

The mediating effect of social media marketing in the market orientation and business performance relationship

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to analyze the sustainability challenges in small and medium-scale enterprises in Indonesia, focusing on marketing orientation, social media marketing, and three domains of business performance, namely economic, social and environmental aspects. Data from 238 respondents in Pekalongan, Central Java Province, Indonesia, were analyzed using the SEM-PLS method. These findings support six hypotheses revealing the impact of marketing orientation on various aspects of business performance (economic/social/environmental) and the influence of social media marketing on economic, environmental, and social dimensions. The results have significant implications for SMEs in Indonesia. The findings highlight the need for improvement in sustainability practices, such as increasing alignment between marketing orientation and social media marketing strategies.

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1. Introduction

The contemporary business landscape is facing increasing pressure to positively respond to environmental challenges. Awareness of environmental issues has significantly risen among consumers, who are now more inclined to choose environmentally friendly products and services. Research by Sun et al. (2021) highlights the importance of sustainable responses from companies to environmental issues to meet the expectations of increasingly environmentally conscious consumers. However, companies' efforts to market products as sustainable and environmentally friendly are not always well-received by consumers. Critics highlight a lack of credibility and reliability in advertising, especially when it comes to claims about environmental standards. Atkinson and Rosenthal (2014) and Göçer and Sevil (2017) state that deficiencies in communication about corporate environmental practices can reduce consumer trust and hinder participation in environmentally responsible consumption. In facing the evolving dynamics of the market, businesses must be able to adapt and anticipate changes to remain competitive. Ali et al. (2020) emphasizes the importance of gaining a competitive advantage through strategic adaptation responsive to the market. In response, both academics and industry practitioners are increasingly focusing on improving market orientation capabilities. Research by Arief et al. (2020), Oerstl et al. (2020), and Murillo et al. (2021) highlights the need to focus on developing adaptive and responsive capabilities to changing market demands and preferences. Although having significant potential benefits, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in developing countries often face a number of challenges that limit their ability to achieve sustainable operations. One major challenge is the high costs associated with sustainability practices. Schulze et al. (2022) highlight the important role of costs as a major barrier in SMEs' efforts to adopt sustainable practices. Additionally, a lack of skills and training is also a serious issue faced by many SMEs. Business owners may lack the knowledge or skills required to effectively implement sustainability practices. This can hinder their ability to identify

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innovative opportunities in operations or to manage necessary changes. Lack of access to training and educational resources can exacerbate this situation. The absence of standard metrics for measuring sustainability also poses a challenge for SMEs. Without clear frameworks and measurable criteria, SMEs may struggle to objectively evaluate their sustainability performance. This can make it difficult to track progress, identify areas where improvements are needed, or compare performance with competitors or industry standards. Additionally, reluctance to adopt new technologies can also hinder SMEs' ability to achieve sustainable operations. Although technology often can help improve efficiency and reduce environmental impact, many SMEs may be hesitant to invest in new technology due to concerns about costs, implementation complexity, or uncertainty about outcomes. This can lead to a lag in the adoption of sustainable and innovative technology processes, as demonstrated by Kumar & Ghodeswar's (2015) research.

This study utilizes market orientation and social media marketing strategies to drive sustainable performance among SMEs, particularly in the textile sector. The objective of this research is to analyze the extent to which the relationship between market orientation and social media marketing enhances sustainable performance in the textile sector among small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Central Java Province, Indonesia.

2. Literature Review

Market uncertainty can encompass various unpredictable external factors, such as changes in customer preferences, shifts in industry trends, or unstable global economic conditions. In such situations, companies with a market-oriented approach, actively prioritizing understanding and responding to customer needs and preferences, tend to be better at introducing new products (Centobelli et al., 2019). Market orientation is a strategic approach where companies focus on deep understanding of customer needs and desires and strive to meet them better than competitors. The importance of effective marketing is emphasized as a key to achieving long-term business success. This includes identifying customer needs, understanding the market well, and responding quickly to changes in the business environment (Taghvaei & Talebi, 2023). In the context of new product launches, strong market orientation can help companies reduce risks and increase success opportunities by ensuring that the introduced products align with changing market needs. In addition to focusing on customers, market orientation also considers external environmental factors. This includes considering factors such as economic conditions, industry competition, and government regulations that may influence a company's business strategy (Kirca et al., 2005).

Social media marketing emphasizes the ecological consequences of marketing activities and plays a significant role in addressing environmental issues (Lazer, 1969). Social media marketing involves organizational efforts to develop, promote, and sell environmentally friendly products (Day & Wensley, 1988; Jeevandas et al., 2019). This has a significant impact on ecosystem sustainability, with stakeholder demands, resources, knowledge, and product uniqueness being determining factors of its success (Mekaniwati et al., 2023). Companies that aim to have significant market influence, especially in contemporary and future eras, must address environmental barriers (Raharjo, 2019). Social media marketing underscores the ecological impact of marketing and its critical role in environmental mitigation (Jones et al., 2008). Embracing innovation is an optimal way to increase profitability while maintaining economic competitiveness (Lazer, 1969). The principles of social media marketing have become catalysts for these efforts, enabling companies to build stronger relationships with customers and the general public while promoting sustainability values (Costantini et al., 2017; Foerstl et al., 2020). Improved company performance is a crucial prerequisite in this context. The effectiveness of marketing capabilities, co-creation of customer value, and market orientation all contribute to overall company performance. Social media marketing allows companies to interact directly with customers, gather feedback, and respond quickly to changes in market preferences and demands (Chen & Liu, 2018). Integrating three core interests - fair economic participation, environmental preservation, and social responsibility - in decision-making processes also remains a primary focus in sustainable development (Purba et al., 2019). Thus, social media marketing not only serves as a tool to promote products and services but also as a platform to communicate a company's commitment to environmental and social sustainability.

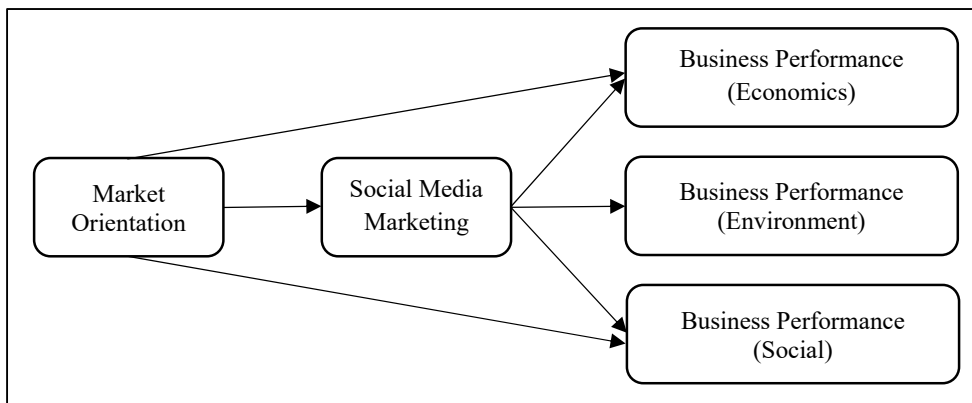


Fig. 1. Conceptual Framework

- H₁:** Market orientation has a positive and significant effect on business performance (economic).
H₂: Market orientation has a positive and significant effect on business performance (environment).
H₃: Market orientation has a positive and significant effect on business performance (social).
H₄: Market orientation has a positive and significant effect on social media marketing.
H₅: Social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on business performance (economic).
H₆: Social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on business performance (environment).
H₇: Social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on business performance (social).
H₈: Social media marketing mediates the relationship between market orientation and business performance (economic).
H₉: Social media marketing mediates the relationship between market orientation and business performance (environment).
H₁₀: Social media marketing mediates the relationship between market orientation and business performance (social).

3. Research Method

This research employs a quantitative method to collect and analyze data. Data are gathered through the use of a Likert scale questionnaire ranging from 1 to 5 points, which is used to interpret respondents' answers. The sample size for this study consists of 238 Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Central Java, Indonesia. The use of a quantitative research design focuses on three latent variables or main dimensions: marketing orientation, social media marketing, and business performance in three areas, namely economic, social, and environmental. The aim of this research is to explore how the interaction between marketing orientation and social media marketing influences the business performance of SMEs in Central Java, Indonesia, particularly in economic, social, and environmental aspects. Data collected from respondents are analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS SEM), which is a statistical method useful for testing conceptual models involving latent variables. Data analysis is conducted using Smart PLS software version 4.9.5.

4. Result

In construct analysis, each item in each variable shows a positive loading value exceeding 0.50 and a p value below 0.05 which indicates its ability to explain the related dimensions or variables. Items that were not considered in the analysis because their loading values were below 0.05 were excluded from Tables 1, 2, and 3 because they did not have significance.

Table 1
Path coefficient values, AVE and Cronbach's Alpha

Construct	Path Coefficient	t-value	P-value	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	VIF
Market Orientation	-	-	-	0.57	0.63	0.80	-
Customer Orientation	0.75	18.06	0.000	0.69	0.55	0.82	-
Competitor Orientation	0.72	16.45	0.000	0.60	0.35	0.75	-
Inter-function Coordination	0.80	16.46	0.000	0.51	0.68	0.80	-
Social Media Marketing	-	-	-	0.58	0.71	0.83	-
Reach	0.07	1.29	0.098	0.52	0.70	0.81	1.629
Retention Rate	0.31	1.98	0.024	0.81	0.92	0.94	9.129
Brand Sentiment	0.12	1.85	0.032	0.62	0.79	0.87	3.334
User Participation	0.17	1.27	0.103	0.71	0.87	0.91	8.655
Level of Influence	0.19	2.29	0.011	0.65	0.86	0.90	3.027
Target Level	0.19	1.75	0.040	0.76	0.89	0.93	5.335
Level of Responsibility	0.06	0.61	0.270	0.71	0.86	0.91	3.476
Business Performance (Economics)	-	-	-	0.54	0.79	0.85	-
Business Performance (Environment)	-	-	-	0.70	0.78	0.87	-
Business Performance (Social)	-	-	-	0.61	0.78	0.86	-

Almost all dimensions consisting of second-order variables show path coefficient values exceeding 0.50 and p-values below 0.05, indicating effective explanation of related latent variables. For the social media marketing variable, the three indicator variables, namely reach, user participation, and level of responsiveness, have p-values above 0.05, making these variables statistically insignificant. Second-order dimensions, as well as main latent variables, all show AVE values exceeding or approaching 0.50. This indicates that these primary latent dimensions or variables meet the criteria for construct validity. The majority of dimensions composing second-order and primary latent variables show Composite Reliability values exceeding 0.70. This indicates that these primary latent dimensions or variables meet the criteria for construct reliability. Finally, all formative indicator variables of social media marketing display VIF values below 10, indicating no multicollinearity among these indicators. The findings of the analysis of endogenous latent variables in Table 2 indicate that the application of market orientation and social media marketing shows weak predictive power. Additionally, business performance in economic, environmental, and social dimensions shows moderate to strong R^2 values, indicating that a significant proportion of variance can be explained by the model. Lastly, the Q^2 values for business performance variables indicate acceptable predictive relevance, implying the model's ability to accurately predict sustainability outcomes. Although social media marketing has minimal impact on business performance in the economic domain, it has a significant impact on environmental and social dimensions, as evidenced by relatively large f^2 values.

Table 2
Coefficient of determination (R^2) and Predictive Relevance (Q^2)

Endogenous Latent Variables	f^2	R^2	Q^2
Implementation of Market Orientation	0.00		
<i>Social Media Marketing</i>		0.00	0.01
<i>Business Performance (Economics)</i>		0.57	0.29
<i>Business Performance (Environment)</i>		0.53	0.36
<i>Business Performance (Social)</i>		0.76	0.46
<i>Social Media Marketing</i>		0.00	0.01
<i>Business Performance (Economics)</i>		0.57	0.29
Implementation of Market Orientation	0.05		
<i>Social Media Marketing</i>	1.28		
<i>Business Performance (Environment)</i>		0.53	0.36
Implementation of Market Orientation	0.05		
<i>Social Media Marketing</i>	1.05		
<i>Business Performance (Social)</i>		0.76	0.46
Implementation of Market Orientation	0.18		
<i>Social Media Marketing</i>	2.96		

The findings in Table 3 depict the relationship between market orientation and business performance in the economic, environmental, and social dimensions. Market orientation correlates positively with environmental and social performance, indicating its influence in promoting sustainability. However, it correlates negatively with economic performance. Business performance shows a strong positive correlation among its dimensions, indicating a cohesive relationship between economic, environmental, and social aspects. The results of this study suggest that although market orientation has a positive impact on environmental and social sustainability, its impact on the economic performance of the batik industry may not be significant.

Table 3
Second Order Fornell-Lacker

Variable	Market Orientation	Business Performance (Economics)	Business Performance (Environment)	Business Performance (Social)
Market Orientation	0.578			
Business Performance (Economics)	-0.109	0.737		
Business Performance (Environment)	0.193	0.674	0.836	
Business Performance (Social)	0.255	0.638	0.757	0.780

Hypothesis testing revealed that the implementation of market orientation significantly affects business performance (economic) (p -value = $0.00 < 0.05$) (Table 4). Therefore, the first hypothesis is accepted, indicating that the implementation of market orientation positively impacts business performance (economic). This research finding is consistent with Udriyah et al. (2019), who explored the relationship between market orientation and business performance, including its impact on economic, environmental, and social dimensions, especially in terms of market responsiveness and competitiveness. Similarly, Tajeddini and Ratten (2020) found that market orientation is associated with improved business performance and customer satisfaction. The implementation of market orientation significantly affects business performance (environment) positively (p -value = $0.00 < 0.05$). Thus, the second hypothesis is accepted, indicating that market orientation positively influences business performance (environment). Furthermore, the positive influence of market orientation on business performance (environment) aligns with the principles of sustainable development and corporate social responsibility (CSR). The implementation of market orientation significantly affects business performance (social) positively (p -value = $0.00 < 0.05$). As a result, the third hypothesis is accepted, highlighting the positive impact of market orientation on business performance (social). Tjahjadi et al. (2020) research in sustainability and marketing has underscored the role of market orientation in promoting environmentally and socially responsible business practices. Market orientation drives innovation in environmentally friendly products and meets consumer demand for environmentally friendly products. Similarly, Alhakimi and Mahmoud (2020) found that market orientation positively influences a company's responsiveness to social issues. The implementation of market orientation does not significantly affect the implementation of social media marketing (p -value = $0.27 > 0.05$). Thus, the fourth hypothesis is rejected, stating that market orientation significantly affects social media marketing. However, the lack of significant influence of market orientation on social media marketing observed in this study differs from some previous research. Keszey (2020) stated a positive relationship between market orientation and the implementation of social media marketing practices. Additionally, Danso et al. (2019) found that market orientation positively influences social media marketing strategy. This difference may be due to specific contextual factors in the batik industry in Indonesia.

The implementation of social media marketing significantly affects business performance (economic) (p -value = $0.00 < 0.05$). Thus, the fifth hypothesis is accepted, indicating a positive influence of social media marketing implementation on business performance (economic). Additionally, social media marketing significantly affects business performance (environment) (p -

value = 0.03 < 0.05). Therefore, the sixth hypothesis is accepted, illustrating the significant influence of social media marketing on business performance (environment). Furthermore, social media marketing significantly affects business performance (social) (p-value = 0.00 < 0.05). Thus, the seventh hypothesis is accepted, indicating a positive influence of social media marketing on business performance (social). Findings regarding the significant influence of social media marketing on business performance echo Liao et al. (2020), who emphasize the economic, environmental, and social benefits of social media marketing, indicating that environmentally friendly products can attract premium prices and increase brand loyalty. Similarly, Gelderman et al. (2021) found that social media marketing initiatives contribute to improving environmental performance and customer perception.

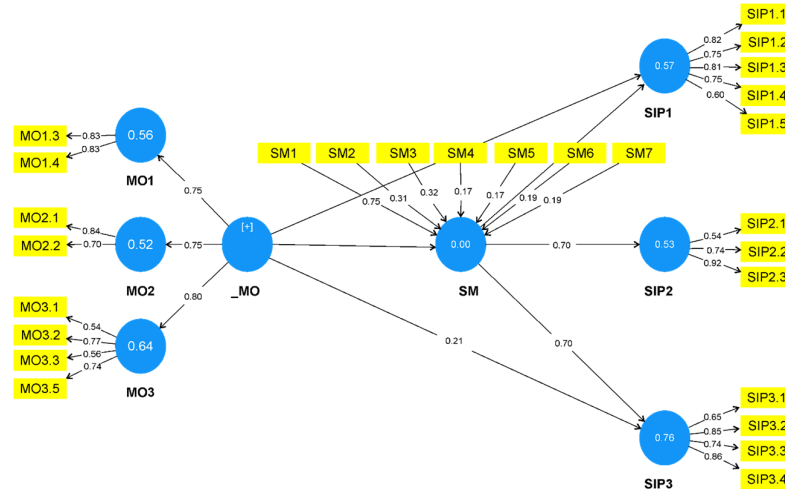


Fig. 2. SEM PLS Result

Table 4

Hypothesis testing results

	Hypothesis	β	Standard Error	t-value	p-value	Conclusion
H1	MO → SIP Eco	-0.15	0.05	3.12	0.001	Accepted
H2	MO → SIP Env	0.15	0.05	3.33	0.000	Accepted
H3	MO → SIP Soc	0.21	0.04	4.92	0.000	Accepted
H4	MO → SM	0.06	0.09	0.62	0.268	Rejected
H5	SM → SIP Eco	0.75	0.03	26.03	0.000	Accepted
H6	SM → SIP Env	0.70	0.04	16.86	0.000	Accepted
H7	SM → SIP Soc	0.84	0.02	35.48	0.000	Accepted
H8	MO → SM → SIP Eco	0.04	0.07	0.61	0.270	Rejected
H9	MO → SM → SIP Env	0.04	0.07	0.62	0.269	Rejected
H10	MO → SM → SIP Soc	0.05	0.08	0.62	0.269	Rejected

The mediating effect of social media marketing between the implementation of market orientation and business performance (economic) is not significant (p-value = 0.270 > 0.05). As a result, the eighth hypothesis is rejected, indicating no significant mediating effect. The mediating effect of social media marketing between the implementation of market orientation and business performance (environment) is not significant (p-value = 0.269 > 0.05). Therefore, the ninth hypothesis is rejected, indicating no significant mediating effect. The mediating effect of social media marketing between the implementation of market orientation and business performance (social) is not significant (p-value = 0.269 > 0.05). Therefore, the tenth hypothesis is rejected, stating no significant mediating effect at the 5% error level. Previous research has shown the potential role of social media marketing practices as a mediator in the relationship between market orientation and sustainability outcomes. Studies conducted by Abbas et al. (2019) and Papadas et al. (2019) highlight the positive impact of social media marketing initiatives on various organizational outcomes, including economic, environmental, and social performance. These findings suggest that social media marketing can serve as a mediator between market orientation and business performance. However, the findings of this study indicate that the mediating effect of social media marketing between market orientation and business performance (economic, environmental, and social) is not statistically significant in the context of the batik industry in Indonesia. This differs from the research by Guo et al. (2020), which showed a deviation from the expected mediating role of social media marketing practices. This gap underscores the importance of considering industry-specific factors and contextual nuances in understanding the relationship between market orientation, social media marketing, and sustainability outcomes.

5. Conclusion

This study concludes that there is a significant relationship between market orientation, social media marketing, and business performance across economic, environmental, and social dimensions in the batik industry in Indonesia. Although market orientation negatively impacts economic performance, it positively influences environmental and social performance. On the other hand, the implementation of social media marketing has a positive influence on all dimensions of business performance, highlighting its role in driving industrial sustainability. Theoretically, this research underscores the importance of integrating environmental considerations into marketing strategies and business operations to enhance sustainability outcomes. It emphasizes the need for businesses to adopt a holistic approach that combines market orientation and social media marketing strategies to achieve business performance. Practically, these findings provide valuable insights for stakeholders in the batik industry and guide strategic decision-making processes. By aligning business practices with the increasing consumer preferences for products, companies can enhance sustainability performance across economic, environmental, and social dimensions. The limitation of this research is its focus on small and medium-scale batik companies, which limits the generalizability of these findings. Future research could address this limitation by expanding the scope of the study to include a wider geographical area and more diverse industry players.

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