SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING TRENDS: INFLUENCERS' ACCOUNTS FOR SMES PRODUCT MARKETING

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Abstract: The existence of influencers' accounts on social media is utilized in public relations initiatives to position business products so that they can contribute to marketing performance. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the effect of using influencers' accounts on marketing performance for SMEs actors. The participants were 226 SMEs actors using social media who were collected using a questionnaire and the scale used was the Likert Scale (5 Scale). The data obtained were analyzed using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Model (PLS-SEM) and processed using WarpPLS Version 8.0. Based on the results gained; it is recommended that the use of influencers' accounts on social media has a significant positive influence on the marketing performance of SMEs. The influencers could directly trigger good marketing performance and the use of influencers mediated by product positioning customized with certain types of products could also have a significant positive influence on the marketing performance of SMEs.

Keywords: *Social Media, Influencer, Product Positioning, Marketing Performance, SMEs*

1. Introduction

The spread of business promotion through digital has increasingly led to unusual promotional methods among society, also supported by the increasing number of social media users. Indonesia's active social media users especially on the Social Networking Site in 2022, are 191.4 million people (68.9% of the total population of Indonesia) (Kepois, We are Social in Datareportal, 2022).

Figure 1: Social Media Users in Indonesia reported in 2022

Based on idxchannel, the figure is estimated to reach more than 200 million people, including social media users with multiple accounts. The existence of social media has

received attention from several industries, businesses and business scales in Indonesia, which is supported by research conducted by Nugraheni & Soraya (2021) which shows that there is a big role for social media in marketing the food and beverage business as well as fashion accessories into a creative industry business that is quite easy to apply social media in order to support the household economy.

The number of users has grown fantastically and accounts belonging to members of society have appeared with a large number of followers that have the potential to be used as promotional deposit accounts outside of public figures known today as Influencers. Gluksman (2017) in his research states that influencer marketing is described as a process of identifying, involving, and supporting individuals who can create conversations with brand customers in which this was a growing trend and was very well-used in public relations initiatives. In recent years, this strategy has become a strategy that involves massive social media. This strategy is effective in creating opportunities for brands to market products through social media services belonging to influencers. The research findings reveal that the use of social media marketing by influencers in public relations initiatives has destroyed the wall between consumers and brands and changed the way the two interact.

Influencers' accounts are the target of small to large scale businesses to promote products so that their reach becomes wider, more specialized and intense. However, there are some adjustments that must be considered in using influencers on social media, such as the survey results in the research of Masuda et al. (2022) that social media influencer marketing strategies need to be adjusted based on personal attributes, characterization, and type of influencer. In addition, it is added again from the research of Chung-Wha et al. (2020) that social media influencers can become human brands for a particular brand with an indicator of each influencer's persona (i.e. inspiration, enjoyment, and similarity) and content curation capabilities (informativeness) which is supported by positive emotions formed by the Influencer that are transferred and positively influence followers to acquire the product/brand that the Influencer recommends.

Product positioning as part of a product strategy can take advantage of the presence of influencers supported by research by Gul et al. (2021) which states that various businesses have moved beyond traditional sales and integrated unique ways to position themselves in the minds of customers who always search for information so that the businesses are ready to reap performance results. The use of influencers can be a good way with the developments that are happening today. Based on the existing phenomena, the author is interested in conducting research on social media accounts from influencers if it is associated with increasing SMEs marketing performance.

Social Media Influencer

Social media as a collection of applications based on the internet with the ideological and technological basis of Web 2.0 gave its users the opportunity to create and exchange content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). This social media had provided many changes in the way of communicating between business actors and their customers (Erwin et al., 2021). Social media from various users raised figures of influencers who could provide influence and impact for their followers (Ligariaty and Irwansyah, 2021). Influencers in social media called Social Media Influencers were social media users who were different from other users, those who were SMI had power, they actively created user-generated content that could be enjoyed by the wider community (Debaere et al., 2021). Ligarity and Irwansyah (2021) add that SMI

was believed to have an influence because of his or her popularity on social media, they were grouped based on the number of followers they had.

There were 3 characteristics used to analyze the use of social media influencers in the research conducted by Gluksman (2017) namely; confidence (the self-confidence and ability to convince others), authenticity (the authenticity of the identity of the influencer and his/her followers' accounts) and Interactivity (cooperation with followers to interact in the form of response or feedback). Hendrayati et al. (2016) mentions that social media influencers as celebgram use the TEARS model as an attribute in analyzing social media influencers, namely Trustworthiness (T) which represents the confidence of a celebrity, Expertise (E) which represents the abilities possessed by a celebgram, Attractiveness (A) which is more dominant in the physical attractiveness of a celebgram, Respect (R) which shows mutual respect and the last is Similarity (S) the suitability of followers of a celebgram with the target audience. Thus, this study collaborated with 2 types of existing models using a new model, namely Attractiveness (A) which represents the attractiveness of appearance both physically and in the nature of the influencer, Similarity (S) the suitability of followers of the celebrity with the target audience, Authenticity (A) (authenticity of identity from influencers and their follower accounts), Confidence (C) (confidence possessed and the ability to convince others), Interactivity (I) (there was cooperation with followers to interact in the form of responses or feedback). It is abbreviated as ASACI.

Product Positioning

Product positioning was carried out to determine the characteristics of the nature of each product that would be offered to the market according to certain customer segments (Lei & Moon, 2015). In determining a better decision to position a product, companies needed to consider changing customer needs and strategies to meet those needs or think differently from competitors (Simpson et al., 2001). This positioning process tried to identify each customer's perception, attitude from customers and patterns of using certain brand products by customers so that the products offered got the best place for customers (Karadeniz, 2009). The company's interest in the brand's name was increasing in this positioning phase.

In measuring the effect of positioning on brand performance (Gul et al., 2021) 5 positioning strategies were used, namely: Positioning by Design, Positioning by Quality, Positioning by Brand Image, Positioning by Price and Undifferentiation Positioning with each item in it. Based on the results of the adoption of Positioning Strategies from Kotha & Vadlamani (1995), the main focus of this research is Differentiation Strategy by Image with 6 items including; Marketing methods Innovation, above average marketing and advertising, improved ad quality, brand recognition, influencing distribution channels, and reputation-building efforts. Based on the literature, this study adopted 4 items to measure product positioning efforts, namely by carrying out unusual promotions, building product identification, expanding distribution channels and trying to build product reputation. The four items were directed to carry out a successful marketing strategy in accordance with the concepts of dissimilarity, uniqueness, favorability, credibility (Fuchs & Diamantopoulos, 2010) so as to increase the purchase intensity of the product.

Marketing Performance

Performance was an important part used to measure the success of a company (O' Sullivan et al., 2009). The assessment was largely based on assumptions that increased marketing accountability which strengthened the company's performance and adds to marketing

credibility. Nuryakin & Ardyan (2019) states that company performance can be divided into several types of performance, including: marketing performance, financial performance, corporate performance and organizational performance. Basically, the dimensions of each performance have in common, which usually consist of financial and non-financial performance.

The focus of this research was marketing performance. Marketing performance measurement was carried out because of the relationship between marketing activities and business performance (Clark & Ambler, 2001). Clark et al. (2006) also explains that marketing performance is the result of marketing activities. Clark (1999) and Lamberti & Noci (2010) explain that marketing performance is divided into several dimensions, including: financial performance (profit, cash flow, sales), non-financial performance (market share, customer satisfaction, customer loyalty), input performance (marketing assets, marketing budget, marketing audit), and multiple measurements (efficiency, effectiveness) while Farandori & Anwar (2021) used Sales Growth, Market Growth and Profit Growth in measuring Marketing Performance (marketing performance). In this research, we adapted marketing performance indicators from Gronholdt and Martensen (2006) and Morgan (2012), including: Sales Growth, Profit Growth, Customer Growth, and Market Reach Growth.

Research Model and Hypothesis
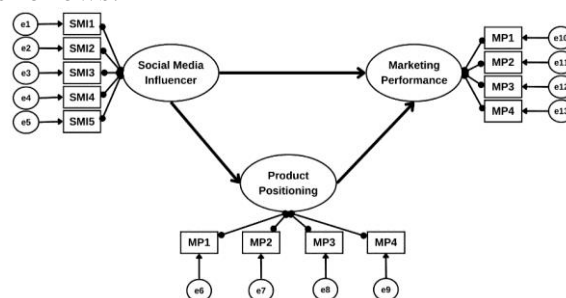### Research Model
The research model is as follows:

Figure 2: Research Model

Hypothesis
Social Media Influencer on Marketing Performance
The tools that existed in social media were becoming more valuable and became a core element in communication strategies to the average consumer (Gluksman, 2017). In marketing objectives, an influencer worked to attract the attention of key customers by increasing brand awareness, establishing relationships with the audience and asking for feedback on their online activities (Booth & Matic, 2011). This had a good impact on the company's brand performance because of its success in interacting with consumers where this was an inseparable part of marketing performance (Gluksman, 2017). The research conducted by Hodijah et al (2021) shows that there is a positive and significant influence of the role of an influencer on organizational marketing performance in small and medium enterprises (SMEs).
H1 = There is a positive and significant effect of SMI on Marketing Performance

Social Media Influencer on Product Positioning
Online influencers in social media were used by companies to convey clear information regarding the position of the product and its use (Yu, 2022). A post or photo uploaded by an

influencer by mentioning a particular product is how influencer marketing works, which can provide product recommendations. The research conducted by Lee et al. (2021) states that business actors can collaborate with influencers to generate responses, the right influencer can position the product appropriately according to the value to be conveyed.

H2 = There is a positive and significant effect of SMI on Product Positioning

Product Positioning on Marketing Performance

Product positioning in marketing was not only used as a strategy but was also one of the main patterns in determining a business plan that could contribute to business performance (Dovel, 1990). The importance of product positioning on performance had been conveyed by many researchers (Clement & Grotemeyer, 1990 and Devlin et al., 1995) who also stated that the concept of positioning was the essence of business success. Optimal product positioning aimed to determine the level of objectives of the product that had been set by the company in improving product marketing performance (Albers, 1979). Product positioning strategy also provided a significant mediating effect on brand performance as marketing performance (Gul et al., 2021). Nugraheni & Soraya (2021) in their research found the same thing, that social media plays a major role in marketing fashion products, accessories, food and beverages for household businesses, social media was used as a means of positioning household business products so as to improve marketing results or performance.

H3 = There is a positive and significant effect of Product Positioning on Marketing Performance

H4 = Product Positioning mediates the relationship between SMI and Marketing Performance

2. Research Method

2.1. Respondent

Respondents in this study were SMEs actors who used the services of influencers on social media in marketing their products. The number of respondents who filled out the questionnaire was 226 respondents, they filled out questionnaires that were distributed online via Google forms, this was done because the locations of respondents were diverse and the situation due to the Covid-19 pandemic had not fully recovered. There were several respondents who were met by the research team directly because the location was not too far away, but they were also directed to fill out online questionnaires via the Google form. Respondent data collection was carried out in June - July 2022.
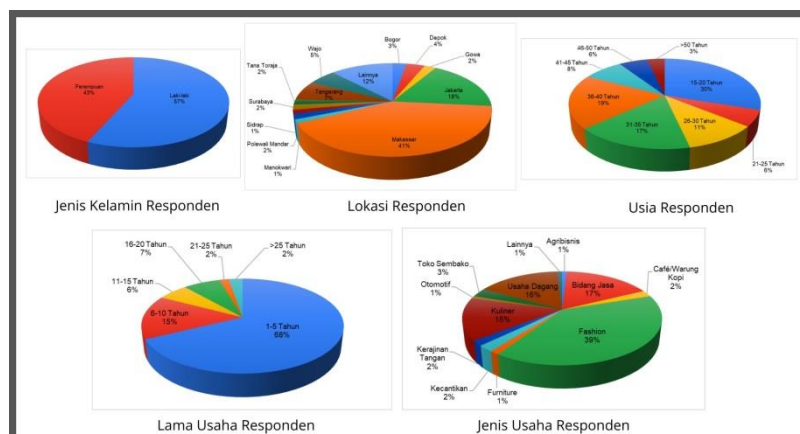

Figure 3: Respondent Characteristics Diagram

Based on the diagram above, it can be seen that of the 226 respondents, 57% or 128 respondents were male respondents and the remaining 43% or 98 respondents were female respondents.

The location of the respondents in this study was the majority from Makassar City, namely 41% (91 respondents), followed by respondents from Jakarta City by 18% (40 respondents), then from Tangerang City by 7% (15 respondents), Regency Wajo by 5% (12 respondents), Depok City by 4% (8 respondents), Bogor City by 3% (6 respondents), Gowa Regency by 2% (5 respondents), each from Bekasi City, Polewali-Mandar Regency, Surabaya City and Tana Toraja Regency by 2% (4 respondents), Manokwari City and Sidrap Regency by 1% (3 respondents) and other cities/districts by 12% (27 respondents) consisting of respondents from Bandung City, Bone Regency, Cirebon Regency, Denpasar City, Jambi City, Jayapura City, Bandar Lampung City, Mamasa Regency, Mamuju Regency, Manado City, Mataram City, Palopo City, Palu City, Pare-Pare City, Parigi Moutong Regency, Pekalongan City, Pinrang Regency , Salatiga City, Samarinda City, Sidoarjo Regency, Surakarta-Solo City, Soppeng Regency, East Luwu Regency-Sorowako and Sukabumi City.

The age group of the respondents in this study was dominated by SMEs actors aged between 15-20 years old with a total of 68 respondents, which shows that SMEs actors have mostly come from teenagers and mostly use the services of social media influencers. In addition, the respondents of 36-40 years old were 19% or 44 respondents. Then the respondents of 31-35 years old were 17% or 38 respondents. The next respondents aged 26-30 years old were 11% or 24 respondents, 8% or 18 respondents for 41-45 years old, 6% or 13 respondents each for 21-25 and 46-50 years old as well as 3% or 8 respondents for 50 years old.

The length of business run by the respondents in this study was dominated by SMEs aged 1-5 years with a total of 153 respondents or 68%. This provides information that SMEs actors who used the services of social media influencers were new SMEs. Followed by those businesses that were: aged 6-10 years with a total of 34 respondents or 15%; business aged 16-20 years with 16 respondents or 7%; businesses aged 11-15 years with 13 respondents or 6%; businesses aged over 25 years with 6 respondents or 2%; and businesses aged 21-25 years with 4 respondents or 2%.

Based on the tabulation of the questionnaire results, there were various types of businesses from the respondents of this study. Fashion business actors became the most dominating respondents with a total of 89 respondents or 39% of the total respondents, followed by businesses in the service sector with a total of 38 respondents or 17%. Then various trading businesses amounted to 36 respondents or 16% and culinary businesses were 33 respondents or 15%. Several other businesses that became respondents in this study were 3% food shops (7 respondents), 2% cafe/coffee shop (5 respondents), 2% beauty (5 respondents), handicrafts 2% (4 respondents), furniture 1% (3 respondents), Agribusiness 1% (2 respondents), Automotive 1% (2 respondents) and other 1% (1 respondent from laundry business and 1 respondent from livestock business).

2.2. Measurement

The instrument in this study was a questionnaire measured using a Likert scale (5 scales). Starting with a scale of 1 indicating disagreement with the statement in the questionnaire and the most agreeing scale was a scale of 5. Each statement in this study was made based on the indicators of each variable used, namely; independent variable which was Social Media

Influencer, mediating variable which was product positioning and dependent variable which was marketing performance.
The following were indicators used:
- Social Media Influencer variables were Attractiveness (SMI1), Similarity (SMI2), Authenticity (SMI3), Confidence (SMI4) and Interactivity (SMI5)
- Product Positioning variables were unusual promotions (PP1), building product identification (PP2), expanding distribution channels (PP3) and trying to build product reputation (PP4)
- Marketing Performance variables were Customer Growth (MP1), Unit Sales Growth (MP2), Market Share Growth (MP3) and Profit Margin Growth (MP4)

2.3. Analysis
The analysis used in this study was Partial Least Square - Structural Equation Model (PLS-SEM), the reason for using PLS-SEM was because the data obtained were not normally distributed (Limayen et al., 2007; Nadkarni & Gupta, 2007). PLS-SEM was considered more powerful for testing models that have abnormal data and also have a predictive focus (Hair et al. 2011, 2012, 2017) which could support the objectives of this study. WarpPLS Version 8 was used for the data processing.

3. Results and Discussion
3.1. Results
The first step was to test the outer model or research instrument. This test was done by testing the validity and reliability of the instruments used, these two tests were important to ensure that the instruments used were valid and reliable. In measuring validity, there were several indicators used, namely Convergent Validity (by looking at the loading factor value and Average Variance Extracted/AVE) and Determinant Validity (Hair et al., 2017). The standardized loading factor should be worth 0.708 or higher (Hair et al., 2017) supported by Hulland (1999) which states that the loading factor used is above 0.70, especially for social studies. In this study, the Loading Factor values for each construct were all above 0.708 (can be seen in table 1). While the AVE value on the required Convergent Validity was above 0.5 so it could be said to be valid (Hair et al., 2017). The AVE value for each variable in this study was above 0.5 (can be seen in table 1). The next validity test is seen from the results of the determinant validity, the determinant validity compares the square root of the AVE with the correlation between constructs (Table 2). The square root value of the AVE must be greater than the correlation between constructs (Hair et al., 2017). Table 2 shows that the developed instrument is valid because the square root value of the AVE is greater than the correlation between constructs.

The next test was the reliability test, then it can be seen from the Internal Consistency test, namely the Cronbach Alpha/CA and Composite Reliability/CR values. Each required value was above 0.60 (Hair et al., 2017). Based on the results of testing the data obtained, the Cronbach Alpha and Composite Reliability values were each above 0.60 (Table 1).

Table 1: Validity and Reliability Testing

Variable	Loading Factor
Social Media Influencer (AVE=0,666, CA=0,874, CR=0,909)	
Attractiveness (SMI1)	0.780
Similarity (SMI2)	0.872

Authenticity (SMI3)	0.788
Confidence (SMI4)	0.807
Interactivity (SMI5)	0.829
Product Positioning (AVE=0,546, CA=0,721, CR=0,827)	
Unusual promotion (PP1)	0.722
Building product identification (PP2)	0.805
Expanding distribution channels (PP3)	0.714
Trying to build product reputation (PP4)	0.710
Marketing Performance (AVE=0,719, CA=0,869, CR=0,911)	
Customer Growth (MP1)	0.822
Unit Sales Growth (MP2)	0.823
Market Share Growth (MP3)	0.857
Profit Margin Growth (MP4)	0.888

Table 2: Determinant Validity

Variable	(1)	(2)	(3)
Social Media Influencer **(1)**	**(0.816)**	0.524	0.435
Product Positioning **(2)**	0.524	**(0.739)**	0.458
Marketing Performance **(3)**	0.435	0.458	**(0.848)**

There were 4 (four) hypotheses tested in this study. The first hypothesis was that there was a positive and significant effect of social media influencers on marketing performance, based on the test results showing that social media influencers have a positive and significant influence on marketing performance (β=0.295; P<0.001) so H1 is accepted. The second hypothesis was that there was a positive and significant effect of social media influencers on product positioning, the test results show that social media influencers have a positive and significant influence on product positioning (β=0.557; P<0.001) meaning H2 is accepted. The third hypothesis was that there was a positive and significant effect of product positioning on marketing performance, the test results show that product positioning has a positive and significant effect on marketing performance (β=0.299; P<0.001) so H3 is accepted. The last hypothesis was that Product Positioning that mediated the relationship between SMI and Marketing Performance, based on the test results, the indirect results and total effects are positive and significant (β=0.167; P<0.001), meaning that product positioning can mediate the influence between social media influencers on marketing performance indirectly so H4 is accepted.

Table 3: Hypothesis Testing Result

Hypothesis	Result	
H1: Social Media Influencer → Marketing Performance	β=0.295; P<0.001	H1 Accepted
H2: Social Media Influencer → Product Positioning	β=0.557; P<0.001	H2 Accepted
H3: Product Positioning → Marketing Performance	β=0.299; P<0.001	H3 Accepted
H4: Social Media Influencer → Product Positioning → Marketing Performance	β=0,167; P<0.001	H4 Accepted

3.2. Discussion
SMEs in this study were social media users and influencer service users in which it shows that the existence of social media was not only to help smooth relations between humans but

also to become a forum for business actors, especially SMEs in offering their products. SMEs had an easy and powerful way to introduce their products through social media. The use of social media contributed to the business value of SMEs, especially in increasing customer engagement (Stockdale et al., 2012). Involvement in SMEs social media was expected to contribute to SMEs performance. Various efforts had been made to improve performance, including the use of services that were trending in social media, namely the services of social media influencers (Gul et al., 2021).

The use of influencer services in improving marketing performance in this study shows significant positive results, which means that SMEs users of influencer services on social media get good benefits. Influencers helped SMEs in communicating their products to customers (Glucksman, 2017). This is in accordance with the research conducted by Booth & Matic (2011) which shows the importance of influencers in product marketing with the result that influencers tried to establish relationships and created interactions in the form of feedback on the products offered. The same thing is also shown in the research of Hodijah et al. (2021). Hendrayati et al. (2016) in his research that specifically used Instagram also supported the results of this study where there was a positive influence from influencers in this case celegram as a promotional medium in increasing purchase intensity which had an impact on marketing performance. Yaacob et al. (2021) also stated the same thing that influencer endorsement in social media has a positive and significant influence on online purchase intentions for fashion products during the pandemic which improves business marketing performance.

Social media influencers also had a good impact on the product positioning of SMEs who were respondents in this study. Each influencer had a different style that could be adapted to the type of product produced by SMEs, for example lifestyle products that used influencers who cared about lifestyle developments (Glucksman, 2017). In addition, this also included beauty products. They built narratives to persuade the public according to the message they wanted to convey (Ligariaty & Irwansyah, 2021) as well as food products from influencers who liked to review food or share food-related posts rather than personal content (Lee et al., 2021). The use of social media influencers had built community relations initiatives. Influencers removed barriers between consumers and products. Consumers become closer to brands and products (Glucksman, 2017).

Product positioning which was one of the steps in determining the best place for a product to the public (Karadeniz, 2009) also had a positive and significant influence on the marketing performance of SMEs. In this study, there was a significant positive effect of product positioning of SMEs on the marketing performance of their business. Positioning the product correctly means that you have set the right target so that the realization of the purchase can be achieved. Dovel (1990) explained how product positioning was part of a business plan in achieving good marketing performance. The same thing was also conveyed by Albers (1979).

As a mediating variable in this study, product positioning also turned out to have a good impact in mediating the relationship between social media influencers used by SMEs and the marketing performance of their businesses. Although the influence given was not as big as the direct influence between social media influencers on marketing performance, but this product positioning could still have a positive and significant effect. This is in line with the research conducted by Gul et al. (2021). The same results are also supported by the research findings of Nugraheni & Soraya (2021) that social media plays a major role in the marketing of home industry products which are used as a means of product positioning business results.

There were several SMEs products that had to be supported by product positioning in improving their marketing performance. The use of influencers from SMEs had to position their products according to the character of the products they had. This had to be supported by the interaction between SMEs owners and the selected social media influencers. SMI was chosen because it was in accordance with the product positioning plan of MSMEs. They had also to provide mutually supportive benefits (Lee et al., 2021).

4. Conclusion

The use of influencers, which has been one of the promotional trends on social media, has been welcomed and utilized by SMEs. The results of the study indicates that there was a positive and significant influence of the use of social media influencers on marketing performance, either directly or through product positioning mediation. Product positioning mediation was needed for certain products that had to position their products according to the character of the influencers used. The use of this easy and inexpensive trend could be a good alternative for all businesses to introduce products, establish relationships and create interactions in the form of feedback with the desired potential customers. The selected social media influencer was certainly with various considerations of compatibility with business products so that the business positioning the product was also in accordance with the target.

Conflict of Interest
There was no conflict of interest from the author until this research has been completed.

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