

Improving Brand and Marketing Performance of SMEs Through Social Media Usage: An Empirical Research

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ABSTRACT--*This study provides the role of social media usage to escalate competitive advantage, brand performance, and marketing performance among Indonesian SMEs. This study used a cross-sectional design with the purposive sampling method. Data were collected from a sample of 150 SMEs from the food, fashion, and cosmetics sector area by giving an online questionnaire to respondents through email. Partial least squares structural equation modeling was used to analyze the data with the helped of WarpPLS6.0. This study revealed that the model was able to explain 55% of the variance in SME marketing performance. Result showed that social media usage had a positive and significant effect on brand performance, competitive advantage and marketing performance. Moreover, SME brand performance was significantly positive give effect to marketing performance directly and indirectly with the mediating role of competitive advantage. Based on the results, theoretical and practical implications are provided for scholars and SME owners.*

Keywords-- *Social Media Usage, Competitive Advantage, SMEs, Brand Performance, Marketing Performance.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) are one of the biggest drivers of economic growth in the world. SME Organizations need effective and efficient marketing tools to produce good performance or are said to be able to achieve market and financial goals, especially in conditions that are as competitive as they are today (Gama, 2011). Social media is a popular tool used by Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) due to its easy technical requirements and low cost, but it can produce a big impact. A number of studies investigated the use of social media among SMEs and found SMEs used social media for various organizational objectives such as marketing, communication, sales, advertising, innovation, problem resolution, customer service, human resources, information technology, driving cultural change, advertising on the social network and internet marketing. Previous study indicated that SME uses social media technologies as a way to communicate with its customers and support internal communication and collaboration (Ainin, 2015).

Indonesia is a large archipelago country, which has a population of more than 268.2 million people, of which 56% of the population (150 million) are active social media users and 48% of the population (130 million) are mobile social media users (websindo.com, 2019). In line with that data, SMEs are one of the pillars of meeting the

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target of achieving digital potential to explore the digital economic potential of USD 130 billion until 2020. In line with that data, the Indonesian government supports by organizing various programs to encourage SMEs to go digital. The target is that by the end of 2020, there are already 6 million SMEs that have gone digital. The large potential of online transactions is expected to encourage the welfare of the people of Indonesia. However, According to Deloitte's research (2015), from 57.9 million SMEs in Indonesia, only 9% of SMEs businesses were serious about using the internet to promote or sell their products online. From this phenomenon, the SMEs owner needs to understand the important role of social media and its impact outcome to their business. Therefore they will use and utilize social media more seriously and professionally.

In previous research, social media was that could increase brand equity (Bruhn, Coulter, Schoenmueller, & Schäfer, 2012; Cawsey & Rowley, 2016; Christou, 2015; Khajuriaa & Rachnab, 2017; Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2015), competitive advantage (He, Zha, & Li, 2013; Mucan & Özeltürkay, 2014; Ribarsky, Xiaoyu Wang, & Dou, 2014), and business performance (Ainin, 2015; Nuseir, 2018; Parveen, Jaafar, & Ainin, 2016; Tajvidi & Karami, 2017; W. Y. C. Wang, Pauleen, & Zhang, 2016). While there is a lot of research on building brands using social media, most only look at the relationship between social media usage on brand equity, or one of its dimensions. Moreover, there were very few studies that link between SMEs' social media usage and its consequences holistically, such as brand performance, competitive advantage, and marketing performance, especially in SMEs background in a developing country. Therefore this research aims to fill that gap by examining the role of social media usage and its impact outcomes, such as brand performance, competitive advantage, and SME marketing performance among Indonesian SMEs.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media Usage, Brand Performance & Competitive Advantage. In the current digital era, various studies on social media have been carried out, including studies on the adoption of social media (Ainin, Parveen, Moghavyemi, Jaafar, & Mohd Shuib, 2015; AlSharji, 2018; Dahnil, Marzuki, Langgat, & Fabeil, 2014; Durkin & McGowan, 2013; Gavino, Williams, Jacobson, & Smith, 2019; Mack, Marie-Pierre, & Redican, 2017; Sarosa, 2012); social media for managing customer relationship (Charoensukmongkol & Sasatanun, 2017; Malthouse, Haenlein, Skiera, Wege, & Zhang, 2013; Trainor, Andzulis, Rapp, & Agnihotri, 2014); and social media as a tool to build a brand (Cawsey & Rowley, 2016; Gensler, Völckner, Liu-Thompkins, & Wiertz, 2013; Moro & Rita, 2018; Tsimonis & Dimitriadis, 2014).

Social media is not only a communication tool for entertainment but also an important part of marketing strategies in business life, especially for SMEs that have limited capital (Öztamur & Karakadılar, 2014). Even in various studies, social media has been proven to improve brand performance and competitive advantage. Lee and Park (2016) found that social media enhance the sustainable brand of airport enterprise in Korea. Social media also can improve brand equity in airline industry (Seo & Park, 2018); in tourist destination (Stojanovic, Andreu, & Curras-Perez, 2018); in live music festival event (Llopis-Amorós, Gil-Saura, Ruiz-Molina, & Fuentes-Blasco, 2019) and in smartphone industry (Yu & Yuan, 2019). According to Abimbola (2001), branding is a marketing principle relevant to the entrepreneurial quest for stimulating demand and creating a competitive advantage. Brand becomes an inimitable superior value-creating and it is one of the keys to achieving sustainable competitive

advantage over competitors (Ponsonby-McCabe & Boyle, 2006). Not only that, social media also reinforce business competitive advantage (Liu, Jiang, & Zhao, 2019; Mucan & Özeltürkay, 2014; Ribarsky et al., 2014). According to Ribarsky et al. (2014), firms derive competitive advantage by using social media analytic related to big data. Meanwhile, Mucan and Özeltürkay (2014) in their study explained Turkish banks create a competitive advantage through social media content in their webpages. Based on the literature, the following hypothesis was proposed:

H1: Social media usage positively affects brand performance

H2: Brand performance positively affects competitive advantage

H3: Social media usage positively affects competitive advantage

Social Media Usage and SME Performance. Social media adoption has been confirmed to improve performance by previous studies, such as online SME performance (Musa, 2016a); customer relationship performance (Trainor et al., 2014); firm performance (Ahmad, Abu Bakar, & Ahmad, 2019; Parveen et al., 2016; Tajvidi & Karami, 2017); and SMEs performance (Ahmad, Ahmad, & Abu Bakar, 2018; Ainin, 2015; Nuseir, 2018; W. Y. C. Wang et al., 2016). In this study, researchers focus on marketing performance which is part of the dimensions of firm or SME performance. We therefore hypothesize:

H4: Social media usage positively affects SME marketing performance

Brand Performance and SME Performance. Several studies prove that brand can affect firm performance (Dunes & Pras, 2017; Lee & Park, 2016; Mohan & Sequeira, 2016; Muhonen, Hirvonen, & Laukkanen, 2017; Odoom, Mensah, & Asamoah, 2017; H.-M. D. Wang & Sengupta, 2016). Park, Eisingerich, Pol, and Park (2013) found brand logo benefits have a strong direct and indirect impact on firm performance. Whereas Lee and Park (2016) found sustainable brands significantly affect business performance in the airport enterprise in Korea. Besides that, the results of research conducted by Agostini, Daniela Carlucci, Filippini, and Nosella (2014) said that there is a positive relationship between using the trademark as a branding effort on SME performance in the fashion industry. We therefore hypothesize:

H5: Brand performance positively affects SME marketing performance

Competitive advantage and Marketing Performance. Competitive advantage has become a popular topic in marketing management research in recent years. Many studies have proven that competitive advantage is a key factor in improving business performance or marketing performance (Kamukama, Ahiauzu, & Ntayi, 2011; Kamukama, Kyomuhangi, Akisimire, & Orobia, 2017; Ma, 2000; Pereira-Moliner et al., 2015; Sigalas & Papadakis, 2018; Zainol & Al Mamun, 2018). Competitive advantage also can improve export performance (Rua, França, & Fernández Ortiz, 2018; Tan & Sousa, 2015) and new venture's performance (Anwar, Rehman, & Shah, 2018). From the previous discussion, following formal hypothesis was framed:

H6: Social media usage positively affects SME marketing performance

Based on the literature review, a theoretical framework is showed in figure 1.

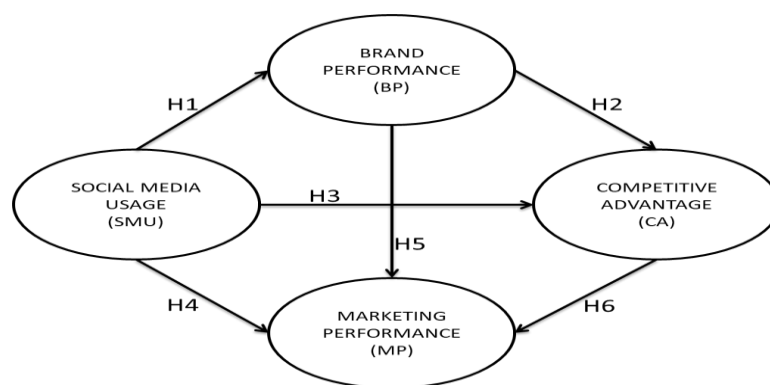


Figure 1: Research Framework

III. RESEARCH METHODS

This research used a quantitative approach, in which the research design used is cross-sectional and the research method used is survey methods. The population of the study was SMEs from food, fashion, and cosmetics sector in Indonesia which have social media account and using social media for their marketing activity. In total, the research samples obtained were 150 respondents who were owners or managers of SMEs. The sampling method used was non-probability sampling. In order to test the conceptual model, a questionnaire was developed using constructs and items from literature. Measurement items for social media usage (SMU) adopted from Ainin et al. (2015); brand performance adopted from Odoom and Mensah (2019); competitive advantage adopted from Saeidi (2019); and marketing performance adapted from Odoom, Anning-Dorson, and Acheampong (2017) and Parveen et al. (2016). Data collection is done by self-administered questionnaire (Shamim, Zeng, Shariq, & Khan), where respondents answer questions that have been arranged in the form of choices and scale questions using a Likert scale (1-5), ranging from 1="strongly disagree" to 5="strongly agree". In order to eliminate possible ambiguities in the questionnaire, it was previously reviewed, as a pre-test, by one expert in the industry and three volunteer users. The data analysis method in this research is SEM-PLS with the help of WarpPLS 6.0 software.

IV. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Model Fit Test. First of all, it is necessary to do a model fit test to see the suitability of the model built in the study. Thus, the suitability of the relationship between variables in research can be seen if the research model is said to be good. In this study, the use of WarpPLS 6.0 has provided calculation results that indicate the criteria used to assess whether the model is appropriate. From the test results, it is known that each value meets the ideal criteria, so it can be concluded that the overall research model is good and appropriate. For more information, fit model test results can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Research Model Fit Test

	Value	Ideal
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Average path coefficient (APC)	P<0,001	<= 0,05
Average R-squared (ARS)	P<0,001	<= 0,05
Average adjusted R-squared (Borgen & Aarset)	P<0,001	<= 0,05
Average block VIF (AVIF)	1.574	<= 3,3
Average full collinearity VIF (AFVIF)	2.027	<= 3,3
Sympson's paradox ratio (SPR)	1	1
R-squared contribution ratio (RSCR)	1	1
Statistical suppression ratio (SSR)	1	>= 0,7
Nonlinear bivariate causality direction ratio (NLBCDR)	1	>= 0,7

Convergent Validity and Reliability. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value shows that all reflective constructs have AVE values ≥ 0.50 , where successively AVE social media usage (SMU) is 0.500; brand performance (BP) 0.738; competitive advantage (CA) 0.698; and marketing performance (MP) 0.832. The AVE results show that all indicators have met the specified value standards, so the convergence of indicators is valid or acceptable and it can be stated that all indicators that measure constructs have met the conditions of convergent validity. In addition, the results of the Composite Reliability (CR) data show that all values were above 0.8 meaning high reliability, such as Composite Reliability of SMU, BP, CA, and MP are 0.927, 0.918, 0.942, and 0.972. In addition to CR, the reliability test was strengthened with Cronbach's Alpha (CA), where the results showed high reliability, namely SMU 0.912; BP 0.881; CA 0.927 and MP 0.966. The data can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2: Convergent Validity and Reliability

	AVE	CR	CA
Social Media Usage (SMU)	0.500	0.927	0.913
Brand Performance (BP)	0.738	0.918	0.881
Competitive Advantage (CA)	0.698	0.942	0.927
Marketing Performance (MP)	0.832	0.972	0.966

AVE Average Variance Extracted; CR Composite Reliability; CA Cronbach's Alpha

Discriminant Validity. The next test is the discriminant validity or Fornell Lacker Criterium test. This test is done by looking at the cross loading value and the root square value of Average Variance Extracted / AVE. If every indicator that measures a construct has a greater cross-load value to the construct, it can be said to be valid. The results of this test indicate that the Root Square Value of AVE obtained by each construct is greater than the correlation value between the construct and other constructs in the same column. Therefore, discriminant validity requirements are also met. Data can be seen in the following Table 3.

Table 3: Discriminant Validity (Fornell Lacker Criterium)

	SMU	BP	CA	MP
Social Media Usage (SMU)	0.760			
Brand Performance (BP)	0.389	0.859		
Competitive Advantage (CA)	0.414	0.693	0.836	

Hypothesis Test Results. Hypothesis testing is done by SEM-PLS. In this study, the significance level used was 5%. The hypothesis will be accepted if the p-value < 0.05 . The path coefficient is used to determine the direction of the correlation coefficient. The results of positive correlation coefficient indicate that there is a positive relationship between constructs and likewise if the results of the negative correlation coefficient indicate a negative relationship. The research model will also be tested by looking at the coefficient of determination (R^2) which is between zero and one. This value explains the variation of the dependent variable. If it is zero then it cannot explain variation on the dependent variable, whereas if it is one, the independent variable explains one hundred percent variation on the dependent variable.

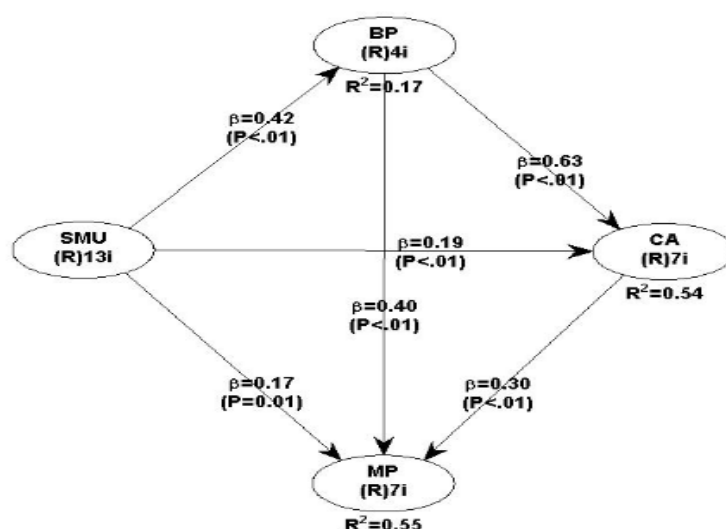


Figure 2: Research Model

Hypothesis test results indicate that there is a significant influence between social media usage and brand performance which p-value is < 0.01 so that H1 is supported. Furthermore, the relationship between brand performance and competitive advantage has a p-value of < 0.01 , so it can be stated that H2 is supported. A significant influence is also found on social media usage on competitive advantage, where a p-value of < 0.01 , so that H3 is also supported. H4 also received support, or in other words, there was a significant influence between social media usage and marketing performance. This is evidenced by the P-value of 0.01. In addition, there is a significant influence between brand performance and SME marketing performance, and between competitive advantage and SME marketing performance, where each p-value was < 0.01 so that H5 and H6 are also accepted. Other results note that the Adjusted R-squared Coefficient on marketing performance is 0.55, which means 55% of SME marketing performance can be made by the variables of social media usage, brand performance and competitive advantage. The results of the hypotheses test are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary Structural Model

Hypothesis	Description	Coefficient	P-value	Result
H1	SMU \rightarrow BP	0.420	< 0.01	Supported

H2	BP → CA	0.630	<0.01	<i>Supported</i>
H3	SMU → CA	0.190	<0.01	<i>Supported</i>
H4	SMU → MP	0.170	0.01	<i>Supported</i>
H5	BP → MP	0.400	<0.01	<i>Supported</i>
H6	CA → MP	0.300	<0.01	<i>Supported</i>

Based on empirical findings in this study, it is known that social media usage had a positive and significant effect on SME brand performance. These results are in line with previous studies that said social media can build brands (Bratu, 2018; Bruhn et al., 2012; Cawsey & Rowley, 2016; Christou, 2015; Erdoğan & Çiçek, 2012; Gensler et al., 2013; Lund, Cohen, & Scarles, 2018; Parganas, Anagnostopoulos, & Chadwick, 2017; Singh & Sonnenburg, 2012; Stojanovic et al., 2018). Social media is known to have a strong influence on brand equity (Bruhn et al., 2012; Khajuriaa & Rachnab, 2017; Llopis-Amorós et al., 2019; Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2015; Seo & Park, 2018; Stojanovic et al., 2018), such as brand awareness (Dabbous & Barakat, 2020; Hutter, Hautz, Dennhardt, & Füller, 2013); brand image (Farshid, Chan, & Nel, 2012; Gökerik, Gürbüz, Erkan, Mogaji, & Sap, 2018); and brand loyalty (Ceyhan, 2019; Erdoğan & Çiçek, 2012). Even Bratu (2018) found that social media can shape brand reputation through social media marketing activities that use influencers. In addition, Singh and Sonnenburg (2012) found that social media nowadays become a forum for co-creating brand performance in collaboration with consumers. It is because of the emergence of social media has changed the consumers' role in storytelling to be a more active participant from a passive listener.

Other results, brand performance significantly influence competitive advantage and SME performance. This confirms some previous research, such as Zameer, Wang, and Yasmeen (2020) who found green brand image enhance green competitive advantage among equipment manufacturing organizations in China; Chailan (2008) who state the existence of a link between brand portfolios and competitive advantage in several beauty-care companies; and Naatu (2016) who showed that brand can reinforce competitive advantage in the Ghanaian Jewelry Industry. Brand performance accumulated from branding which is a marketing principle that can stimulate demand and create a competitive advantage. Abimbola (2001) found five ways of SMEs branding for achieving superior brand performance that can lead to competitive advantages, such as (1) emphasize only one or two strong brands (prioritize corporate branding), (2) focus on doing marketing programs creatively on specific brand associations, (3) create a set of well-integrated brand elements that increase brand awareness and image, (4) design a proper campaign for a targeted audience, (5) expand as many secondary associations as possible. Not only a competitive advantage, brand performance also reinforces SME performance. This study is also in line with previous studies (Agostini et al., 2014; Baldauf, Cravens, & Binder, 2003; Dunes & Pras, 2017; Efrat & Asseraf, 2019; Eng & Keh, 2007; Hirvonen, Laukkanen, & Salo, 2016; Homburg, Klarmann, & Schmitt, 2010; Koh, Lee, & Boo, 2009; Lee & Park, 2016; Muhonen et al., 2017; Netemeyer, Heilman, & Maxham, 2012; Odoom, Mensah, et al., 2017; Park et al., 2013; H.-M. D. Wang & Sengupta, 2016).

On the other hand, this study shows that social media usage significantly influence SME competitive advantage and SME marketing performance. The progress of the internet and information technology has given rise to social media which has a big impact on SMEs. The use of social media in carrying out various marketing activities can increase a company's competitive advantage (Al-Abdallah, 2015; He et al., 2013; Liu et al., 2019; Mucan &

Özeltürkay, 2014; Ribarsky et al., 2014; Tăbușcă & Maniu). According to Ribarsky et al. (2014), firms derive competitive advantage by using social media analytic related to big data. With the hashtag and business analytic feature, social media can provide general information to companies about the market, customers, competitors, products, trends, etc. Meanwhile, Mucan and Özeltürkay (2014) in their study explained how Turkish banks create competitive advantage through social media content in their webpages. They use social media to share photo albums related to their advertising, they put basic company info at their account, and they post any notes on the timeline on average once a day. A few of them had more impact in this way. In addition, the results of this study show similarity with previous research (Ainin et al., 2015; Musa, 2016b; Odoom, Anning-Dorson, et al., 2017; Odoom & Mensah, 2019; Parveen et al., 2016; Tajudeen, Jaafar, & Ainin, 2018; Tajvidi & Karami, 2017) which states that social media usage improves business performance, especially in marketing performance. Musa (2016b) found that social media marketing practices significantly affect on business performance of Malaysian SMEs. Odoom, Anning-Dorson, et al. (2017) also found social media usage enhances SME Performance in Ghana. Still, about SMEs, this study also confirms Ainin (2015) research that found relationship between the use of social media and the outcome performance of Small Medium Enterprise in Malaysia.

V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

This study provides the role of social media usage to escalate brand performance, competitive advantage, and marketing performance among Indonesian SMEs. Result showed that social media usage had a positive and significant effect on brand performance, competitive advantage and marketing performance. Moreover, SME brand performance was significantly positive give effect to marketing performance directly and indirectly with the mediating role of competitive advantage.

The findings of this study have both theoretical and practical implications. For academics, the findings of this study will help to understand the relationship between social media usage, brand performance, competitive advantage and marketing performance. While there is a lot of research on building brands using social media, most only look at the relationship between social media usage on brand equity, or one of its dimensions. This research explained the relationship of social media usage on brand performance that leads to competitive advantage and marketing performance holistically, especially in SMEs background in developing countries. For practitioners, this research can be an input to SMEs owner to understand the important role social media to achieve excellent brand performance, competitive advantage among competitors, and superior marketing performance. Therefore, SMEs need to use and utilize social media more seriously, including by using social media to find information related to markets, competitors, and customers; to market and to build brand; to advertise products or services; to conduct marketing research; to build customer relationships, to provide customer service; to get customer feedback about existing products and new products to be launched; and to get new customers. SMEs' owner needs to make a routine schedule for posting on social media, create interesting content and designs in accordance with the brand positioning, and make an SOP in answering and responding to comments and feedback from customers. If the company is consistent in using social media as marketing tools, it will enhance brand reputation, opportunities to win the market among competitors and achieve superior performance. Suggestions for future research derived from the consideration of the limitations of this study. This study has weaknesses as it uses non-probability sampling

methods, so it is recommended that future research can use probability sampling methods and conduct tests on other SMEs sectors.

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