



The Influence of Social Media Marketing on Purchase Decisions: Exploring the Mediating Effects of Promotion and Customer Experience

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Abstract. *Businesses must use social media if they want to survive in this modern era. Almost all industries need social media to increase market share, boost brand credibility, and increase customer trust. Social media is also necessary for the transportation industry to function properly. Until now, there has not been much research on transportation related to marketing activities on social media, especially buses. This study provides a new perspective on efforts to improve SMMA purchasing decisions. It was found that customer experience and promotion variables are necessary as mediating variables between SMMA and purchase decisions. This study collects and analyzes quantitative data. In this study, purposive sampling method was used to 506 sample bus passengers at PO Bejeu Jepara. The empirical model was tested with Smart PLS 4.0 software.*

Keywords : SMMA, Promotion, Customer Experience, Purchase Decision

1. INTRODUCTION

In modern times, every single thing has developed rapidly, technology has become one of the most important things in the modern era. One of modern industries, such as transportation, require SMM strategies. Bus marketing strategies that use social media allow a multifaceted approach to connecting and interacting with potential customers. Social media which is now becoming very popular and needed by today's society such as Instagram, TikTok, Facebook, LinkedIn, WhatsApp and others. So that social media is now very important to be one of the marketing strategies of a business. Companies that use social media for a range of marketing initiatives, including advertising, customer relationship management, and customer engagement, and engaging with employees through internal interactions. The popularity of social media is increasing as it becomes increasingly convenient and important for workers. For this reason, marketers are starting to pay attention to social media-based marketing strategies (Prasetio et al. 2022).

Consumers' behavior and attitudes get increasingly influenced as they spend more time on social media. This transforms the world of marketing for firms who use these platforms in their daily operations. Social media truly plays an important role in marketing that it allows the target audience to enjoy media visualizations through the platform (Jatyananda, Nurittamont, and Phayaphrom 2022).

This study investigates the relationship between SMMA conducted by transportation businesses and purchase decisions. In addition, this study shows that features such as promotions and customer experience can serve as a link between SMMA, repurchase intention in using bus services.

From table 1, there are some SMMA case studies found because most case studies on SMMA discuss aviation so this research will discuss buses.

Tabel 1 Studies On SMMA

Author- Year	Research Area	Destination	Key Findings	Limit
Seo and Park (2018)	SMM for the airline industry	Examining the effect of social media marketing strategies on consumer reaction and brand equity.	Trendiness matters most; SMMA affects brand awareness, image and commitment.	Study only Looked at airline passengers in South Korea, not generalized
Moslehpour et al. (2021)	Social media marketing, airline's sector	Looking into the antecedents and consequences of SMM on purchase intention	Trust and perceived value mediate SMM factors and purchase intention	Focused on Indonesian consumers, may not Generalize to other populations
Prasetio et al. (2022)	SMM, brand equity, airlines	Social media marketing, brand equity, airlines	SMM improves e-WOM, commitment, brand awareness, and image.	Limited to Batik Air in Indonesia; may not generalize to other context.
J. Liu et al. (2023)	Social media marketing, Generation Z travel behavior	Investigating The impact of Gen Z travel behavior as a result of social media marketing Activities (SMMAs).	Gen Z is more influenced by SMMA When choosing a place, younger generations are willing to pay more	Focusing on China's Gen Z customers may differ from those in other countries.
Saraç (2023)	Social media marketing activities (SMMAs) in the aviation sector	Understanding how SMMAs Affect brand Credibility and purchasing intention	SMMAs Influence brand reputation and buying intention, brand credibility serves as a partial mediator between the two.	The study focuses on Turkey's aviation industry and May not generalize to other industries or nations.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media Marketing Activity

Social media marketing (SMM) is an online marketing strategy that delivers promotional information to customers. (Hafez 2022). Social media can be said to be internet-based applications (either mobile or web applications) Users can produce and trade content using web 2.0 technology. Social media is divided into numerous categories, including social networks, blogs, wikis, microblogging services, etc (Prasetio et al. 2022). In addition, advertisements made by Influencers on social media boost the interaction between firms and customers because they increase the relevance and meaningfulness of the brand from the

customer's perspective (Ali et al. 2024). So that key marketing objectives can be achieved through social media: market analysis and feedback, company networking, marketing and reputation management, customer service and customer relationship management (Yang et al. 2022).

Social media allows consumers to interact and form social communities in a dynamic environment. The copy link feature allows users to repost content and interact with other users, which differentiates social media from conventional marketing. Vertical films adapted for mobile devices receive greater shares and likes as a narrative method employed in SMMA than long-form articles, because the entertainment factor is interesting and helps to attract customers and SMMA (Banerji and Singh 2024). So it can be interpreted that the benefits of social media use originate from conversations with other persons and material generated by an individual, corporation, or organization.

A social media marketing plan includes organizational initiatives that transform to achieve desired marketing outcomes, communication (networking) and interaction (influence) on social media into a useful strategic tool (Wibowo et al. 2021). Some recent definitions of social media marketing agencies (SMMA) lead us to the following conclusions: SMMA use social media networks as a two-way marketing tool to engage with clients and provide beneficial offers, in addition to increasing client engagement and raising awareness of the brand, goods, or services (Unique 2016).

Promotion

Promotion is a set of actions in marketing that allows a corporation can assess and divide the market according to its clientele and more successfully distribute its goods (Kim, Cho, and Kim 2019). One way of promotion is to recommend products that are sold. While recommendation systems play an important role in promoting goods and services, there are many other factors that determine how effective they are (Low et al. 2023).

Through promotion, it is intended to entice consumers to try the product and persuade current customers to purchase it more frequently. This will lead to purchasing decisions and an increase in the company's sales volume (Limpo, Rahim, and Hamzah 2018).

Customer Experience

One important framework that managers should consider when identifying and addressing opportunities that can improve a company's competitive position is customer experience (Wibowo et al. 2021).

A person's perception of the quality of their experience can differ depending on what they perceive as advantages in the interaction with the object. Consequently, companies consider Customer experience quality is defined as "a perceived judgement regarding the perfection or superiority of the customer experience". Companies do so because it is considered a better metric structure and evaluation (Roy et al. 2024).

Purchase Decision

Consumers make interrelated product preferences within a set of choices when people decide what to buy (Dapas et al. 2019). During the process of making a purchase decision, customers must consider several things to finally have a purchase decision (Sudirjo 2021). So that when consumers have decided to buy something as a choice between two, consumers have one choice. Make a purchase or make a transaction known as a purchase decision (Utomo and Soesanto 2022).

The Influence of Social Media Marketing Activities on Promotion

A lot of businesses have realized that social media is among the most successful methods to connect and motivate customers to develop a unique brand and improve communication with customers by promoting brands through content created by content creators or commonly referred to as influencers (Jatyananda, Nurittamont, and Phayaphrom 2022). It can be said that promotion really helps businesses compete in marketing and helps customers choose products. If the product used has a good brand image, consumers will be interested in using it, and if consumers are interested in using the promoted product, consumers will make purchases (Hermiyenti and Wardi 2019).

H1 : SMMA positively impacts promotion

The Influence of Social Media Marketing Activities on Customer Experience

Examined how consumer buying trends have changed since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, and saw a huge increase While utilizing social media to fulfill consumer needs and make purchases (Malarvizhi et al. 2022). This purchasing decision can occur due to customer experience when deciding to make a purchase of the product they want to buy.

H2 : SMMA positively impacts Customer Experience

The Influence of Social Media Marketing Activities on Purchase Decision

Likes, shares, comments, and following are examples of social media interactions known as attachments. Compared to passive interactions, meaningful interactions are more important. Meaningful interactions involve conversations and comments, while passive interactions include liking and sharing. When more customers are engaged with the brand, more customers are connected with the brand. As a result, social media can foster good consumer engagement before, during, and after a purchase. Social media is ideal for developing interactions between brands and customers, as well as interactions between customers and brands (Mulyani 2013). With the interaction by the company with customers instantly, it is easy for customers to make the right purchasing decision (Unique 2016) explained the results of his study which showed that SMMA did not have a positive impact on purchase decisions.

H3 : SMMA positively impacts purchase decisions

The Influence of Promotion on Purchase Decision

One of the factors that determine the success of a marketing program is promotion, which is a special method of personal advertising, promotional sales, and public relations that companies use for advertising and marketing (M. Fikri). Current studies show that promotion involvement in purchasing decisions has a positive impact (Hermiyenti and Wardi 2019). It is the same as those who argue that promotions positively on purchase decisions.

H4 : Promotion positively impacts purchase decisions

The Influence of Customer experience on Purchase Decision

Companies must have a good understanding of the consumer journey, which starts with consumers' expectations before buying, their experiences, and their evaluations after the purchase process is complete of the products sold (Asad Ayoub). customer experience on purchasing decisions has positive results (M. Fikri)

H5 : Customer Experience positively impacts purchase decisions

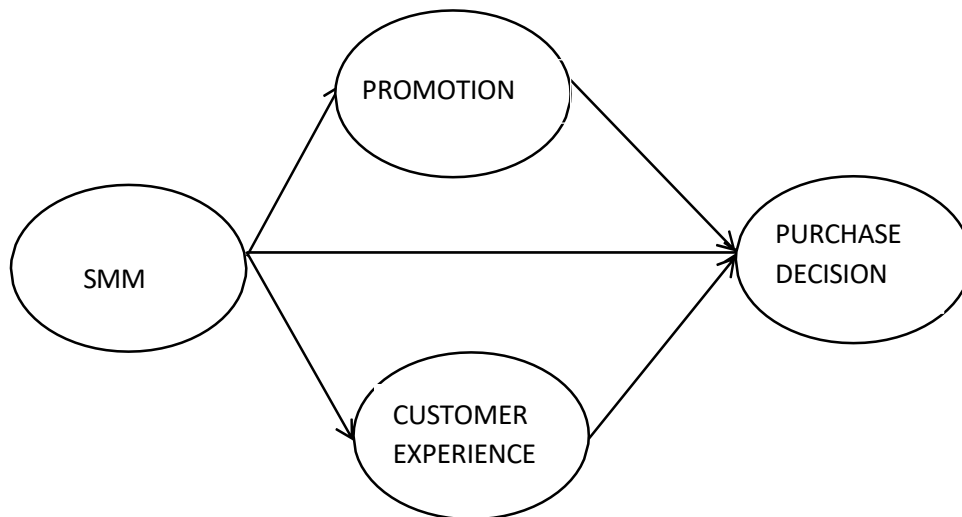


Figure 1. Hypothesis Framework

Table 2. Explanation Of The Hypothesis Framework

INDICATOR	
SMMA	Using Bejeu bus social networking is enjoyable. Bejeu bus' social media stuff appears interesting. Bejeu bus social media allows you to exchange information with others Bejeu bus social media allows you to converse with others and exchange thoughts.
	It is easy to express my viewpoint using Bejeu bus social media. Bejeu bus social media content is the most recent information. Bejeu bus social media provides a customized information search. I wish to share information about the business, product, or service from Bejeu bus social media with my friends. (Khan & Services, 2022)
PROMOTION	I know that PO Bejeu does sales promotion through Instagram, Facebook, direct sales, and others. I use PO Bejeu Bus transportation services because of the information provided by the agent. Discount offers that make me use PO Bejeu Bus transportation services. Bejeu Bus transportation service. I use PO Bejeu Bus transportation services because PO Bejeu Bus always helps Persijap Jepara. I know PO Bejeu in many media.
CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE	The Bejeu Bus is unique and good. I feel comfortable and safe using the Bejeu Bus. The service provided by Bejeu is not found in other companies. Bejeu listens to complaints and provides solutions to customers. I choose Bejeu because it suits my style.
PURCHASE DECISION	I use PO Bejeu bus transportation services because of necessity. I use PO Bejeu Bus transportation services because I get
	recommendations from others. recommendations from other people. I prefer PO Bejeu Bus transportation services because I am popular among other consumers. I am confident in using PO Bejeu Bus transportation services because of the good quality of service.

3. METHODS

This research approach is based on 506 PO Bejeu Jepara clients. Baseline data were obtained by running an online poll using Google Forms.. In this case study, probability sampling was used. No legitimate consumer samples were collected. SmartPLS 4.0 software as an analysis tool used the structural equation modeling (SEM) method for data analysis. Several tests were used, including in-model tests, hypothesis tests, mediation tests, and out-of-model tests.

4. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Outer Model (Measurement Model)

This model includes two measurement models, namely the test.:

1. *Convergent Validity*

This measurement is considered complete when the outside loading exceeds 0.7 and the AVE value is at least 0.5 (Ulum, Ghozali, & Chariri, 2008). The minimum value for 0.5 (Ulum, Ghozali, & Chariri, 2008). The outcomes of the convergent validity test on the research model may be viewed in Table 3.

Table 3. Convergent Validity Test

Indicator	<i>Outer loading</i>	AVE	Result
SMMA1	0.905	0.847	Valid
SMMA2	0.903		
SMMA3	0.949		
SMMA4	0.943		
SMMA5	0.945		
SMMA6	0.892		
SMMA7	0.955		
SMMA8	0.864		
PRO1	0.828	0.647	Valid
PRO2	0.778		
PRO3	0.790		
PRO4	0.783		
PRO5	0.840		
EXP1	0.867	0.691	Valid
EXP2	0.916		
EXP3	0.763		
EXP4	0.889		
EXP5	0.701		
PUR1	0.773	0.754	Valid
PUR2	0.935		
PUR3	0.892		
PUR4	0.866		

Source: Output data from SmartPLS version 4.0 (Processed)

According to these findings, the indicators that measure the variables have a convergent validity test value of more than 0.7, as well as an AVE value of more than 0.5, indicating their validity.

2. Reliability Test

Composite reliability (Cr) is a measure of variable reliability that indicates a trustworthy value greater than 0.7, but it is not an absolute norm. Cronbach's Alpha is a value that measures the reliability of all indications throughout a range of zero to one. A score greater than 0.7 indicates reliability.

Table 4. Composite reliability & Cronbach's alpha

Variabel	Composite reliability	Croncach' alpha	Keterangan
SMMA	0.978	0.974	Reliabel
PRO	0.901	0.866	
EXP	0.917	0.886	
PUR	0.924	0.890	

Source: Output data from SmartPLS version 4.0 (Processed)

The Reliability Test demonstrates that the indicators of all variables have a value greater than 0.7, indicating that they are reliable.

Inner Model (Measurement Model)

The inner model is a model for predicting causal links between factors that cannot be readily measured and hidden variables.

R-square

R-square is a test that evaluates the impact of an independent variable on a dependent variable. When the R-square value is greater than 0.67, it is considered to have a strong influence; 0.33 suggests a moderate influence, and 0.19 indicates a weak influence.

Table 5. R-square

Variabel	R-square	R-square adjusted
PRO	0.038	0.036
EXP	0.634	0.633
PUR	0.640	0.638

Source: Output data from SmartPLS version 4.0 (Processed)

According to the data table, PRO's R-square value is 0.038, while the Adjusted R-square value is 0.036. This shows that the Social Media Marketing Activity has a 3.8% impact on PRO, which is considered a modest influence. The remaining 96.2% could be explained by variables and indicators not covered in this study.

The R-square value for EXP is 0.634, while the Adjusted R-square value is 633. This shows that Social Media Marketing Activity has a 63.4% impact on EXP, which is considered a weak influence. The remaining 36.6% can be explained by variables and indicators not covered in this study.

Furthermore, the R-square value for Purchase Decision is 0.640, with an adjusted R-square value of 0.638. This indicates that all exogenous components have a combined impact of 64% on Y, which is considered moderate influence. The remaining 36% can be explained by variables and indicators not covered in this study.

Mediation Test

In the context of mediation, there are three scenarios first, Non-mediation happens when the connection between the independent and dependent variables is positive, while The association between the mediating factors is negative. Second, full mediation occurs when The connection between the independent and dependent variables is negative while the relationship between the mediating factors is positive. Third, partial mediation occurs when both the independent and dependent factors are positive and there is a positive link between the mediating variables. Test results using the bootstrapping method with SmartPLS 4.0 can be interpreted based on the P value, where if the P value on indirect special effects > 0.05 , it indicates a negative effect, while if the P value < 0.05 , it indicates a positive effect.

Table 6. Path Coeffien

Variabel	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistic ((O/STDEV))	P value
SMMA -> PRO	0.196	0.195	0.040	4.898	0.000
SMMA -> EXP	0.796	0.796	0.020	40.147	0.000
SMMA -> PUR	0.098	0.099	0.045	2.179	0.029
PRO -> PUR	0.779	0.780	0.018	42.587	0.000
EXP -> PUR	0.190	0.190	0.045	4.245	0.000

Source: Output data from SmartPLS version 4.0 (Processed)

Table 7. Specific Indirect Effects

Variabel	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistic ((O/STDEV))	P value
SMMA -> PRO -> PUR	0.152	0.152	0.032	4.770	0.000
SMMA -> EXP -> PUR	0.151	0.152	0.037	4.108	0.000

Source: Output data from SmartPLS version 4.0 (Processed)

Based on the attached tables 6 and 7, the conclusion is:

The impact of Social Media Marketing Activity on PUR is mediated by PRO

Table 6 shows a positive link between the Path Coefficient of Social Media Marketing Activity and PUR (P value = 0.029 < 0.05). Table 6 shows a positive indirect effect of social media marketing activity on PUR, mediated by PRO (P value = 0.000 < 0.05), indicating Partial Mediation.

The Effect of Social Media Marketing Activity on PUR mediated by EXP

Table 6 demonstrates a favorable correlation between the Path Coefficient of Social Media Marketing Activity and PUR (P value = 0.029 < 0.05). Table 6 reveals that social media marketing activity has a positive indirect influence on PUR, which is mediated by EXP (P value = 0.000 < 0.05), suggesting partial mediation.

Hypothesis Test

In hypothesis testing, T statistics and P value can be seen. The hypothesis could be accepted if the P value < 0.05. To find out, it can be found in the Path Coefficient obtained through the Bootstrapping technique in the SmartPLS version 4.0 program.

Table 8. Hypothesis Test Results

Hypothesis	Analysis
SMMA -> PRO	Coeffisien = 0.196
	P value = 0.000
	T statistics = 4.898
	T-tabel = 1.645
	T statistics > T-tabel
SMMA -> EXP	Coeffisien = 0.796
	P value = 0.000
	T statistics = 40.147
	T-tabel = 1.645
	T statistics > T-tabel
SMMA -> PUR	Coeffisien = 0.098
	P value = 0.029
	T statistics = 2.179
	T-tabel = 1.645
	T statistics > T-tabel
PRO -> PUR	Coeffisien = 0.779
	P value = 0.000
	T statistics = 42.587
	T-tabel = 1.645
	T statistics > T-tabel
EXP -> PUR	Coeffisien = 0.190
	P value = 0.000
	T statistics = 4.245
	T-tabel = 1.645
	T statistics > T-tabel

Source: Output data from SmartPLS version 4.0 (Processed)

Hypothesis 1: The impact of Social Media Marketing Activity on PRO

If the coefficient value (0.196), T statistics (4.898) > T-table (1.645), and P value (0.000) are less than 0.05, H₀ is rejected and H_{a1} accepted. This shows that there is a positive and substantial relationship between the Social Media Marketing Activity variable and PRO.

Hypothesis 2: The effect of Social Media Marketing Activity on EXP

If the coefficient value (0.796), T statistics (40.147) > T-table (1.645), and P value (0.000) are less than 0.05, H₀ is rejected and H_{a2} approved. This shows that the Social Media Marketing Activity variable has a positive and significant influence on EXP.

Hypothesis 3: The Effect of Social Media Marketing Activiy on PUR

If the coefficient value (0.098), T statistics (2.179) > T-table (1.645), and P value (0.029) are less than 0.05, H₀ is rejected and H_{a3} accepted. This shows that the Social Media Marketing Activity variable has a positive and significant relationship on PUR.

Hypothesis 4: The Effect of PRO on PUR

If the coefficient value (0.779) and T statistics (42.587) exceed the T-table (1.645) and the P value (0.000) is less than 0.05, H₀ is rejected and H_{a4} accepted. This shows that there is a positive and significant influence of the Involvement variable on Purchase Decision.

Hypothesis 5: The Effect of EXP on PUR

If the coefficient value (0.190) and T statistics (4.245) are greater than T-table (1.645) and the P value (0.000) is less than 0.05, H₀ is rejected and H_{a5} accepted. This shows that there is a positive and significant relationship between Perceived Quality factors and Purchase Decision.

5. CONCLUSION

This study investigates the relationship between SMMA and customer purchasing decisions in transportation companies. So that the results of this study can provide a new perspective on how SMMA is used in transportation companies, especially buses. This study also shows that SMMA can influence purchasing decisions (H₃) and through promotions (H₁) and customer experience (H₂). This research opens new doors for the development of purchasing decisions in transportation, especially buses that use SMMA. This study will help bus transportation companies to improve engagement and perceived quality. Perceived quality includes business fleet quality, inventiveness, availability of complete and accurate data, excellent performance standards, as well as facilities both inside and outside the bus.

Participation in activities such as using the service since it suits one's lifestyle, Always preferring bus transportation, loving the experience of utilizing the service, continuously seeking information about it, and wanting others to know about it when they use it.

The findings of this study are likely to be applicable more extensively and not just to one bus company. As a result, further study can be undertaken using passenger samples from multiple bus companies. In addition, further study can be conducted to identify additional mediating elements between SMMA and bus company purchase decisions.

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