marketing as a strategic driver of market recovery in the resource-limited and often disruptive environment of Zakho Autonomous Administration, providing empirical support for its relevance in volatile and developing markets.

6. Theoretical and Practical Contributions

This paper broadens the comprehension of agile marketing as a dynamic capability by assimilating Cao's (2011) theory of dynamic capabilities and the knowledge creation theory (IGI Global, 2025). The study provides the first empirical evidence linking agile marketing dimensions to marketing recovery in the context of a developing region that has been neglected in the literature. Besides, the paper breaks marketing recovery down into five sub-dimensions, thus presenting a very detailed view for the first time about the working of agility in internal processes and customer engagement strategies.

From the perspective of management, the results provide practical suggestions for the business leaders not only in Zakho but also in similar markets. The managers should implement the agile marketing framework that includes the collaboration of different departments, adaptability of planning, continuous feedback, and effectiveness in terms of costs. The said methods would double the responsiveness of an organization to the market and would also provide excellent recovery strategies after crises or market shocks. Moreover, the capabilities would be further strengthened through the organization of training sessions devoted to encouraging innovation, conducting rapid experiments, and having good internal communication.

7. Limitations and Directions for Future Studies

This paper presents a plethora of interesting points but at the same time, it carries some limitations that have to be mentioned. To start with, the sample was only consisting of companies in Zakho. Thus, the findings cannot be generalized or applied to other contexts or sectors. Future studies could improve external validity by broadening their sampling to include firms from different sectors and areas. Secondly, the present research used a cross-sectional method, only one time period was covered. Longitudinal studies would be able to illustrate the temporal change of agile marketing practices and the recovery process. Third, only direct relationships were analyzed, leaving out the possibility of some variables playing mediating or moderating roles such as digital transformation, customer engagement, or organizational culture. This can be the way forward for the researchers to come up with a more comprehensive model. Additionally, qualitative research through case studies or focus groups could be a way to discover how agility is actively employed in marketing functions revealing possibly the contextual factors that might not be captured by quantitative models.

8. Conclusion

The use of agile marketing in winning back a significant portion of the commercial market in the independent district of Zakho is the main point of this study. The most important factors for getting out of the crisis and keeping on going with the rest of the market were communication, flexibility, innovation, and cutting down on expenses. Companies that exhibit these traits will be able to recover faster, feel more assured, and push for higher realizable value. The implications of these findings are twofold, theoretical and practical, reinforcing the position of agile marketing as a strategic enabler of resilience and recovery. Fast-moving markets still pose a danger to those who do not apply the principles of agile marketing; thus, it is not just a source of competitive advantage but also a prerequisite for survival and sustainable growth.

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