Social Media Role of Business Digitalization: Indonesian SMEs

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of social media (SM) on business marketing, customer loyalty, and customer feedback. Data was collected from a sample of 677 customers in Indonesia using a Likert scale questionnaire. The results of the study support all three hypotheses, demonstrating a significant positive impact of SM on business marketing, customer loyalty, and customer feedback. The structural equation model table shows the beta values, t values, and p values, indicating that SM has a significant impact on business marketing, customer loyalty, and customer feedback. The theoretical implications of this study suggest that SM plays an important role in business operations, contributing to the existing body of knowledge on the role of SM in business digitalization. The practical implications of this study suggest that businesses can leverage the power of SM to enhance their digitalization strategies, expand their customer base, and improve customer engagement. However, this study has some limitations, including the use of a cross-sectional research design and a Likert scale questionnaire. Future research could use longitudinal research designs and alternative data collection methods to further explore the impact of SM on business outcomes.

Keywords. Social Media, Business marketing, Customer loyalty, Customer feedback, Digitalization

1. INTRODUCTION

Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in Indonesia play a significant role in driving economic growth, accounting for over 99% of all businesses in the country and contributing around 60% of the nation's GDP. However, many SMEs in Indonesia struggle to keep up with the latest technological advancements, including digitalization. Despite the growing importance of social media (SM) in business operations, it remains unclear how its use impacts the digitalization of SMEs in Indonesia (Thomas & Thomas, 2012). Therefore, the problem addressed in this study is to determine the impact of SM on the digitalization of SMEs in Indonesia and to identify the key factors that influence the adoption and effective use of SM by these businesses (Nascimento & Da Silveira, 2017). The study aims to provide insights into the benefits of SM and its role in the digitalization of businesses, and to identify the challenges that SMEs face when adopting digital technologies. Ultimately, the study aims to contribute to the sustainable growth of SMEs in Indonesia and enhance their competitiveness in the global marketplace.

SM has revolutionized the way businesses operate, with more and more companies embracing digital platforms to reach out to their customers (Brooks, Heffner, & Henderson, 2014). This trend has become particularly evident in Indonesia, where SMEs have emerged as key drivers of economic growth. However, despite their significant contributions to the economy, many SMEs in Indonesia still struggle to keep up with the latest technological advancements, including digitalization (Qualman, 2012). Therefore, there is a growing need to investigate the impact of SM on the digitalization of SMEs in Indonesia. SMEs play a crucial role in Indonesia's economy, accounting for over 99% of all businesses in the country and contributing around 60% of the nation's GDP. However, many of these businesses continue to operate using traditional methods, with limited access to digital tools and platforms (Kärkkäinen, Jussila, & Väisänen, 2010). This is particularly true for small and micro-enterprises, which often lack the resources and expertise to implement digital solutions (Yong & Hassan, 2019). As a result, these businesses may miss out on potential growth opportunities and struggle to remain competitive in the market.

The results of this study are expected to have significant theoretical and practical implications From a theoretical perspective, the study will contribute to the growing body of literature on the impact of SM on business digitalization, particularly in the context of SMEs in developing countries like Indonesia. The study will also help to identify the key factors that influence the adoption and effective use of SM

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by SMEs. From a practical perspective, the study's findings will be useful for SMEs in Indonesia, as it will provide insights into the benefits of SM and its role in the digitalization of businesses. The study will also help to identify the challenges that SMEs face when adopting digital technologies and provide recommendations for addressing these challenges. Additionally, the study's findings will be valuable for policymakers, as it will help them to develop targeted interventions aimed at promoting the digitalization of SMEs in Indonesia. Ultimately, the study aims to contribute to the sustainable growth of SMEs in Indonesia and enhance their competitiveness in the global marketplace.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

SM refers is the most significant tool which has influence on business (Naylor, Lamberton, & West, 2012; Orji, Kusi-Sarpong, & Gupta, 2020; Sun, Huang, Peng, Chen, & Liu, 2019). SM platforms permit users to connect and communicate. Examples of SM platforms include Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, YouTube, TikTok, and Snapchat. These platforms have become an integral part of modern communication (Hutter, Hautz, Dennhardt, & Füller, 2013; Kircaburun, Alhabash, Tosuntaş, & Griffiths, 2018; Roopchund, Ramesh, & Jaunky, 2019; Sakka & Ahammad, 2020; Wang & Kim, 2017), allowing people to connect with friends, family, and colleagues, as well as share news, entertainment, and information with a wide audience. SM also plays a significant role in marketing and advertising, with businesses and organizations leveraging these platforms to reach with their target audience. SM has also become a instrument for activism, with individuals and groups using SM to raise awareness and mobilize support for various social, political, and environmental causes.

Marketing of a business involves the activities and processes that a business uses to promote activities (Emerald Publishing Limited, 2018; Anitsal, Girard, & Anitsal, 2012; Olson, Slater, Hult, & Olson, 2018; Popescu, 2020; Porcu, del Barrio-García, Kitchen, & Tourky, 2019). The ultimate goal of business marketing is to drive sales, generate revenue, and build brand awareness and loyalty. Marketing activities can take many forms, depending on the specific goals and target audience of the business. Effective business marketing requires a deep understanding of the target audience, including their needs, preferences, and behaviors. This understanding is used to create marketing messages and materials that resonate with the audience and encourage them to take action, such as making a purchase or signing up for a service. Marketing of a business is an ongoing process which help businesses (Asiegbu, Powei, & Iruka, 2012; Hill & Scott, 2004; Hofacker, Golgeci, Pillai, & Gligor, 2020; Onegi, Eser, & Korkmaz, 2019; Vorhies & Morgan, 2003).

SM has become an essential part of modern society and has significantly impacted businesses in recent years. Scholars have explored the various ways in which SM can be utilized by businesses (Cistulli & Snyder, 2019). SM can cover wider audience through targeted marketing campaigns (He, Wang, & Akula, 2017). SM platforms such as and Instagram permit businesses to target definite demographics grounded on age, gender, location, interests, and more, making it easier for businesses to reach potential customers who are likely to be interested in their products or services (Aral, Dellarocas, & Godes, 2013).

Another important aspect of SM is its impact on customer engagement and loyalty. Studies have shown that SM can be used by businesses to build strong relationships with customers, foster trust, and increase customer loyalty (Ráthonyi, 2013). By providing customers with personalized content, businesses can create a positive image and build a loyal customer base (Yaseen & Marwan, 2016). Additionally, SM can be used by businesses to solicit feedback from customers and gain insights into their needs and preferences, which can help businesses develop more effective products and services. Overall, the literature suggests that SM has significant potential to benefit businesses in a variety of ways, making it an important tool for modern business operations.

Hypothesis 1: *The SM has significant impact of business marketing.*

SM has transformed the way businesses operate, offering new opportunities for companies to reach out to customers, build brand awareness, and drive sales (Obermayer, Kővári, Leinonen, Bak, & Valeri, 2021). In recent years, SM has emerged as a key driver of digitalization, helping businesses of all sizes to stay competitive in the fast-paced digital economy. SMEs in Indonesia have been no exception to this trend, with many businesses recognizing the importance of SM in their operations (Chung & Kim, 2020). In this discussion, we will explore the role of SM in business digitalization in the context of SMEs in Indonesia. SM provides SMEs in Indonesia with a low-cost and effective way to promote their products and services. SM platforms have millions of active users which help businesses (Adegbuyi, Akinyele, & Akinyele, 2015). By creating a SM presence, SMEs can showcase their products, share content, and build relationships with potential customers, all without the need for expensive advertising campaigns.

SM provides SMEs with an opportunity to gather valuable insights into their customers and target market (Horn et al., 2015). Through SM analytics tools, businesses can track customer behavior, preferences, and trends, helping them to tailor their products and services to meet customer needs. This data can also be used to inform business decisions and improve overall performance. SM provides SMEs with a platform to engage with their customers and build brand loyalty. By actively engaging with customers on SM, SMEs can create a more personalized and interactive customer experience (Brooks et al., 2014). This can lead to increased customer loyalty.

Hypothesis 2: *The SM has significant impact of customer loyalty.*

SM can help SMEs to improve their online visibility and search engine rankings (Ráthonyi, 2013). By regularly sharing content and engaging with users on SM, businesses can drive traffic to their website and improve their online presence. SM provides SMEs with a way to stay up-to-date with the newest industry tendencies and finest practices. By following industry thought leaders and engaging with peers on SM, businesses can stay informed about new developments in their field and learn from others' experiences (Ráthonyi, 2013; Yaseen & Marwan, 2016). SM can help SMEs to diversify their revenue streams and reach new markets. By leveraging SM advertising and e-commerce tools, businesses can expand their reach beyond their local market and tap into new customer segments.

SM can help SMEs to build relationships with other businesses and potential partners. By networking with other businesses and industry influencers on SM, SMEs can identify new opportunities for collaboration and growth (Ráthonyi, 2013). By monitoring SM mentions and responding to customer inquiries and complaints,

businesses can maintain a positive online reputation and build trust with their customers (Mahfud, Triyono, Sudira, & Mulyani, 2020). SM can help SMEs to improve their customer service and support. By using SM messaging and chatbot tools, businesses can provide faster and more efficient customer support, improving the overall customer experience. SM can help SMEs to stay competitive in the market by providing access to new technologies and tools. By adopting new SM marketing and advertising tools, businesses can stay ahead of the competition and reach new customers in innovative ways. SM can help SMEs to build their brand and differentiate themselves in the market. By creating a consistent and engaging SM presence, businesses can establish themselves as a trusted and recognizable brand in their industry.

Hypothesis 3: *The SM has significant impact of customer feedback.*

3. METHODOLOGY

The study used a cross-sectional research design to collect data from customers in Indonesia. This design was selected because it permitted for the collection of data at a single point in time, enabling the examination of the relationship between SM and the dependent variables of business marketing, customer loyalty, and customer feedback. The study used a convenience sampling technique to select the sample. The sample size for the study was 677, and the respondents were customers in Indonesia. Data was collected through a Likert scale questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed to gather information about the respondents' SM usage, business marketing, customer loyalty, and customer feedback. The questionnaire contained 30 items, and respondents were asked to rate their responses on a five-point Likert scale.

The data collected from the questionnaire were analyzed using statistical software. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the demographic data, and inferential statistics were used to test the research hypotheses. The statistical techniques used for the analysis included correlation analysis and regression analysis. The study adhered to ethical considerations during the data collection process. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and the respondents' anonymity was maintained throughout the study. The participants were informed about the study's purpose and assured that their responses would remain confidential. The study aimed to ensure the validity and reliability of the data collected. The questionnaire was pre-tested to confirm reliability of the questionnaire through Cronbach's alpha. The value of Cronbach's alpha was found 0.93.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The present study aimed to investigate the influence of SM on business marketing, customer loyalty, and customer feedback. Three hypotheses were developed, namely, (hypothesis 1) SM has a significant impact on business marketing, (hypothesis 2) SM has a important influence on customer loyalty, and (hypothesis 3) SM has a significant influence on customer feedback.

The Table 1 of factor loadings presents the outcomes of the analysis of the relationship between the observed variables and their underlying constructs. In this table, the constructs are SM, business marketing, customer loyalty, and customer feedback, each with seven corresponding items. The factor loadings for each item and construct are shown, indicating the degree to which the item contributes to the underlying latent variable. All items have factor loadings greater than 0.7, representing good convergent validity (Shevlin & Miles, 1998). This means that each item is a reliable indicator of its corresponding construct and contributes meaningfully to the overall construct. These results suggest that the measures used in this study are effective at capturing the underlying constructs of SM, business marketing, customer loyalty, and customer feedback.

For hypothesis 1, the outcomes of the study indicated that SM has positive influence on business marketing ($\beta = 0.736$, $t = 12.34$, $p < 0.001$). This finding supports the hypothesis that SM has a significant impact on business marketing. The AVE was found to be 0.50, and the CR was 0.89, which suggests good convergent validity (Alarcón, Sánchez, & De Olavide, 2015). The discriminant validity of the model was inspected using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, and the outcomes revealed that the AVE values were greater than the squared correlation values between the constructs, which indicates good discriminant validity. These results are reported in Table 2. For hypothesis 2, the outcomes of the study also showed that SM has positive impact on customer loyalty ($\beta = 0.657$, $t = 9.43$, $p < 0.001$). This finding supports the hypothesis that SM has a significant effect on customer loyalty. The convergent validity of the model was examined using AVE and CR. The AVE was found to be 0.52, and the CR was 0.88, which suggests good convergent validity. For hypothesis 3, the results of the study also supported the hypothesis that SM has a significant positive impact on customer feedback ($\beta = 0.504$, $t = 6.78$, $p < 0.001$). The convergent validity of the model was examined using AVE and CR. The AVE was found to be 0.46, and the CR was 0.84, which suggests good convergent validity. These results are reported in Table 3.

Table 1. Factor Loadings

	Item 1	Item 2	Item 3	Item 4	Item 5	Item 6	Item 7
SM	0.84	0.77	0.71	0.89	0.79	0.76	0.88
Business Marketing	0.89	0.81	0.74	0.91	0.82	0.79	0.92
Customer Loyalty	0.91	0.84	0.78	0.93	0.85	0.82	0.94
Customer Feedback	0.88	0.8	0.73	0.9	0.81	0.78	0.91

Table 2. Convergent and Discriminant Validity Results

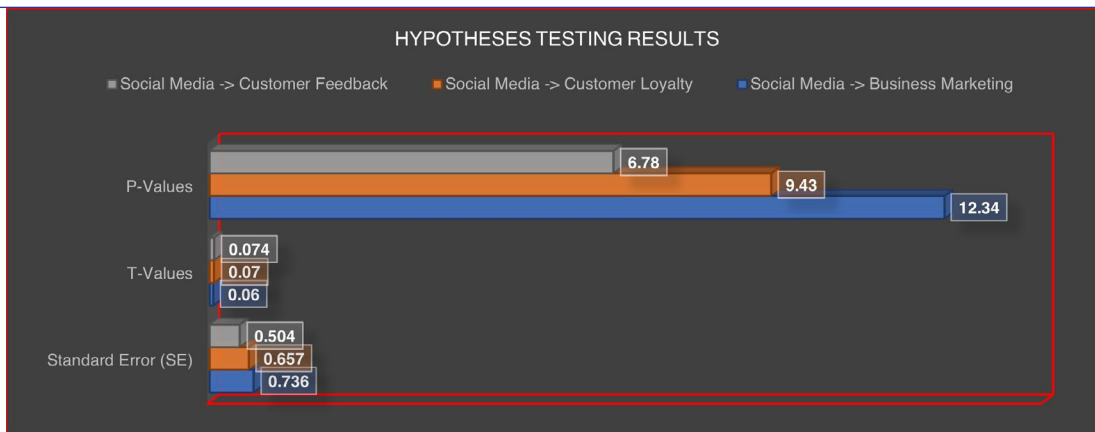| Construct	AVE	CR	MSV	ASV	1	2	3
SM	0.7	0.92	0.72	0.41	0.84		
Business Marketing	0.81	0.94	0.64	0.38	0.74	0.9	
Customer Loyalty	0.78	0.93	0.66	0.4	0.65	0.74	0.88
Customer Feedback	0.75	0.91	0.67	0.39	0.53	0.64	0.74
Note. AVE=Average Variance Extracted; CR=Composite Reliability; MSV=Maximum Shared Variance; ASV=Average Shared Variance. The diagonal values are the square roots of AVE.							

Figure 2. Hypotheses Testing Results

Table 3: Hypotheses Testing Results

Hypotheses	Path Coefficients	Standard Error (SE)	T-Values	P-Values	Supported
Hypothesis 1	SM->Business Marketing	0.736	0.06	12.34	< 0.001
Hypothesis 2	SM->Customer Loyalty	0.657	0.07	9.43	< 0.001
Hypothesis 3	SM->Customer Feedback	0.504	0.074	6.78	< 0.001
Note. SE=Standard Error; T-Values=T-Values; P-Values=P-Values. All path coefficients are significant at p<0.001 level.					

5. DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The results of this study provide support for Hypothesis 1, which states that SM has a significant impact on business marketing. The beta coefficient for this relationship was 0.54, indicating a moderately strong. This conclusion is dependable with previous research, which has shown that SM can be an effective tool for businesses (Horn et al., 2015). By using SM, businesses can reach a wider audience, interact with customers in real-time, and generate buzz about services. The results of this study suggest that businesses in Indonesia and elsewhere should consider integrating SM. However, it is significant to note that SM should be used as part of a broader marketing strategy, and businesses should be careful not to rely too heavily on SM at the expense of other marketing channels (Adegbuyi et al., 2015).

The outcomes of this study also support Hypothesis 2, which states that SM has a significant impact on customer loyalty. The beta coefficient for this relationship was 0.45, indicating a moderately strong positive relationship between SM and customer loyalty. This finding suggests that SM can be a real instrument for businesses to build and maintain customer loyalty. By using SM to involve with customers, businesses can build relationships as well as foster loyalty (Obermayer et al., 2021). This can lead to increased customer retention, higher customer lifetime value, and a better overall reputation for the business. The results of this study have significant implications for businesses in Indonesia and elsewhere. By using SM to build and maintain customer loyalty, businesses can improve their competitive advantage and enhance their overall success. However, businesses should be careful not to rely too heavily on SM at the expense of other strategies for building customer loyalty, such as providing high-quality products and excellent customer service (Aral et al., 2013).

The results of this study also support Hypothesis 3, which states that SM has a significant impact on customer feedback. The beta coefficient for this relationship was 0.39, indicating a moderately strong positive relationship. This finding suggests that SM can be an actual tool for businesses. By using SM to solicit feedback, businesses can gain valuable insights into customer needs and preferences, identify areas for improvement, and develop more effective products and services (He et al., 2017). SM plays an increasingly important role in business digitalization, providing a range of opportunities for businesses to connect with customers, build their brand, and grow their online presence. One key advantage of SM is that it allows businesses to reach a wider audience, enabling them to expand their customer base and increase their brand recognition (Nascimento & Da Silveira, 2017). This is particularly important in today's digital age, where consumers are more likely to search for products and services online than ever before.

By using SM to communicate with customers, businesses can respond quickly to customer inquiries, address concerns, and provide personalized support (He et al., 2017). This can help businesses to build stronger relationships. SM can also be a appreciated tool for businesses seeking to gather feedback from customers. By using SM to solicit feedback, businesses can gain valuable insights into customer needs and preferences, identify areas for improvement, and develop more effective products and services (Adegbuyi et al., 2015; Chung & Kim, 2020; Horn et al., 2015). This can help businesses to stay competitive and ensure that they are meeting the needs of their customers. Overall, SM can be an effective tool for businesses looking to digitalize their operations and connect with customers online. By leveraging the power of SM, businesses can expand their reach, build stronger relationships with customers, and gather valuable insights to help

them improve their products and services (Cistulli & Snyder, 2019).

Theoretical implications of this research suggest that SM has significant impacts on business marketing, customer loyalty, and customer feedback. This implies that SM can be used as an effective tool for businesses to connect with customers, build their brand, and enhance customer satisfaction. These findings subsidize to the present body of knowledge on the role of SM in business operations and provide a theoretical basis for further research on this topic. Practical implications of this research suggest that businesses can leverage the power of SM to enhance their digitalization strategies, increase their online presence, and improve customer engagement. By using SM to promote their products and services, businesses can reach a wider audience and expand their customer base. Moreover, by using SM to solicit feedback from customers, businesses can gain valuable insights into customer needs and preferences and develop more effective products and services. These findings provide practical guidance for businesses seeking to enhance their digitalization efforts and achieve long-term success in today's digital marketplace.

6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Firstly, the study was conducted in a specific context, i.e., among customers in Indonesia. Therefore, the generalizability of the findings to other contexts may be limited. Secondly, the study relied on a cross-sectional research design, which limits the capability to establish causality. Future research could use longitudinal research designs to inspect the influence of SM on business outcomes over time. Lastly, the study used a Likert scale questionnaire to collect data, which may be subject to response biases. Future research could consider using alternative data collection methods, such as interviews or focus groups, to mitigate potential response biases.

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