

Strategic Insights Into Social Media Marketing Activities For Transportation Businesses

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Abstract

In this study, the function of Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMA) as a dynamic capability in influencing Social Ties, Purchase Decisions, and the moderating impact of Brand Love within the transportation services industry, focusing on PO Bejeu. Unlike previous research primarily centered on retail or cosmetics, transportation services present distinct operational challenges that merit deeper exploration. Using data from 103 respondents collected via a Likert scale Google form questionnaire, the study employed Analysis using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0 software. Results revealed that SMMA significantly improves Social Ties (path coefficient = 0.630) and Purchase Decisions (path coefficient = 0.404), with Social Ties mediating the effect on Purchase Decisions (indirect effect = 0.114). Brand Love amplifies the relationship between Social Ties and Purchase Decisions (interaction effect = 0.134). These findings underscore SMMA's effectiveness in fostering customer engagement, enhancing brand trust, and driving personalized strategies to improve purchase decisions. Moreover, nurturing emotional connections via Brand Love strengthens customer loyalty and advocacy. The research emphasises the transformative potential of SMM for transportation services, offering actionable insights to leverage social platforms to deepen consumer relationships and boost business growth in industries with lower digital marketing adoption rates.

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Keywords: SMMA, Social Ties, Brand Love, Purchase Decisions.

INTRODUCTION

Social media marketing activities, as a dynamic capability, are crucial for bus companies navigating the evolving digital business landscape. These activities enable firms to leverage real-time interaction with customers, fostering engagement, satisfaction, and retention while building competitive advantages through enhanced communication and strategies based on data (Eze et al., 2021; Ju, 2024). By integrating social networking sites like Instagram, Twitter, and Facebook into their operations, bus companies can monitor customer sentiment, respond promptly to feedback, and adapt their services to meet changing demands (Vo et al., 2024). Furthermore, social media initiatives facilitate knowledge-sharing and operational efficiency by creating information-rich networks that enhance innovativeness and collaboration within organizations (Lam et al., 2016).

By utilizing strategies such as targeted advertising, influencer collaborations, with user-generated material, companies may target particular groups with messages that are more widely distributed. (Hotkar et al., 2023). Additionally, social media provides real-time insights into consumer behavior, allowing organizations to refine products and services based on data-driven decisions (Liu et al., 2023). This dynamic capability not only supports brand awareness and customer retention but also ensures businesses remain competitive in an increasingly digital marketplace (Al-Dmour et al., 2023).

Existing studies largely focus on industries such as retail, cosmetics, and e-commerce but lack exploration of SMMA's role in transportation services like PO Bejeu. The unique operational dynamics and consumer behavior in transportation services may lead to different outcomes compared to other sectors.

Table 1. State of The Art SMMA

Writer and Year	Specific Research Area	Objective	Primary Finding	Limitation
Farah Putri Wenang Lusaiingrum (2023)	Social media marketing and online purchase decisions	Explains how SMMA result in online purchase decisions	Social media marketing activities influence brand awareness and trust, which in	The convenience sampling method limits generalization and the research



			turn influence online purchase decisions.	only focuses on one brand (SOMETHINC)
Aulia Asri Fawwazi Haryanto dkk. (2021)	Viral marketing and social media's impact on TikTok users' decisions to buy	Analyze how social media and viral marketing influence purchasing decisions through the TikTok app.	Social media and viral marketing significantly influence purchasing decisions both individually and simultaneously.	Limited to TikTok users aged 17-25 in Sukabumi City; non-probability sampling reduces generalizability.
Ostojic dkk. (2024)	SMM and student purchasing decisions	Considering how social media marketing influences student purchasing decisions	Social media ads and updated content significantly influence purchase decisions and student engagement	Limited to students of one faculty in Serbia, thus reducing generalizability
Gratcia Natasya Bonaldy dkk. (2022)	Social media marketing and purchase decisions of local brands	Analyzing Social media marketing's effect on consumers' brand identification and purchasing decisions	SMM favorably influences buying decisions and brand awareness; this link is mediated by brand awareness.	Study limited to 120 respondents in Manado aged 21-40 years; findings cannot be generalized

Viral marketing campaigns on platforms like Instagram and Facebook also demonstrate significant associations between social media activity and purchasing decisions (Naik et al., 2024). These findings highlight the importance of understanding consumer behavior patterns on social media to optimize marketing strategies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Media Marketing Activities

In the digital era SMMA have supplanted traditional marketing strategies as being essential for firms (Rrustemi et al., 2021). Depending on their degree of maturity, businesses may use a variety of tactics to efficiently use social media, including social CRM techniques, social commerce, social content, and social monitoring (F. Li et al., 2021). Social media marketing aims to produce shareable content to increase brand exposure and customer reach, and provides direct customer feedback (Khan et al., 2020). SMMA encompass a range of strategies employed by businesses to enhance brand visibility, engage consumers, and use social media tools to cultivate brand loyalty (Ocktavia et al., 2023). SMMA encompass a range of strategies employed by brands to engage consumers through online platforms, ultimately influencing their perceptions and behaviors (Ibrahim et al., 2021). Overall, SMMA serves as a vital tool for businesses to connect with consumers, build trust, and encourage repeat engagement across various sectors (Sharma et al., 2020).

Social Ties

Social ties play a crucial role across various contexts, influencing outcomes in housing, migration, collaboration, and even corporate mergers (Schmidt, 2025). In collaborative projects, social ties enhance trust and information exchange, which are vital for successful project delivery, indicating that both formal and informal relationships can affect collaboration levels (af Hällström et al., 2021). Lastly, in the realm of mergers and acquisitions, social ties are linked to increased activity within countries, highlighting their importance in navigating complex business environments (Carril-Caccia et al., 2023). Social ties refer to the relationships between individuals within a network, characterized by their strength and embeddedness (af Hällström et al., 2021). Overall, social ties are crucial for fostering collaboration, support, and resilience in various social and professional settings (Azarian, 2010).

Brand Love

Brand love is a complex emotional attachment consumers develop towards specific brands, characterized by passion, loyalty, and a deep connection (Gumparathi et al., 2022). This emotional bond often leads to both attitudinal loyalty (positive feelings and willingness to recommend) and behavioral loyalty (repeated purchases) (Asiyah & Irfayanti, 2024). In the context of football teams, brand love comprises five dimensions:

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regular usage, emotional attachment, connection, passion, and intrinsic benefits (Velicia Martin et al., 2020). Understanding brand love is crucial for managers to develop effective marketing tactics to create enduring emotional bonds with customers (Velicia Martin et al., 2020). Brand love encourages customers to become advocates for the brand, sharing positive word-of-mouth recommendations. This advocacy not only reinforces their own loyalty but also attracts new customers who trust personal endorsements (Sallam, 2014).

Purchase Decision

A purchase decision is the process consumers undergo when determining what to buy, influenced by their needs and preferences (H. Li & Ma, 2020). The process by which customers weigh their alternatives and decide whether to buy products or services is known as a purchase decision. This process is influenced by several elements, including as the status of the market, individual characteristics, and how the information is presented, particularly in real estate contexts (Chen & Wang, 2023). Purchase decisions are a crucial stage in consumer behavior, influenced by various factors. Brand image and product quality significantly impact purchasing choices (Rihayana et al., 2022). Understanding these factors and the decision-making process is necessary for companies to create successful marketing plans and enhance customer loyalty in both traditional and digital environments (Salomo et al., 2021).

RESEARCH METHOD

Quantitative approaches are the methodology employed in this study. Since the populace size of this research is unclear, the Rao Purba formula is applied to the sample (Sujarweni, 2015) In order to overcome the complexity and ambiguity involved in calculating the size of concealed or sparse populations, the researcher employed the Rao Purba formula, which is highly beneficial when working with unknown populations (Robb & Böhning, 2011). Up to 103 samples of primary data were collected directly from respondents for this investigation. A Google form was used to distribute questionnaires with a Likert scale of 1–10 in order to collect data. For sampling in this study, non-probability sampling was employed. The sampling strategy used in this study to choose samples from the community is called accidental sampling (Zickar et al., 2023). As long as they are deemed relevant, anyone who occurs to cross paths with the researcher can be sampled using the technique known as accidental sampling. This process ensures that data collected through accidental sampling is valid and reliable, reducing potential bias and improving overall data

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quality. With SmartPLS 4.0 software, data analysis is done using the Structural Equation Modelling, or SEM, approach. Hypothesis testing, inner model testing, and testing of exterior models are among the tests that are conducted.

The Research Model

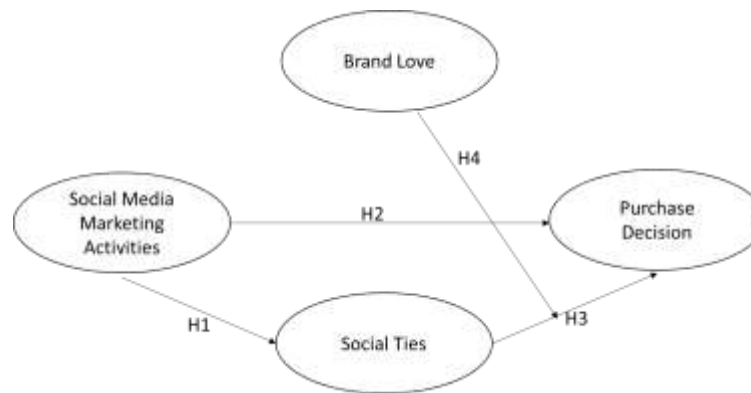


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Source: authors' concept

HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Impacts of Social Media Marketing Activity on Social Tie

Demonstrate that effective SMMA fosters brand trust and loyalty, which in turn encourages revisit intentions among customers, thereby strengthening social ties within communities (Ibrahim et al., 2021). Research by (Ibrahim & Aljarah, 2024) highlights that SMMA positively influences Self-brand associations and Instagram user interaction, suggesting that these activities can deepen social ties through enhanced interaction and engagement. Collectively, these studies underscore the importance of SMMA in cultivating social relationships and enhancing brand connections, thereby reinforcing the positive impact on social ties (Koay et al., 2020).

H1: Social media marketing activity significantly and favorably affects social tie

Impacts of Social Media Marketing Activities on Purchase Decision

(Shafiqa et al., 2024) found that SMMAs positively impact purchase decisions, mediated by E-WOM and brand awareness. (Kodrat, 2021) reported that SMMA have an

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immediate and favourable impact on purchase decisions and an indirect effect mediated by brand awareness. The importance of SMMA in shaping consumer behavior and decision-making processes across various industries (ElSayad & Md Saad, 2024).

H2 : Social Media Marketing Activity significantly and favorably affects Purchase Decision

Impacts of Social Tie on Purchase Decision

This study identifies social ties as a key factor influencing consumer conformity and purchase intentions within digital marketing contexts. It emphasizes how electronic word-of-mouth (Badawi Badawi & Muafi, 2021) facilitated by strong social ties can directly lead to increased purchase decisions. This study demonstrates that social ties significantly influence purchase decisions (Luan et al., 2017). Social media marketing significantly enhances brand awareness and purchase decisions, with brand awareness mediating this relationship (Kodrat, 2021).

H3 : Social Tie significantly and favorably affects Purchase Decision

Moderating Effects of Brand Love

Research indicates that strong social ties significantly impact purchase decisions due to trust and familiarity. Consumers are more likely to follow recommendations from friends or family when evaluating products or services (Luan et al., 2017). Brand love has been identified as a powerful driver of customer loyalty and purchase intention. It creates a sense of a sentimental bond that may reduce the dependence on external influences like social ties (Nawaz et al., 2020). When consumers experience high levels of brand love, their emotional attachment to the brand may override the influence of social ties. Conversely, consumers with low levels of brand love may rely more heavily on their social networks for guidance in making purchase decisions (Luan et al., 2017). Empirical evidence supports the idea that psychological constructs like brand love can moderate consumer behavior patterns, including reliance on social networks for decision-making (Cruz-Ros et al., 2024).

H4 : The relationship between social ties and purchase decision is moderated by brand love.

RESULT

Outer Model (Measurement Model)

This model has two measurement models, including the test:

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1. Convergent Validity

As soon as the AVE value is at least 0.5 and the outside loading is greater than 0.7, the measurement is deemed complete (Ulum et al., 2008). At least one 0.5 (Ulum, Ghozali, & Chariri, 2008). The results of the research model's convergent validity test are shown in Table 1.

Table 2. Convergent Validity Test

Indicator	Outer loading	AVE	Result
SMMA1	0.704	0.661	Valid
SMMA2	0.844		
SMMA3	0.776		
SMMA4	0.806		
SMMA5	0.794		
SMMA6	0.830		
SMMA7	0.869		
SMMA8	0.867		
SMMA9	0.785		
SMMA10	0.843		
ST1	0.879	0.807	Valid
ST2	0.914		
ST3	0.898		
ST4	0.930		
ST5	0.869		
BL1	0.900	0.763	Valid
BL2	0.877		
BL3	0.868		
BL4	0.935		
BL5	0.781		
PD1	0.870	0.731	Valid
PD2	0.896		
PD3	0.899		
PD4	0.890		
PD5	0.821		
PD6	0.879		
PD7	0.715		

Source: Data Processed (2025)



The indicators assessing SMMA, social relationships, brand love, and purchase decisions are deemed valid based on these findings, since they have an AVE value over 0.5 and a convergent validity test score above 0.7.

2. Reliability Test

Composite Reliability (Cruz-Ros et al.) is a variable reliability metric that, while not a strict criterion, assesses a dependable value of more than 0.7. Cronbach's Alpha is a number that indicates the dependability of every signs and goes from zero to one. If the value is more than 0.7, it can be regarded as reliable.

Table 4. Composite reliability & Cronbach's alpha

Variabel	Composite reliability	Cronbach' alpha	Result
SMAA	0.943	0.951	Reliabel
ST	0.940	0.954	
BL	0.922	0.941	
PD	0.938	0.950	

Source: Data Processed (2025)

It can be deemed trustworthy if the Reliability Test demonstrates that all of the variables' indicators obtain values over 0.7.

Inner Model (Measurement Model)

The inner model forecasts causal relationships between components that are difficult to measure and hidden variables.

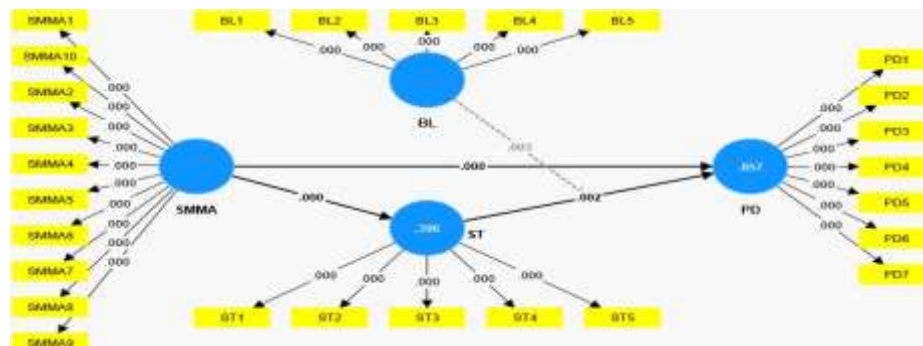


Figure 2. Structural Model

R-square

An indicator of the degree to which the independent variable's impact In the R-squared test, the dependent variable would be. Strong influence is indicated by an R-square of 0.67, moderate impact by a value of 0.33, and weak influence by a value of 0.19.

Table 5. R-square

Variabel	R-square	R-square adjusted
ST	0.396	0.390
PD	0.857	0.852

Source: Data Processed (2025)

According to the table of data, the Adjusted R-square value is 0.390 and the R-square value for Social Ties is 0.396. This suggests that Social Ties have a 39.6% impact on the model, which may be regarded a moderate influence. Other factors and indicators not covered in this study can account for the remaining 60.4%.

R-squared worth for Purchase Decision is 0.857, whereas 0.852 is the Adjusted R-squared value. This indicates that Purchase Decision has an 85.7% influence on the model, which is seen as having a significant impact. Other Uncovered causes and indications in this study can take into consideration the remaining 14.3%.

Hypothesis Test

T statistics and the P value are seen when testing hypotheses. Should the P-value be below 0.05, It is possible to accept the theory. To find out, look at the Path Coefficient in the program SmartPLS 4.0 was created through the use of the bootstrapping technique.

Table 6. Path Coeffien

Variabel	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P value
SMMA -> ST	0.630	0.636	0.057	10.966	0.000
SMMA -> PD	0.404	0.407	0.061	6.608	0.000
ST -> PD	0.181	0.174	0.059	3.066	0.002
BL -> PD	0.434	0.438	0.052	8.415	0.000
BL x ST -> PD	0.134	0.129	0.045	2.956	0.003

Source: Data Processed (2025)



Table 7. Specific Indirect Effects

Variabel	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P value
SMMA -> ST -> PD	0.114	0.110	0.038	3.031	0.002

Source: Data Processed (2025)

Here is the explanation for the 8 hypotheses based on the path coefficient analysis results:

Hypothesis H1 states that SMMA favorably affect Social Ties. In light of the path coefficient analysis, the path coefficient between SMMA and Social Ties is 0.630, indicating a significant positive relationship. 0.000 is less than 0.05 for the P-value, and 10.966 is the t-statistic value, which is more than 1.96. This confirms that Hypothesis H1 is supported, meaning that SMMA significantly influence Social Ties.

Hypothesis H2 evaluates the connection between SMMA and Purchase Decision. With a value of 0.404, the path coefficient demonstrates that social media marketing activities have a favorable impact on purchase decisions. The t-statistic value amounts to 6.608, which is more than 1.96, and the P-value is less than 0.05, at 0.000. Therefore, Hypothesis H2 is supported, indicating that Social Media Marketing Activities significantly influence Purchase Decision.

Hypothesis H3 investigates how Social Ties on Purchase Decision. The path coefficient between Social Ties and Purchase Decision is 0.181, which indicates a positive relationship. The t-statistic value is 3.066, which exceeds 1.96, and The P-value is below 0.05, at 0.002. This confirms that Hypothesis H3 is supported, meaning that Social Ties have a significant impact on Purchase Decision.

Hypothesis H4 tests The impact of Brand Love on Purchase Decision. The path coefficient between Brand Love and Purchase Decision is 0.434, indicating a strong positive relationship. The t-statistic is calculated as 8.415, The P-value is 0.000, which is less than 0.05, and it is larger than 1.96. Consequently, Hypothesis H4 is validated, showing that Brand Love significantly affects Purchase Decision.

Hypothesis H5 tests the moderating effect of Brand Love interacting with Social Ties on Purchase Decision. The path coefficient for Brand Love $\times$ Social Ties $\rightarrow$ Purchase Decision is 0.134, indicating a positive interaction effect. The t-statistic is 2.956, which surpasses 1.96, and the P-value is 0.003, which is less than 0.05. This confirms that

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Hypothesis H5 is supported, meaning that Brand Love regulates the relationship between Social Ties and Purchase Decision.

Hypothesis H6 tests the indirect effect of SMMA on Purchase Decision through Social Ties. The analysis shows that the indirect effect is 0.114. The P-value is 0.002, which is less than 0.05, and the t-statistic value is 3.031, which is higher than 1.96. This indicates that Hypothesis H6 is supported, meaning that Social Media Marketing Activities greatly impact Purchase Decision through Social Ties.

DISCUSSION

The study's conclusions support the crucial contribution of social media marketing activities to shaping consumer preferences., particularly in purchase decisions. For businesses, social media marketing is a vital tool, as it enhances brand visibility and fosters consumer engagement (Ocktavia et al., 2023). This aligns with the results, which demonstrate that social media marketing activities positively impact both social ties and purchase decisions. By leveraging social media platforms, businesses can create shareable content and encourage direct customer interaction, ultimately strengthening consumer trust and brand loyalty (Sharma et al., 2020). These results reinforce prior research suggesting that efficient social media strategies can significantly improve consumer decision-making and engagement (Khan et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the study highlights the role of social ties in impacting the buying decisions of consumers. Social ties, which refer to the relationships among individuals within a network, contribute to information exchange, trust-building, and collaborative decision-making (af Hällström et al., 2021). Findings show that social ties mediate the relationship among social media marketing activities and purchase decisions, emphasizing the significance of interpersonal relationships in shaping consumer behavior. This result is consistent with earlier research demonstrating that strong social connections enhance consumer confidence and facilitate purchase decisions (Schmidt, 2025). Consequently, businesses should consider strategies that encourage social interactions among consumers, such as user-generated content and community engagement.

Additionally, the research confirms the meaning of brand love in shaping consumer behavior. Brand love is distinguished by a strong emotional bond, passion, and loyalty, leading to advocacy and repeated purchases (Gumparthi et al., 2022). The findings reveal that brand love not only directly influences purchase decisions but also moderates the effect of social ties on purchasing behavior. This implies that emotionally engaged

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customers have a higher chance of to rely on social connections when making purchasing choices. As a result, companies should focus on cultivating strong emotional bonds with customers through personalized experiences and brand storytelling (Velicia Martin et al., 2020). By fostering brand love, businesses can enhance customer retention and encourage positive word-of-mouth recommendations (Sallam, 2014).

CONCLUSION

This study underscores the crucial part that SMMA in shaping consumer behavior, particularly through their influence on brand equity, social ties, and purchase decisions. SMMA, encompassing strategies such as trendiness, interaction, and WOM, significantly enhance brand awareness and loyalty by fostering consumer engagement and trust across digital platforms (Yang et al., 2022). Additionally, the research demonstrates the mediating function of social ties in strengthening how SMMA and purchasing decisions are related, emphasizing how interpersonal connections drive trust and collaborative decision-making (Zhang & Zhang, 2023). The concept of brand love further enriches this dynamic by moderating the impact of social ties on purchasing behavior; emotionally attached consumers exhibit heightened loyalty and advocacy for brands. These findings align with prior studies on social commerce platforms, which reveal that normative social influence and visibility of consumer behavior amplify decision-making patterns (Jia et al., 2024). Collectively, the results advocate for businesses to leverage SMMA strategically by integrating emotional branding, fostering social interactions, and promoting user-generated content to sustain competitive advantages in the digital marketplace.

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