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Article

The Mediating Effect of Marketing Agility on Business Model Innovation and Management Performance

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Abstract: Business model innovation changes how a firm creates and captures value, but redesign alone does not explain how managers convert new arrangements into sustained performance. This conceptual research paper develops a conditional mediation framework in which marketing agility connects an implemented business model change with subsequent business-unit outcomes. Drawing on business model research, dynamic capabilities, organizational learning, and marketing scholarship, the paper distinguishes agility that precedes innovation from agility that develops during its implementation. The proposed mechanism operates when a redesigned business model improves access to customer information and the ability to revise market-facing decisions. Marketing agility then supports repeated interpretation, experimentation, and resource adjustment, potentially improving customer retention, implementation effectiveness, and profitability. These benefits depend on the content of the innovation, the interpretability of market feedback, and the costs of repeated adaptation. Six propositions explain why the indirect relationship may differ across business model components and why short-term financial effects can diverge from longer-term outcomes. A prospective research design specifies temporal separation, distinct measures, alternative causal directions, and the assumptions required for mediation analysis. The contribution is a theoretically derived explanation of when marketing agility can transmit the consequences of business model innovation, rather than an empirical estimate of an established effect. For managers, the framework shifts attention from adopting agile routines in isolation to aligning information access, decision authority, and performance evaluation with the redesigned business model.

Keywords: business model innovation; marketing agility; management performance; dynamic capabilities; mediation; conceptual research

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1. Introduction

A business can introduce a subscription, replace intermediaries with direct customer relationships, or reorganize a partner network without improving its performance. Each change alters the structure through which value is offered and captured, yet its consequences depend on what the organization subsequently learns and does. Business model innovation (BMI) therefore raises an implementation question alongside a design question. Teece treats business models as arrangements connecting value creation with value capture, while Zott and Amit emphasize the configuration of interdependent activities [1,2]. A promising configuration creates opportunities; it does not guarantee that managers will recognize changing demand or allocate resources effectively after launch.

Marketing agility (MA) offers a possible explanation for this gap. Kalaignanam and colleagues conceptualize it around rapid iteration between understanding market conditions and carrying out marketing decisions [3]. This process can help a business refine customer segments, revise channels, adjust offers, and stop ineffective initiatives.

Its relevance extends beyond campaign speed because these decisions connect a business model to customers' actual responses. Nevertheless, faster activity can also generate inconsistent offers, duplicated expenditure, and premature conclusions. The pertinent question is whether agility helps managers make consequential adaptations after business model change, and under what conditions those adaptations produce worthwhile outcomes.

Existing research supplies reasons to investigate this relationship without settling its direction. The BMI–performance literature includes positive aggregate associations and meaningful contextual variation [4]. Marketing agility studies examine several antecedents and outcomes, including innovation capabilities, competitive advantage, and profitability. Other work places agility before BMI or treats it as a moderator of business model change [5,6,7]. These models are informative but cannot be relabeled as evidence that BMI improves performance through subsequent MA. A mediation argument requires a specific sequence: an implemented change alters marketing behavior, and that behavioral change contributes to later outcomes.

This paper asks how and when marketing agility can mediate the relationship between business model innovation and management performance. The unit of analysis is a business unit operating a distinguishable business model. Management performance is used here to mean realized business-unit outcomes associated with managerial execution, including operational effectiveness, market results, and financial returns. It does not denote an individual manager's competence or appraisal score. Organizational performance research supports separating outcome dimensions rather than treating all favorable results as interchangeable [8,9]. This distinction prevents a tautology in which an agile process is judged successful merely because it is fast.

The central argument is conditional. BMI can increase marketing agility when the new configuration makes customer information accessible and permits meaningful changes in market-facing decisions. Subsequent agility can improve performance by reducing persistent mismatches between the business model and customer requirements. However, this route weakens when implementation creates dependency, obscures feedback, or requires expensive repeated adjustments. The same redesign may also affect performance directly through its cost structure or contractual terms. Accordingly, the proposed framework retains direct effects and recognizes both favorable and unfavorable consequences over time.

The paper contributes a temporal distinction between agility that helps create a business model and agility that helps operate a changed one. It also explains why the content of BMI matters for the proposed mediation: a redesign that changes customer interfaces presents different opportunities from a value-capture redesign that leaves customer information and marketing decision rights unchanged. Finally, it specifies observations that could challenge the argument, including unchanged post-implementation agility, reverse temporal ordering, and benefits explained entirely by lower transaction costs. The following sections clarify the constructs, explain the conceptual methodology, develop six propositions, and set out a research design capable of distinguishing these possibilities.

2. Literature Review and Theoretical Foundations

2.1. Business Model Innovation as Implemented Architectural Change

BMI concerns consequential changes in the arrangements through which a business creates, delivers, and captures value. Foss and Saebi show that the literature varies in its definitions, levels of analysis, and treatment of novelty [10,11]. This variation matters because a new advertising message, a product improvement, and a reorganization of the revenue system are different interventions. The focal BMI episode must implement a novel, nontrivial change to value creation, delivery, or capture components or their architecture; routine campaign revisions and financing changes that leave this

architecture intact do not qualify. An unimplemented strategic intention cannot expose customers or employees to the proposed new configuration.

An activity-system perspective makes complementarity central. Altering who performs an activity can change the information available to another participant, the incentives to share it, and the cost of revising the offering [2]. This perspective justifies examining the architecture of exchange rather than counting innovations indiscriminately. It does not imply that every novel design is profitable or that marketing behavior is its sole transmission mechanism.

Measurement should preserve this distinction. Clauss develops BMI measures covering value creation, value proposition, and value capture innovation [12]. These domains can change together, but their effects need not be identical. Latifi and colleagues investigate BMI and SME performance through intermediary efficiency, organizational, and revenue-related mechanisms [13]. Such research makes a general point relevant here: identifying a relationship between BMI and performance leaves open the organizational processes that transmit it. Marketing agility is proposed as one such process, especially where the redesigned business model changes customer contact and the scope for adaptation.

2.2. Marketing Agility and Adjacent Capabilities

Marketing agility concerns rapid iteration between market interpretation and marketing action [3]. It should be distinguished from possession of a flexible technology platform, the use of short project cycles, and general willingness to change. A firm may collect extensive customer information but fail to act on it. Another may launch frequent campaigns without reconsidering the evidence behind them. In both cases, visible activity can obscure a weak connection between sensing and execution. The present framework treats MA as a repeatable organizational process whose enactment can vary after a BMI episode, rather than as an immutable managerial trait.

The literature offers complementary perspectives on its development. Gomes and colleagues develop an international marketing agility framework linking reasoning, learning, and action [14]. Moi and Cabiddu examine the development of agile marketing capabilities through a qualitative maturity framework [15]. These contributions support attention to organizational arrangements and learning. Their constructs and settings still need to be considered individually: an international-market framework and a tourism-sector capability model do not establish a universal BMI–MA relationship.

Dynamic capabilities provide a useful overarching explanation. Teece's account links opportunity recognition, commitment, and organizational transformation, while subsequent work explicitly connects dynamic capabilities with business models [16,17]. Teece, Peteraf, and Leih also examine organizational agility under uncertainty [18]. The present argument uses these ideas to explain adaptation, but preserves the narrower market-facing domain of MA. Strategic agility concerns the firm's broader strategic direction; marketing agility concerns how market information and marketing decisions are repeatedly connected. Neither construct should be substituted for the other solely because both involve speed or flexibility.

2.3. Performance, Learning, and the Cost of Adjustment

Performance is the consequence to be explained, not part of the definition of agility. Financial performance captures economic returns; market outcomes capture customer and competitive responses; operational outcomes capture execution quality. These dimensions may move at different rates and even in opposing directions [9]. For example, better retention can coexist with lower current profit when adaptation requires costly service changes. Researchers must therefore specify the outcome, comparison period, and level of analysis before claiming that an agile unit performs better.

Organizational learning also introduces a temporal tension. March's analysis of exploration and exploitation explains why learning processes can favor familiar activities whose benefits are realized quickly [19]. Applied here, this suggests that a business may optimize an existing marketing routine while missing a more consequential change in its

business model. The extension is theoretical: MA becomes useful when iteration improves the quality of market decisions, not simply when it increases the number of low-risk adjustments. Gibson and Birkinshaw's research on contextual ambidexterity provides a related basis for considering how adaptability can coexist with discipline [20]. It does not establish the mediation proposed in this paper.

Direct evidence on MA further cautions against a uniform performance claim. Agag and colleagues report different short-term and long-term profitability relationships, including a negative direct short-term relationship and a positive longer-term one; customer satisfaction plays different mediating roles across those horizons [21]. These are findings from their models and settings, rather than proof of a universal lag. They nevertheless motivate a framework that separates immediate adjustment costs from later benefits and distinguishes an indirect route from the total relationship with performance.

2.4. What the Existing Evidence Does and Does Not Establish

The literature contains several causal orderings that must remain distinct. Christofi and colleagues examine BMI as a mediator between foreign-market conditions and international performance; international marketing agility moderates the links from those market conditions to BMI [6]. Khan and colleagues examine international marketing agility in relation to cost leadership and BMI [7]. Clauss and colleagues place strategic agility before BMI and performance and find differences among BMI dimensions [5]. These studies make reverse or reciprocal ordering plausible. They do not invalidate post-implementation mediation, but they require it to be justified by the timing and content of the focal episode.

Research connecting data-driven innovation capabilities, marketing agility, and competitive advantage supplies a closer mediation analogy, although its antecedent and outcome differ from those specified here [22]. Table 1 summarizes the boundaries among the focal constructs. Table 2 compares selected evidence by direction rather than arranging studies as if they tested one common model. Together, these distinctions identify the theoretical task: explain a post-redesign process while preserving credible alternative explanations.

Table 1. Construct Boundaries Used in the Conceptual Framework. Operational Examples Are Proposed Indicators, Not a Newly Validated Measurement Scale.

Construct	Focal meaning	Possible evidence	Excluded interpretation
Business model innovation	Implemented change in value architecture	Dated changes to activities, offers, channels, or revenue logic	Campaign novelty alone
Marketing agility	Rapid iteration between market interpretation and marketing action	Decision-cycle duration, evidence reviews, and enacted revisions	Speed without learning
Management performance	Business-unit outcomes of execution	Profit margins, retention, service quality, and goal attainment	Individual manager appraisal
Enabling conditions	Prior ability to interpret information and authorize action	Data access, delegated authority, and coordination arrangements	Performance embedded in the predictor

Table 2. Selected Research and Its Relevance to the Proposed Mediation. The Relationships Shown Summarize the Cited Studies, Not Results of the Present Paper.

Study	Relationship examined	Relevant insight	Transfer limit
Ilyas et al. [4]	BMI and firm performance	Positive aggregate relationship with institutional variation	Does not isolate MA mediation
Clauss et al. [5]	Strategic agility, BMI, performance	BMI dimensions have different roles	Agility precedes BMI
Christofi et al. [6]	Market conditions, BMI, international performance	International MA moderates market conditions–BMI links	MA is a moderator, not the mediator
Khan et al. [7]	International MA, cost leadership, BMI	MA can precede business model change	Reverse ordering to the focal path
Alghamdi and Agag [22]	Data-driven innovation, MA, competitive advantage	Longitudinal mediation analogue	Different antecedent and outcome
Agag et al. [21]	MA, satisfaction, profitability	Relationships differ by time horizon	Does not test BMI as antecedent

3. Methodology

This study uses conceptual theory development through a focused integration of relevant research. Its purpose is to specify a mechanism, clarify its scope, and derive propositions that can be contradicted by future observations. Jaakkola distinguishes conceptual research designs and emphasizes the purposeful role of theory in such work [23]. MacInnis similarly identifies several forms of conceptual contribution, including differentiating and integrating existing ideas [24]. The design used here combines these functions: it differentiates the timing and meaning of agility, then integrates business model and marketing arguments into a conditional explanation of performance.

Targeted searches of publisher and journal records and institutional repositories were conducted through 19 September 2026. Search terms combined business model innovation, marketing agility, dynamic capabilities, performance, mediation, and related temporal and measurement concepts. The selection included foundational construct papers, empirical studies connecting relevant variables, recent syntheses, and methodological sources on mediation. References were retained for a specific role in the argument. This is a purposive conceptual synthesis; it does not claim exhaustive database coverage, a systematic-review screening procedure, or a pooled estimate of effect size.

The analytical procedure separated three questions for each relevant study. First, what does each construct mean and at what organizational level is it measured? Second, where does agility enter the proposed or estimated model: antecedent, mediator, moderator, or outcome? Third, what does the research design permit the study to establish? This comparison prevents a positive association in one setting from becoming evidence of a different sequence elsewhere. Evidence about strategic agility, digital transformation, and innovation capability is treated as adjacent support when its constructs do not match the focal mediation.

Propositions were developed by linking an implemented BMI episode to changes in information access and action possibilities, then linking subsequent MA to separate performance outcomes. Counterarguments were incorporated during derivation: innovation may increase dependence, adaptation may create costs, and prior performance may finance both innovation and agility. No sample was recruited, no survey was administered, and no statistical model was estimated. The conceptual framework and research agenda constitute the paper's analytical contribution. Their value depends on explanatory precision and exposure to empirical challenge, rather than on an invented appearance of hypothesis confirmation.

4. Conceptual Framework and Proposition Development

4.1. From Redesigned Business Models to Subsequent Marketing Agility

Business model innovation can change the conditions under which market information becomes available. Replacing a transactional relationship with continuing service, for example, can create repeated opportunities to observe use, dissatisfaction, and renewal decisions. Reorganizing distribution can shorten the path between customers and the unit responsible for an offer. These are illustrative mechanisms, not reported company cases. Their relevance follows from the activity-system view: changing the organization of exchange can alter who knows what and who can respond. More information is useful only when the unit can interpret it and connect it to a decision.

A second mechanism concerns the reversibility and authority of action. A redesigned offering may permit modular changes in service levels or allow resources to move across channels without renegotiating the entire partner network. This can reduce the organizational effort required to test a response. Conversely, exclusive agreements, highly coupled systems, or centralized approval can make the new business model harder to adapt. Novelty alone therefore has no determinate relationship with MA. The proposed mechanism concerns the consequences of a particular redesign for information and action, rather than an assumption that innovative firms must also be agile.

Doz and Kosonen connect strategic agility with business model renewal, emphasizing the organizational ability to change commitments [25]. This paper extends the timing of that argument: after a model has changed, its resulting architecture may enable or constrain the next cycle of marketing adaptation. A unit with usable customer records and appropriate decision authority can exploit newly created information more readily than a unit whose data remain inaccessible or whose choices remain externally controlled. These enabling conditions should be assessed before the focal change when they are used as moderators, so that later consequences are not mistaken for pre-existing advantages.

Proposition 1. Relative to comparable units retaining their existing business models, implemented BMI episodes that expand customer observability or feasible market-facing choices increase subsequent marketing agility; this relationship is stronger where interoperable customer information and delegated decision authority are already present.

Figure 1 presents the focal sequence. The framework retains a direct BMI–performance path because contractual changes, resource economies, or pricing architecture can affect outcomes without an intervening increase in MA. Dashed contextual links indicate proposed conditions; they do not represent estimated interaction effects.

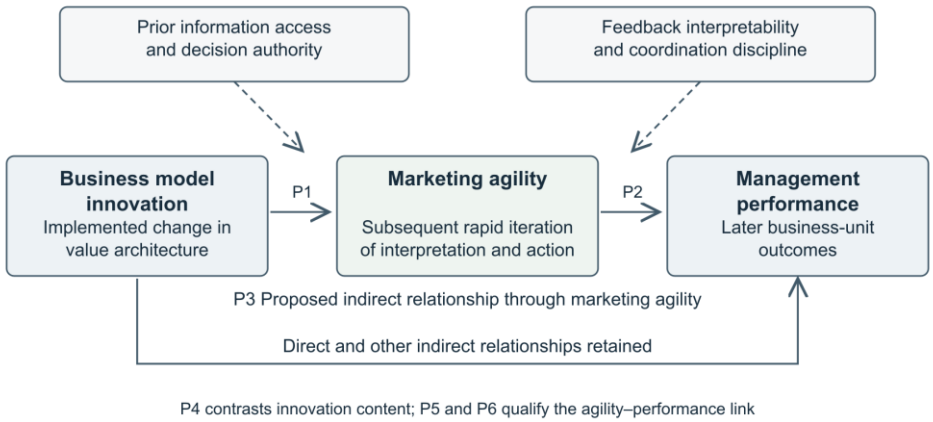


Figure 1. Proposed Conditional Mediation Framework. All Relationships Are Theoretical. The Focal Path Concerns Marketing Agility Following an Implemented BMI Episode; Earlier Agility and Later Feedback Remain Alternative or Complementary Temporal Processes.

4.2. From Marketing Agility to Management Performance

The performance mechanism begins with a mismatch that persists under the new business model. Customers may misunderstand the offer, a channel may attract costly demand, or an apparently valuable feature may not influence renewal. MA can help the unit detect the discrepancy, compare possible explanations, and implement an adjustment while it still matters. The benefit comes from reducing the duration or economic consequence of the mismatch. Frequent changes without diagnostic value can instead consume resources and make performance harder to interpret.

Research on marketing agility and market adaptation in international settings underscores the relevance of contextual fit [26]. Zhou and colleagues find that the indirect relationship between MA and financial performance through innovation capability varies with market turbulence [27]. These perspectives support a distinction between responsiveness and useful responsiveness. An action that increases immediate engagement but attracts unprofitable customers may improve a campaign metric while weakening the business model. A meaningful outcome should capture customer value, delivery cost, or resource productivity beyond the marketing team's visible activity.

The route to performance can operate through several consequences that need not become separate mediators in every study. Better segmentation may reduce acquisition waste; evidence-based revisions may improve retention; coordinated decisions may reduce expensive rework. These consequences are explanations of how adaptation could matter, not a claim that MA improves every performance dimension simultaneously. The strongest prediction concerns situations in which customer feedback identifies an actionable mismatch and the unit can implement a correction before the opportunity disappears. The required observation is an improvement in independently measured outcomes following changes in the adaptive process.

Proposition 2. When customer feedback is attributable to identifiable marketing decisions and market-facing commitments are reversible, increased post-implementation marketing agility improves operating profit margin over a prespecified follow-up horizon.

4.3. The Mediated Relationship and Competing Channels

The mediation argument connects the previous mechanisms. BMI alters the arrangements of exchange; those arrangements influence MA; subsequent adaptation affects realized outcomes. Marketing agility is thus a proposed transmission process between architectural change and performance. It is not a label attached to every successful innovation. If the unit's decision process remains unchanged while profits rise because a new contract reduces costs, the focal mediator has not explained the improvement. Likewise, if MA rises before BMI and does not change afterward, the evidence favors an antecedent interpretation for that episode.

The argument does not require BMI to have a positive total effect in every period. A unit may become more agile and improve customer fit while incurring substantial implementation expenditure. The favorable indirect route can coexist with a negative direct route through disruption or cost. Zhao, Lynch, and Chen show why mediation analysis should focus on the indirect relationship instead of requiring a significant total effect as a preliminary gate [28]. Here, that methodological distinction also reflects the economic logic: a useful adaptive process can partly offset the costs of redesign without immediately making the entire project profitable.

Differences in subsequent MA among units facing comparable implemented changes help examine one part of the mechanism. Estimating the entire mediation also requires a defined BMI exposure contrast and credible adjustment for prior differences. The expected outcome contrast should follow the mediator, rather than merely coincide with it. This formulation also allows the indirect path to be absent. A value-capture redesign that changes partner revenue shares may affect returns without changing customer information or marketing discretion. A framework that insists on mediation in such cases would mistake a possible explanation for a universal mechanism.

Proposition 3. Under the conditions specified in Propositions 1 and 2, the focal BMI episodes have a positive indirect effect on later operating profit margin through increased post-implementation marketing agility; the direct effect remains unrestricted.

4.4. Why the Content of Innovation Matters

Different BMI components expose different opportunities for marketing learning. A changed value proposition invites reassessment of customer benefits and willingness to pay. A new delivery arrangement changes the settings in which customer responses become visible. A value creation change can alter partner contributions or the resources available to satisfy demand. Such changes can create repeated questions that marketing action can resolve. Their potential for MA is strongest when they increase contact with customers or expand feasible adjustments, rather than simply adding organizational complexity.

Value capture innovation can also matter, especially when subscription, usage, or performance-based charging produces new feedback. However, a value-capture redesign changing partner revenue shares or payment mechanisms without changing customer information flows or marketing decision rights may affect returns without repeated marketing adaptation. Clauss and colleagues' findings on the differing performance roles of BMI dimensions reinforce the need to avoid treating them as an undifferentiated quantity [5]. The theoretical distinction proposed here is functional, not categorical: a revenue redesign that transforms customer interaction may support the mediator more strongly than a delivery redesign that locks the firm into inflexible commitments.

Proposition 4. The indirect relationship through marketing agility is stronger for BMI episodes that expand observable customer interaction and reversible market-facing choices than for value-capture redesigns that leave customer information flows and marketing decision rights unchanged.

This proposition predicts a difference that a simple innovation count would miss. Two units can introduce equally novel business models while creating different opportunities for adaptive learning. It also directs attention to complementarity. A customer-facing redesign may require changes in operational or partner arrangements before the resulting information becomes usable. A study should therefore examine what changed together, not infer the mechanism solely from whether managers describe the innovation as radical or incremental.

4.5. Market Turbulence and Interpretable Feedback

Market turbulence increases the possibility that previously appropriate decisions will become ineffective. This creates a reason to revisit segments, channels, and offers more frequently. Yet turbulence can also make observations ambiguous. Demand may change before the effects of an intervention become visible, competitors may act simultaneously, or an external shock may dominate customer behavior. Under these conditions, rapid iteration can encourage managers to attribute outcomes to the wrong intervention. The value of faster learning depends on whether learning remains possible.

Longitudinal research on data-driven innovation capabilities and MA reports a positive contextual role for market turbulence [22]. Zhou and colleagues, however, find that the indirect MA–financial-performance relationship through innovation capability is stronger under lower turbulence [27]. These studies examine different pathways and outcomes. Feedback interpretability is proposed here as a new boundary condition, not an established explanation of their different findings. The present extension distinguishes the rate of change from feedback interpretability. An environment can change quickly while still providing reliable signals about customer reactions. Another can change unpredictably in ways that prevent meaningful comparison. This distinction generates a more discriminating prediction than assuming that every form of uncertainty strengthens every dynamic capability.

Proposition 5. Market turbulence strengthens the performance contribution of marketing agility when feedback remains interpretable, but weakens that contribution when overlapping changes prevent reliable assessment of adaptive decisions.

The boundary is relevant to both managerial action and research design. A unit may respond to greater ambiguity by narrowing the scope of an experiment, preserving a comparison group, or delaying an irreversible commitment. Such restraint is compatible with agility when it reflects timely interpretation of evidence. Counting more frequent changes as necessarily greater effectiveness would miss this possibility and reward avoidable instability.

4.6. Governance, Adjustment Costs, and Time Horizons

Agility requires discretion, but discretion without coordination can fragment a business model. Sales may promise flexibility that operations cannot deliver; local pricing changes may undermine a broader revenue logic; repeated service revisions may obscure the brand proposition. These are foreseeable consequences of interdependent decisions. Governance contributes by specifying which choices a team can make, which commitments require coordination, and which outcomes justify continuing or stopping an intervention. Governance is defined here through pre-existing decision rights, review schedules, and spending limits, separately from the realized iteration process. The relevant distinction is between rules that clarify action and procedures that merely delay it.

A learning portfolio also requires attention to accumulated costs. Small experiments can appear inexpensive individually while consuming substantial analytical, creative, and implementation capacity together. March's exploration–exploitation reasoning suggests why managers should consider the allocation of learning effort over time [19]. The proposed extension is that MA contributes more reliably to performance when experimentation has a defined purpose, usable evidence, and an explicit stopping rule. Activity without these conditions can preserve the appearance of responsiveness while postponing economic accountability.

Proposition 6. Pre-existing coordination and evaluation discipline strengthen the positive indirect relationship through marketing agility over a prespecified horizon linked to the unit's purchasing, delivery, or renewal cycle by limiting duplicated work, conflicting commitments, and unproductive experimentation.

This proposition does not predict an arbitrary universal time lag. A recurring purchase model and a long industrial sales cycle expose results at different rates. The short-term and longer-term patterns reported by Agag and colleagues illustrate why these horizons should be specified rather than combined [21]. An apparent early loss may represent useful investment, but that explanation must eventually be checked against later outcomes. Conversely, a favorable early response may disappear once implementation and retention costs are recognized.

5. AN Empirical Research Agenda

5.1. Observing the Proposed Sequence

A useful test would follow identifiable BMI episodes within business units rather than asking respondents to rate innovation, agility, and performance at one moment. Baseline observation would document the existing business model, prior MA, prior outcomes, resources, and the enabling conditions in Proposition 1. Implementation records would establish what changed and when. The exposure contrast must also be specified, for example implementation versus a credible delayed-implementation comparison, or a defined difference in BMI content or intensity. Following implemented episodes alone cannot identify the effect of implementation. Subsequent observations would assess MA during a justified adaptation period, followed by independently recorded performance. Maxwell and Cole demonstrate why cross-sectional estimates can misrepresent longitudinal mediation processes [29]. Temporal separation is necessary for this argument, although it does not by itself remove confounding.

Figure 2 shows the proposed observation sequence. The intervals should follow the business's buying, delivery, and renewal cycles, with the rationale specified before analysis. Menter and colleagues' longitudinal BMI research highlights lagged

performance relationships and interdependence among innovation dimensions [30]. Multiple observations would also reveal whether an initially favorable market response survives later costs. Units abandoning the new model should remain visible in the study whenever possible; excluding them could make unsuccessful implementation disappear from the evidence.

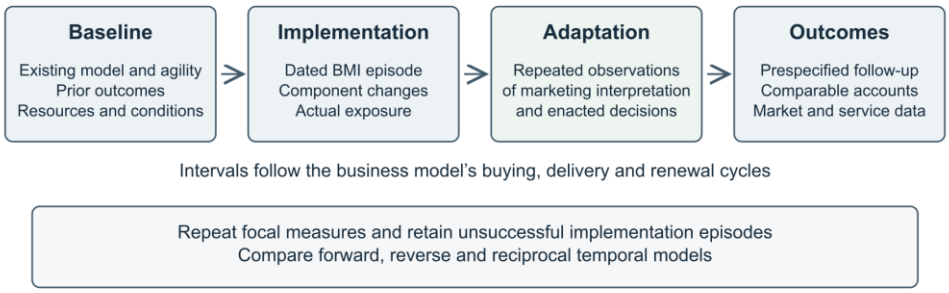


Figure 2. Prospective Observation Sequence for Testing the Theory. The Stages Describe Future Data Collection, Not an Executed Study. Repeated Observations of All Focal Constructs Would Allow Competing Temporal Models to Be Compared.

5.2. Measurement and Sources of Evidence

BMI measurement should combine clearly defined survey domains with records of implementation. MA measurement should assess whether market interpretation changes action, not merely whether teams hold frequent meetings. Existing conceptual and qualitative work can inform item development, but items adapted to this business-unit setting require validation. MacKenzie and colleagues emphasize the importance of defining constructs and specifying their relationship with indicators before applying statistical criteria [31]. If BMI components are specified as formative, they should not be treated as interchangeable reflections merely because doing so simplifies estimation.

Table 3 proposes an evidence plan. The primary test would prespecify operating profit margin, with retention, service quality, and implementation goal attainment as separate secondary outcomes. Implementation targets should be recorded before results are observed. This choice is a research-design proposal, not an established universal scale of management performance. Definitions and accounting boundaries would need to remain comparable before and after BMI. Otherwise, an apparent improvement might result from reallocating costs across units. If an aggregate outcome is used, its composition and interpretation require explicit justification rather than an arbitrary average of unrelated indicators.

Table 3. Proposed Measurement Plan. Measures Require Adaptation and Validation Before Use; No Data Have Been Collected for This Paper.

Domain	Proposed evidence	Timing and source	Main validity concern
BMI episode	Component changes and implementation dates	Project records and strategy informants	Intentions mistaken for implementation
Marketing agility	Decision-cycle duration and evidence-linked revisions	Repeated marketing and operational observations	Activity frequency mistaken for learning
Financial performance	Operating profit margin	Comparable unit accounts after adaptation	Changed cost allocation

Market and operational outcomes	Retention, service quality, goal attainment	Customer and operational records	Reusing agility indicators as outcomes
Conditions and common causes	Authority, data access, turbulence, feedback interpretability, coordination discipline	Baseline records and external indicators	Post-treatment variables used as controls

Separate informants and outcome records can reduce dependence on one manager's overall impression. Podsakoff and colleagues show why method effects deserve attention at the design stage [32]. Such separation does not guarantee unbiased measurement, and one diagnostic cannot certify the absence of common-method problems. Pilot work should examine whether respondents distinguish business model changes from marketing adjustments and whether different informants refer to the same business unit and observation period.

5.3. Identification and Tests That Could Reject the Explanation

The primary analysis would estimate the indirect relationship with uncertainty intervals while retaining the direct BMI–performance path. An appropriate model must reflect the temporal structure, outcome distribution, and nesting of observations. Bootstrapping can describe sampling uncertainty; it cannot establish the validity of the causal ordering. Imai and colleagues distinguish mediation-effect definition, identification, estimation, and sensitivity analysis [33]. A causal interpretation would require credible assumptions about exposure assignment and mediator–outcome confounding. Randomizing a BMI intervention, where feasible, would not automatically randomize subsequent MA.

Tests of the conditional propositions would specify interactions on the relevant paths before estimating conditional indirect relationships. Proposition 5 requires examining whether feedback interpretability changes the way turbulence conditions the MA–performance relationship; a single MA-by-turbulence interaction would not test that claim. Proposition 6 requires a separate measure of pre-existing coordination and evaluation discipline. Baseline moderator measures would be distinguished from changes produced by BMI itself. Estimates would be reported across substantively meaningful values within the observed range, with uncertainty intervals and without selecting favorable subgroups after inspecting outcomes.

Rival explanations include prior success financing innovation, leadership quality influencing all three constructs, and external demand changes generating both adaptation and improved outcomes. Endogeneity guidance makes clear why adding controls or choosing a structural equation estimator is insufficient by itself [34]. A panel design could address stable unit differences, but changing unobserved influences would remain. Implementation-created information access should not automatically be controlled away if it forms part of the mechanism. If it also independently affects performance, however, it may create mediator–outcome confounding affected by BMI; neither automatic adjustment nor simple omission resolves identification. Under that condition, standard regression mediation cannot identify a natural indirect effect without additional identifying assumptions. The analysis should remain associational unless an alternative estimand and design are explicitly justified. Sensitivity analysis and explicit causal assumptions are preferable to claiming that a long control list resolves these problems.

Within contexts satisfying the enabling conditions, the mechanism would lose support if BMI did not change later MA or if credibly identified indirect estimates were consistently null or negative. A nonpositive total performance change alone would not refute a favorable indirect effect. Evidence that prior MA explains the sequence would favor a different temporal account. Comparing forward, reverse, and reciprocal models would be useful, provided superior statistical fit is not presented as proof of causality. A study should also report null and negative indirect estimates and variation across

outcomes. These observations would clarify where the mechanism operates rather than justify adding further constructs until a positive coefficient appears.

6. Discussion

6.1. Theoretical Contribution

The proposed contribution is a conditional explanation of an implementation process. Whetten's account of theory development requires reasons for the factors and relationships included in an explanation [35]. Here, MA earns its place because it connects changes in the architecture of exchange with repeated market-facing decisions. The paper does not claim novelty merely from placing three established constructs in sequence. Its substantive distinction is between agility that produces a business model and agility that operates within the changed architecture afterward.

This distinction can reconcile apparently competing directions. An agile unit may initiate BMI, and the implemented model may subsequently change how that unit learns and acts. Both processes can occur across successive episodes. The empirical task is to identify their timing, rather than force every observation into one permanent directional relationship. Similarly, Vesterinen and colleagues' conceptual framework connects analytics capability, MA, and firm performance [36]. The present framework locates the antecedent in implemented business model architecture, which changes the relevance of information rights, partner dependencies, and direct economic effects.

The proposed boundary conditions also make success and failure interpretable within one account. A redesign can create information while limiting decision authority; a marketing team can react quickly while receiving ambiguous feedback; a useful adaptation can cost more than it returns within the observation period. Each case breaks a different link. These distinctions encourage research to examine why a relationship is absent, rather than treating every null result as evidence that innovation or agility is unimportant.

6.2. Managerial Implications

Managers implementing BMI should examine how the new arrangement changes access to customer information and responsibility for action. Day's adaptive marketing perspective gives learning and experimentation an organizational role [37]. In practice, this means specifying which team receives relevant feedback, what it can change, and which commitments require coordination. Investing in analytical tools without these arrangements can increase reporting activity while leaving decisions unchanged. Evidence on data analytics and market-knowledge specificity similarly directs attention to how information becomes usable [38].

Performance review should follow the business model's economics. Managers can track retention and service outcomes during adaptation while preserving a clear account of implementation and experimentation costs. Morgan's marketing–performance framework distinguishes capabilities from intermediate advantages and downstream results [39]. Applying that distinction prevents campaign engagement or response speed from substituting for economic evaluation. Homburg and colleagues' work on marketing excellence also places agility within a broader strategic configuration [40]. Its findings should not be interpreted as a return attributable to agility alone, but they support examining how market-facing priorities fit together.

The managerial implication is selective investment in adaptation. When customer evidence is informative and decisions are reversible, a unit can authorize local adjustment within clear limits. When commitments are interdependent or feedback is unreliable, coordination and more careful evaluation may be more valuable than accelerating every decision. A project review should distinguish an adaptation that failed to improve the offer from one that improved it at excessive cost. That distinction identifies whether the next intervention belongs in market learning, operational execution, or the business model itself.

6.3. Limitations and Scope

The framework is conceptual and its proposed relationships remain untested. Its purposive literature selection cannot establish the prevalence or average magnitude of the focal mediation. Much of the relevant evidence concerns particular national, sectoral, or international-business settings. Generalization to public organizations, highly regulated services, or units with little control over customer interfaces requires additional theorizing. These settings may place different limits on information access, discretion, and measurable performance.

Business-unit boundaries also require care when several units share data, brands, or partners. Spillovers could make one unit's agility affect another's outcomes and complicate the meaning of an independent treatment episode. Future work should examine these dependencies, as well as sustained changes in customer relationships and employee workload. The six propositions provide a focused starting point, not a complete inventory of every factor affecting innovation performance.

7. Conclusion

Marketing agility can plausibly mediate the relationship between business model innovation and management performance when an implemented redesign changes the conditions for market learning and action. The proposed mechanism is specific: the changed business model creates opportunities to understand customer responses and revise consequential decisions; subsequent adaptation then contributes to independently measured business-unit outcomes. Novelty, speed, and favorable performance remain distinct constructs.

The relationship is conditional on innovation content, existing organizational arrangements, feedback interpretability, and adjustment costs. It can coexist with direct economic effects and with earlier agility that helped generate the innovation. The paper therefore advances six testable propositions and a prospective design that can distinguish these processes. Establishing the mediation empirically will require credible temporal evidence, valid measures, and defensible identification assumptions. For management practice, the central implication is to align the redesigned business model with the authority and information needed to learn from its operation, while evaluating the resulting benefits against the full cost of adaptation.

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