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Training and Development on Promotional Pricing Through Marketing Capability of Employees in an ISP Company

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ABSTRACT: This study analyzes the influence of Training and Development on Promotional Pricing with Marketing Capability as a mediating variable in Internet Service Provider (ISP) companies in the Suciayumajakuning area (Subang, Cirebon, Indramayu, Majalengka, and Kuningan). The research is motivated by competitive challenges among ISPs in designing effective promotional pricing strategies through strengthened human resource competencies. This study extends previous models by integrating human capital and dynamic capability perspectives within the ISP industry context. Unlike prior studies that predominantly focus on manufacturing or export-oriented sectors, this research addresses the less-explored ISP industry, which has high service intangibility and strong price sensitivity. with theoretical approaches from Human Capital Theory, Dynamic Capability Theory, and Resource-Based View.The study employed a quantitative approach using Structural Equation Modeling Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with 150 ISP marketing respondents. The measurement model met validity and reliability criteria (loadings 0.70–0.88; AVE > 0.50; CR > 0.90). The findings show that Training and Development significantly affects Marketing Capability ($\beta = 0.613$; $p < 0.001$), Marketing Capability significantly affects Promotional Pricing ($\beta = 0.582$; $p < 0.001$), and Training and Development directly influences Promotional Pricing ($\beta = 0.176$; $p < 0.05$). The indirect effect ($\beta = 0.357$) confirms Marketing Capability as a significant mediator. Training and development enhance promotional pricing effectiveness both directly and through improved marketing capability. Practically, ISPs should strengthen data-driven and digital marketing training programs to sustain competitiveness.

Keywords: Training and Development, Marketing Capability, Promotional Pricing.

INTRODUCTION

Advances in information and communication technology in Indonesia motivate internet service providers (ISPs) to continuously improve the quality of their services and their marketing methods. Within the geographical boundaries of Subang Regency, Cirebon, Indramayu, Kuningan, and Majalengka, the dynamics of competition among ISPs are becoming increasingly clear as consumer demand for fast and reliable internet connectivity increases. The number of ISPs in this region is 37 companies (A.P.J.I.I., 2025).

The ISP sector presents unique characteristics such as high service intangibility and strong price sensitivity, making it a scientifically relevant context for studying capability-based pricing models. This situation requires ISPs to focus not only on infrastructure but also on human resource development, especially in relation to personnel proficiency in formulating effective promotional pricing strategies, to ensure that employee marketing capabilities must also continue to be developed. Marketing capabilities including product, price, distribution, and promotional capabilities—have a significant positive impact on export marketing performance. This ability is multi-dimensional and essential for success in export business (Mohamad et al., 2011).

However, many ISPs operating in this region face limitations related to the quality and competence of their employees regarding the implementation of appropriate promotion strategies; therefore, it is crucial to conduct training and development programs to enhance employees' competencies. Despite the implementation of training and development initiatives, a visible difference remains between employees' ability to implement competitive pricing strategies and market needs. This study underscores challenges regarding the effectiveness of training and development in improving employee marketing performance, especially in decisions related to promotional pricing. Previous studies focus mostly on direct effects of training on employee or organizational performance but rarely examine the mediating role of marketing capabilities in pricing strategies, particularly in the ISP sector.

This scenario establishes a research gap, where the indirect relationship between training and development and promotional pricing through employee marketing capabilities is still not sufficiently researched, especially in the local context of Subang, Cirebon, Indramayu, Kuningan, and Majalengka. Furthermore, theoretical grounding in prior research suggests potential integration of training and development with marketing capabilities, yet no studies have tested this relationship within promotional pricing strategy formulation in the ISP industry.

Theoretical grounding suggests that combining training and development with marketing capabilities can result in more suitable and effective promotional pricing strategies. This integration allows companies to leverage data driven pricing decisions and analytics (Mansurali et al., 2024). Skilled marketing personnel can improve marketing efficiency and financial performance (Tehrani et al., 2012). Training and Development (T&D) improves employees' skills, knowledge, and performance, and influences organizational learning and productivity (Husain et al., 2023; Keltu, 2024; Syafitri & Adiwaty, 2025). Marketing Capability represents an organization's capacity to design, implement, and apply effective marketing strategies for competitive advantage, strengthened through training (Brown et al., 2019; Hanasyah, 2024; Moi et al., 2019; Oduro & Mensah-Williams, 2023). Promotional Pricing is a short-term price reduction strategy used to stimulate purchases, requiring strong market understanding supported by marketing capability (Hallums, 1994; Muhamad, 2023; NielsenIQ, 2023; Simamora, 2023). The interaction between training, marketing capability, and promotional pricing demonstrates a capability-based competitive advantage (Florea et al., 2020; Hoque et al., 2022; Mahaliani et al., 2024; Morgan & Feng, 2024; Vorhies & Morgan, 2005).

Given these empirical and theoretical issues, this study addresses the following questions: Does training and development influence the marketing capabilities of ISP employees?; Does marketing capability affect the effectiveness of promotional pricing?; Does training and development directly influence promotional pricing strategies?; Does marketing capability mediate the relationship between training and development and promotional pricing?

The novelty of this research lies in focusing on ISP companies, which have not been previously examined within the marketing capability framework. This study examines ISPs in Subang, Cirebon, Indramayu, Kuningan, and Majalengka using an integrated approach connecting training and development, marketing capabilities, and promotional pricing. It not only analyzes direct effects but also explores the mediating function of marketing capability in shaping promotional pricing strategy effectiveness. The results are expected to provide practical insights for ISP management in designing targeted training programs and competitive pricing strategies.

METHOD

Research Type

This study uses a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional survey design. The objective is to test the causal relationship between Training and Development, Marketing Capability, and Promotional Pricing in Internet Service Providers (ISPs) in the Suciayimajakuning area (Subang, Cirebon, Indramayu, Majalengka, and Kuningan). The Structural Equation Modeling Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) approach is used because it is able to predict the relationships between latent variables simultaneously, especially in data with abnormal distributions and exploratory models. SEM-PLS is known for its strong predictive capabilities, which are especially useful in exploratory research and when the primary goal is prediction rather than theoretical testing (Kono & Sato, 2022; Magno et al., 2022). That said, this technique is strong against normality violations, making it suitable for datasets that do not follow normal distributions, which is a common scenario in many areas of research (Monecke & Leisch, 2012). SEM-PLS is also appropriate for mediation testing and heterogeneous samples, conditions commonly found in ISP employee datasets with varied organizational sizes and structures. Data analysis was performed using SmartPLS 4 software following a two-step, with the validity, reliability, and analysis of direct and indirect relationships between latent variables.

Population and Sample/Informants

The population of this study is all ISP employees involved in marketing and promotional activities in the Suciayumajakuning area. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, with the following criteria: (1) employees are active in the marketing or promotion department, and (2) have a minimum working period of one year. Based on these criteria, 150 respondents were obtained who met the requirements for participation in the study. Although there are no strict rules for minimum sample sizes in SEM-PLS, some guidelines suggest that sample sizes should be at least

ten times the number of indicators in the most complex model constructions. These rules of thumb help ensure that models can be reliably forecasted (Kono & Sato, 2022).

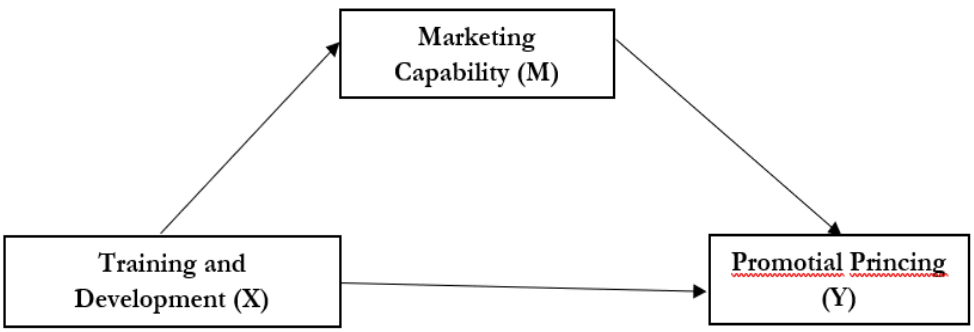
Research Location

The research was conducted on several Internet Service Provider (ISP) companies operating in five districts in the Suciayumajakuning area (Subang, Cirebon, Indramayu, Majalengka, and Kuningan). This location was chosen because the level of competition between ISP in the region is very high and the growth in demand for internet services has increased significantly, making it relevant to research the effectiveness of promotional pricing strategies and employee marketing competencies.

Instrumentation or Tools

This study used a closed questionnaire instrument based on a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). The instrument was built based on theoretical indicators from the previous literature, namely: Training and Development (X): training needs, training design, facilities, and evaluation with a total of 12 indicators, an example item from this construct is: : "The company provides structured training that is aligned with my job requirements.". Marketing Capability (M): product competence, innovation capability, Pricing Capability, Channel & Distribution Capability, Communication & Promotional, and customer relationship management with a total of 12 indicators, an example item from this construct is: "Our company is capable of developing marketing strategies that match customer needs." . Promotional Pricing (Y): discount, bundling, transparency, promotion duration, and value perception strategies with a total of 11 indicators, a representative item for this construct reads: "Promotional prices offered by the company are transparent and easy for customers to understand.". The questionnaire was tested through convergent and discriminant validity, as well as construct reliability using Outer Loading, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Cronbach's Alpha, and Composite Reliability (CR) values.

Figure 1. Conceptual Model



Data Collection Procedures

Data collection was carried out during September 2025 through an online survey sent to respondents via company e-mail and internal work groups assisted by the Suciayumajakuning ISP Association. Each respondent received an informed consent sheet explaining the purpose, benefits, and confidentiality of the research data. Respondents were given two weeks to fill out the questionnaire. All incoming data were checked for completeness and consistency before further processing.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was carried out using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS 4 software. The analysis procedure includes two main stages:

1. Measurement Model Analysis (Outer Model): to test the validity and reliability of indicators. Convergent validity is determined by an outer loading value of ≥ 0.70 and an AVE ≥ 0.50, while reliability is seen from Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability ≥ 0.70.
2. Structural Model Analysis (Inner Model): to test the relationship between latent constructs by looking at the path coefficient, t-statistic, and p-value values from bootstrapping (5,000 resampling).

The results show that the entire construct meets the criteria of validity and reliability:

- Outer loading ranges from 0.70–0.88
- AVE: 0.59–0.63
- Composite Reliability: 0.922–0.932
- Cronbach's Alpha: 0.896–0.911

The relationship between the variables showed significant results:

- Training and Development → Marketing Capability: $\beta = 0.613$; $t = 11.42$; $p = 0.000$
- Marketing Capability → Promotional Pricing: $\beta = 0.582$; $t = 9.67$; $p = 0.000$
- Training and Development → Promotional Pricing: $\beta = 0.176$; $t = 2.41$; $p = 0.017$
- The indirect effect through Marketing Capability of $\beta = 0.357$, indicates significant mediation.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Convergent validity is tested through Outer Loading and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values. The convergent validity criteria are met if each indicator has a loading ≥ of 0.70 and AVE ≥ 0.50. AVE is a measure of the amount of variance captured by the construct in relation to the variance due to measurement error. An AVE of 0.5 or higher is generally considered acceptable, indicating that the construct explains more than half of the variance of the indicator (Cheung et al., 2023).

Tabel 1. Convergent Validity Test

Konstruk	Range Loading	AVE	Ket
Training & Development (X)	0.72 – 0.88	0.63	Valid
Marketing Capability (M)	0.70 – 0.87	0.61	Valid
Promotional Pricing (Y)	0.71 – 0.86	0.59	Valid

The loading factor value of all indicators is above 0.70, indicating that each indicator is able to reflect the construct well. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value is also > 0.50, indicating convergent validity is met (Hair et al., 2021).

Reliability tests are seen through Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability (CR). A construct is said to be reliable if Cronbach's Alpha value > 0.70 and CR > 0.70.

Table 2. Construct Reliability Test

Konstruk	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	Ket
Training & Development (X)	0.911	0.932	Reliabel
Marketing Capability (M)	0.904	0.928	Reliabel
Promotional Pricing (Y)	0.896	0.922	Reliabel

Source: SmartPLS 4 Output (2025)

All three constructs have Alpha and CR values above the minimum limit, > 0.70, indicating that the construct constituent indicators have excellent internal consistency.

The validity of the discriminant was evaluated by looking at the HTMT (Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio) value. A good HTMT value is below 0.90.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity Test (HTMT)

Construk Pair	HTMT	Ket
X – M	0.712	Valid
X – Y	0.734	Valid
M – Y	0.781	Valid

Source: SmartPLS 4 Output (2025)

The HTMT value of all construct pairs < 0.90, indicating that each construct has good discriminant validity and empirically measures different concepts.

Table 4. Structural Analysis

Hubungan Antar Variabel	Koefisien Jalur (β)	t-Statistic	p-Value	Ket
Training & Development → Marketing Capability	0.613	11.42	0.000	Signifikan
Marketing Capability → Promotional Pricing	0.582	9.67	0.000	Signifikan
Training & Development → Promotional Pricing	0.176	2.41	0.017	Signifikan

Source: SmartPLS 4 Output (2025)

Based on Table 4, the findings indicate that training and development have a positive and significant effect on marketing capabilities, then marketing capabilities have a positive and significant effect on promotional pricing strategies, then training and development also have a direct effect on promotional pricing, although with a smaller strength of relationships.

Indirect effects It occurs when the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables is mediated by one or more intervention variables. For example, in the same study, customer satisfaction and trust mediated the relationship between service quality and loyalty, suggesting that service quality affects loyalty indirectly through these mediators (Prakoso, 2025)

The analysis confirmed that Marketing Capability significantly mediates the relationship between Training and Development and Promotional Pricing, with an indirect effect of $\beta = 0.613 \times 0.582 = 0.357$, and significant ($p < 0.05$). This shows that the better the training and development provided to employees, the better their marketing capabilities will be, which ultimately increases the effectiveness of the implementation of promotional pricing.

Table 5. Coefficient of Determination (R^2) and Predictive Relevance (Q^2)

Endogenous Construct	R^2	Interpretation	Q^2	Predictive Relevance
Marketing Capability	0.376	Moderate	0.241	Moderate predictive relevance
Promotional Pricing	0.524	Substantial	0.312	High predictive relevance

Source: SmartPLS 4 Output (2025)

According to Chin (1998), R^2 values of 0.19, 0.33, and 0.67 represent weak, moderate, and substantial explanatory power, respectively. Thus, the model demonstrates substantial predictive accuracy, particularly in explaining 52.4% of the variance in Promotional Pricing. The Q^2 values obtained through blindfolding procedures were all positive, confirming predictive relevance (Henseler et al., 2009).

Table 6. Effect Size (f^2) Results

Relationship	f^2 Value	Effect Strength
T&D → Marketing Capability	0.414	Large
Marketing Capability → Promotional Pricing	0.392	Large
T&D → Promotional Pricing	0.057	Small

Source: SmartPLS 4 Output (2025)

According to Cohen (1988), the f^2 coefficients of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 are indicative of small, medium, and large effect sizes, respectively. The results indicate that Training and Development has a significant impact on Marketing Capability, which in turn exerts a considerable influence on Promotional Pricing. The direct relationship between Training and Development and Promotional Pricing, while statistically significant, demonstrates a reduced magnitude, thereby suggesting a partial mediation effect.

The mediation analysis was conducted in accordance with the methodologies established by Hair et al. (2021), employing bootstrapping techniques with 5,000 resamples. The outcomes substantiated that Marketing Capability serves as a significant mediator in the relationship between Training and Development and Promotional Pricing ($\beta = 0.357$, $p < 0.001$).

The Variance Accounted For (VAF) value was computed as:

$$\text{VAF} = \frac{Indirect\ Effect}{Total\ Effect} = \frac{0{,}357}{0{,}533} = 0{,}67$$

A VAF score of 0.67 demonstrates that the mediation is partial, indicating that although Training and Development exerts a direct effect on Promotional Pricing, the majority of its impactapproximately 67% is transmitted through Marketing Capability. This result is consistent with the findings of Husain et al. (2023) and Tan and Sousa (2015), who emphasize that capability development functions as a critical pathway through which employee learning contributes to enhanced marketing and pricing outcomes. The empirical results strongly reinforce the theoretical model, showing that Training and Development influences Promotional Pricing through two distinct channels: a direct effect and an indirect effect mediated by Marketing Capability.

Interpretation of Key Findings

The findings of this study show that Training and Development has a positive and significant influence on Marketing Capability ($\beta = 0.613$; $p < 0.001$). This shows that the higher the intensity and quality of training and development programs carried out by internet service providers (ISP), the more employees are able to understand products, establish customer relationships, and innovate in marketing strategies. These findings provide empirical support for Human Capital Theory, emphasizing that investments in employee training enhance marketing competence and strategic performance (Becker, 1993), which states that investment in employee training increases the competence and productivity that are the basis of organizational excellence. According to Marjani et al., (2024), the success of training depends not only on the material, but also on knowledge transfer and informal learning in the workplace, which in turn strengthens employees' marketing capabilities.

Furthermore, Marketing Capability also has a significant effect on Promotional Pricing ($\beta = 0.582$; $p < 0.001$). This means that employees who have high marketing skills are better able to design promotional pricing strategies that are adaptive, efficient, and attractive to consumers. This is in line with the Dynamic Capability Theory and research by Tan & Sousa (2015) which confirms that agile marketing capabilities allow companies to adapt pricing strategies to market changes.

In addition, Training and Development was also shown to have a direct effect on Promotional Pricing ($\beta = 0.176$; $p < 0.05$), although with a smaller effect than the indirect effect through Marketing Capability. This weaker direct effect can be explained by the nature of pricing decisions, which require not only technical skills from training but also accumulated experiential knowledge, market insight, and strategic judgment elements embedded within marketing capability rather than training alone. In this context, Marketing Capability acts as an intangible mediator that transforms learned skills into effective pricing strategies, aligning with Husain et al. (2023) who found that training improves organizational learning capability which has an impact on promotion performance. Research by Zulstra, (2024) also indicates that the effectiveness of pricing strategies depends on broader marketing competencies rather than training inputs alone.

The mediation effect of $\beta = 0.357$ indicates that Marketing Capability plays a significant mediator in the relationship between HR development and the effectiveness of promotional pricing strategies. This suggests that employees first internalize and translate training into improved marketing capabilities, and only then are they able to execute accurate pricing strategies. These results are particularly relevant for ISPs operating in the Suciayumajakuning area, who face high competitive pressure and require an adaptive pricing strategy based on employee competencies. This study contributes a localized perspective of marketing capability development within emerging market ISPs, a sector where pricing agility is essential yet remains underexplored.

Comparison with Previous Studies

The results of this study are consistent with the research of Becker (1993) and Keltu (2024) which affirms that training and development have a direct influence on improving individual and organizational performance. In line with the research of Vorhies, (1998) and Vorhies & Morgan (2005), these findings confirm that the development of marketing capabilities is a key factor in achieving sustainable competitive advantage.

In addition, these results also support the findings of Brown et al. (2019), Tan & Sousa, (2015), and Hanasyah (2024), which show that marketing capabilities contribute to improving business performance through more effective management of pricing, promotion, and customer relationship strategies. However, this study expands the context of previous research by emphasizing the role of marketing capability as a mediator in the local ISP sector which is still rarely studied, as revealed by Mohamad et al. (2011)that marketing capability is a multidimensional factor that plays a major role in the success of local export and promotion strategies.

These results are also in line with the views of Florea et al. (2020) and Morgan & Feng (2024) who stated that planned training is able to improve employees' ability to plan marketing programs and launch new products, which has an impact on more effective promotional pricing strategies.

Compared with prior studies, the present research demonstrates that in the ISP industry characterized by service intangibility, price sensitivity, and rapid technological shifts marketing capability becomes the core mechanism linking HR development to strategic pricing performance. This offers a conceptual extension of capability-based pricing models within emerging digital service markets.

Limitations and Cautions

Despite making strong theoretical and empirical contributions, the study has several limitations. First, the cross-sectional design of the study limits the ability to ascertain causal relationships between variables, as was also criticized by Herzberg et al., (1959) in a similar study. Second, the use of perception-based questionnaires opens up the possibility of self-report bias where respondents may overestimate their training or abilities. Third, this study focuses on the Suciayumajakuning area which has certain economic and social characteristics, so the results may not be fully generalized to other sectors such as digital banking or national telecommunications.

Furthermore, the study does not capture the dynamic evolution of marketing capability over time, which may evolve as employees accumulate more experiential learning beyond formal training. This temporal limitation constrains understanding of how capability maturity influences pricing decisions.

Recommendations for Future Research

Further research is recommended to use longitudinal design in order to explore the cause-and-effect relationship between training and development, marketing capability, and promotional pricing more robustly. In addition, the integration of mixed methods with in-depth interviews can provide more contextual insights into the mechanism of building marketing capabilities through digital training. The following research can also include moderation variables such as organizational learning, digital literacy, or innovation capability to enrich understanding of the factors that strengthen the effectiveness of promotional strategies in the digital economy era.

Researchers are also encouraged to investigate capability pathways that explain how employees translate learning into strategic pricing skills, as well as explore cross-regional comparisons to determine whether ISP markets with different competitive intensities exhibit similar mediation patterns.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to explain the influence of Training and Development on Promotional Pricing with Marketing Capability as a mediation variable in ISP companies in the Suciayumajakuning area. The results showed that all hypotheses were proven to be significant: Training and Development had a positive effect on Marketing Capability ($\beta = 0.613$), Marketing Capability had a significant effect on Promotional Pricing ($\beta = 0.582$), and Training and Development had a direct effect on Promotional Pricing ($\beta = 0.176$). The indirect effect ($\beta = 0.357$) confirms that Marketing Capability serves as a significant mediating mechanism.

Theoretically, these findings support Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1993), Dynamic Capability Theory (Teece et al., 1997), and Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991), both of which emphasize the importance of developing internal resources as a driver of competitive advantage. In addition, this study contributes to the theoretical expansion of these frameworks by demonstrating how

capability-building functions as the linking mechanism through which HR development translates into adaptive pricing strategies an area that remains underexplored in emerging market ISPs. This strengthens the argument presented by Morgan & Vorhies (2018) that marketing capability acts as a strategic bridge connecting organizational learning with market responsiveness.

Practically, ISPs need to strengthen data-driven training programs, digital marketing, and consumer behavior analysis to improve adaptive capabilities in setting targeted promotional strategies. The findings highlight several managerial implications: ISPs should institutionalize continuous capability development, integrate analytics-based decision-making into pricing processes, and adopt learning-oriented cultures that accelerate employees' strategic judgment in dynamic service markets. This aligns with recommendations from Mahaliani et al. (2024), who emphasize that digital capability development enhances pricing agility and improves overall promotional effectiveness.

The limitations of this study include cross-sectional design, geographical limitations, and potential respondent perception bias. Future research will need to expand the industry context and adopt longitudinal designs so that the results obtained can be more general and robust. Exploratory qualitative methods may also help uncover deeper mechanisms by which employees convert training experiences into pricing-related strategic capabilities, as suggested by Florea et al. (2020). Therefore, human resource competency development constitutes a strategic foundation for building adaptive marketing and pricing capabilities in creating superior marketing capabilities and effective promotional strategies in the digital services sector. The study underscores that capacity-building is not only a functional necessity but also a long-term strategic investment for ISPs competing in rapidly evolving markets.

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