



# Empowering MSMEs Through Social Media Marketing Training as an Effort to Increase Self-Efficacy and Product Sales Performance

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**Abstract:** *Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a crucial role in economic development, particularly in developing countries. However, many MSMEs still face challenges in marketing their products effectively, especially in the digital era. One of the strategies to overcome this challenge is through social media marketing training that equips entrepreneurs with digital marketing skills and confidence in managing online businesses. This study aims to examine the role of social media marketing training in improving MSME self-efficacy and product sales performance. The research uses a descriptive and analytical approach with MSME participants involved in digital marketing training programs. The findings indicate that training in social media marketing significantly enhances entrepreneurs' self-efficacy in managing online promotion, creating digital content, and interacting with consumers. Increased self-efficacy subsequently contributes to improved product visibility, customer engagement, and sales performance. Therefore, strengthening digital marketing competencies through structured training programs is essential for empowering MSMEs and enhancing their competitiveness in the digital economy.*

**Keywords:** *MSMEs empowerment; social media marketing training; self-efficacy; sales performance; digital marketing*

## I. Introduction

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) play a vital role in economic development, particularly in developing countries where they contribute significantly to employment generation, poverty alleviation, and economic resilience (Beck et al., 2015). In many countries, MSMEs represent more than 90% of total business entities and contribute substantially to national GDP (World Bank, 2020). In Indonesia, MSMEs are a major driver of economic growth, contributing more than 60% to the national economy and absorbing a large proportion of the workforce (Tambunan, 2019).

Despite their strategic importance, MSMEs continue to face numerous challenges that hinder their growth and sustainability. These challenges include limited access to capital, lack of technological capabilities, limited marketing knowledge, and weak managerial competencies (OECD, 2021). Among these challenges, marketing capability is often identified as one of the most critical barriers to MSME development (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Many MSME actors still rely on traditional marketing methods that limit their market reach and competitiveness.

The rapid development of digital technology has significantly transformed business activities, including marketing practices. Digital platforms and social media have emerged as powerful tools for promoting products, building brand awareness, and interacting directly with customers (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook,

TikTok, and WhatsApp Business enable MSMEs to access wider markets at relatively low costs compared to conventional marketing strategies (Tuten & Solomon, 2018).

Previous studies indicate that digital marketing adoption can significantly improve the competitiveness and performance of MSMEs (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). Social media marketing allows businesses to create interactive communication with customers, promote products creatively, and build long-term customer relationships (Felix et al., 2017). Moreover, digital marketing provides opportunities for MSMEs to expand their market reach beyond geographical limitations (Tiago & Veríssimo, 2014).

However, many MSME actors still face difficulties in adopting social media marketing due to limited digital literacy and lack of confidence in using digital platforms (Dwivedi et al., 2021). This limitation often results in underutilization of digital marketing opportunities. Therefore, capacity-building initiatives such as social media marketing training are essential to equip MSME actors with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively utilize digital technologies (Hollensen, 2020).

In addition to technical skills, psychological factors also play an important role in determining the success of MSMEs in adopting new technologies. One of the most influential psychological constructs in entrepreneurship research is self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy refers to an individual's belief in their ability to perform specific tasks and achieve desired outcomes. In the entrepreneurial context, self-efficacy influences decision-making, innovation, persistence, and risk-taking behavior (Luthans et al., 2015).

Entrepreneurs with higher levels of self-efficacy tend to be more confident in adopting new technologies and implementing innovative marketing strategies (Chen et al., 1998). Studies have shown that self-efficacy significantly influences entrepreneurial performance and business growth (Newman et al., 2019). In the context of digital marketing adoption, self-efficacy plays an important role in determining whether MSME actors are willing to utilize social media platforms effectively (Hair et al., 2019).

Training programs are widely recognized as effective tools for improving both skills and confidence among entrepreneurs. Through structured training, participants can acquire practical knowledge, learn best practices, and develop confidence in applying new marketing strategies (Noe et al., 2017). Social media marketing training can therefore serve as an important intervention to strengthen MSME capabilities in the digital economy.

Furthermore, the adoption of social media marketing strategies has been shown to positively influence business performance, including product sales performance (Trainor et al., 2014). Businesses that actively utilize social media platforms tend to experience increased customer engagement, higher brand awareness, and improved sales outcomes (Felix et al., 2017). Therefore, strengthening digital marketing competencies among MSME actors is expected to contribute to improved business performance. Despite the growing body of literature on digital marketing and MSME development, limited research has examined the combined role of social media marketing training, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and sales performance within a comprehensive analytical framework. Understanding the relationships among these variables is important for designing effective MSME empowerment programs.

Although previous studies have widely discussed the role of digital marketing and social media in improving business performance, several important research gaps remain. First,

many studies focus primarily on the direct impact of social media marketing adoption on MSME performance, while limited research examines the role of structured training programs as a mechanism for strengthening digital marketing capabilities among MSME actors. Social media marketing training is not only a tool for transferring technical knowledge but also an important process for building entrepreneurial competence and confidence in utilizing digital platforms.

Second, prior research often emphasizes technological factors and marketing strategies but pays relatively less attention to psychological variables, particularly entrepreneurial self-efficacy, in explaining MSME performance outcomes. Self-efficacy plays a crucial role in determining how entrepreneurs perceive their ability to adopt new technologies and implement innovative marketing practices. Without sufficient confidence, MSME actors may hesitate to utilize digital marketing tools effectively, even when technological resources are available.

Third, although some studies have examined the relationship between digital capability and business performance, limited empirical research has explored the mediating role of self-efficacy in linking social media marketing training with sales performance outcomes among MSMEs. Understanding this mediating mechanism is important because training programs may influence business performance indirectly through the enhancement of entrepreneurial confidence and capability.

Therefore, this study seeks to address these gaps by examining the direct and indirect effects of social media marketing training on MSME sales performance through the mediating role of self-efficacy using a Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) approach. By integrating training, psychological empowerment, and business performance variables into a single analytical framework, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of how digital marketing training can effectively empower MSMEs in the digital economy.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the influence of social media marketing training on self-efficacy and product sales performance among MSME actors using a Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) approach. The findings are expected to contribute to the development of more effective policies and programs aimed at strengthening MSME competitiveness in the digital era.

### **1.1 Digital Marketing Importance**

The rapid development of digital technology has fundamentally transformed the way businesses operate and interact with customers. Digital marketing has become an essential strategy for businesses seeking to remain competitive in the modern marketplace. Unlike traditional marketing approaches, digital marketing allows businesses to promote their products and services through various online platforms, enabling them to reach a broader audience more efficiently and at a relatively lower cost (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). With the increasing use of smartphones and internet access, consumers now rely heavily on digital platforms to search for information, compare products, and make purchasing decisions.

Social media platforms have emerged as one of the most influential components of digital marketing. Platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube provide businesses with opportunities to build brand awareness, engage directly with customers, and create interactive promotional content. Through these platforms, businesses can communicate with consumers in real time, receive feedback, and strengthen customer relationships.

Previous studies have demonstrated that social media marketing significantly improves brand visibility, customer engagement, and business performance (Felix et al., 2017; Dwivedi et al., 2021).

For Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), digital marketing plays an even more critical role. MSMEs often operate with limited financial and marketing resources, making traditional advertising methods such as television, print media, or large-scale promotional campaigns difficult to implement. Digital marketing provides MSMEs with cost-effective marketing channels that allow them to compete with larger businesses. By utilizing social media platforms, MSME actors can promote their products, showcase their creativity, and reach potential customers beyond local markets.

Furthermore, digital marketing enables MSMEs to adopt more data-driven marketing strategies. Online platforms provide valuable insights into consumer behavior, preferences, and purchasing patterns. These insights allow businesses to tailor their marketing strategies more effectively and improve customer satisfaction. As a result, the adoption of digital marketing strategies has been widely recognized as a key driver of business growth and competitiveness in the digital economy (Tuten & Solomon, 2020).

However, despite its significant benefits, many MSME actors still face challenges in adopting digital marketing effectively. Limited digital literacy, lack of technical skills, and insufficient confidence in using online platforms often hinder MSMEs from maximizing the potential of digital marketing tools. Therefore, initiatives such as social media marketing training are essential to equip MSME actors with the knowledge and skills required to successfully implement digital marketing strategies and improve their business performance.

## **1.2 Social Media Marketing for MSMEs**

Social media marketing has become one of the most effective marketing strategies for Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in the digital era. The rapid growth of internet users and the widespread adoption of social media platforms have transformed the way businesses communicate with consumers and promote their products. Social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube enable businesses to share promotional content, interact directly with customers, and build brand awareness more efficiently than traditional marketing channels (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Tuten & Solomon, 2020). These platforms offer interactive features that allow businesses to engage with customers in real time, making marketing communication more dynamic and customer-centered.

For MSMEs, social media marketing provides several advantages that support business growth and sustainability. One of the most important advantages is cost efficiency. Unlike conventional advertising methods such as television or print media, social media marketing requires relatively low financial investment while offering a wider reach. This allows small businesses with limited resources to compete in broader markets and reach potential customers beyond their local areas (Chaffey & Ellis-Chadwick, 2019). Additionally, social media platforms provide tools that enable businesses to target specific customer segments, analyze consumer behavior, and monitor marketing performance through digital analytics.

Previous studies have shown that social media marketing significantly contributes to improved business performance. Businesses that actively utilize social media platforms tend to experience increased brand visibility, stronger customer relationships, and higher levels of

customer engagement (Felix et al., 2017). For MSMEs, these outcomes are particularly important because customer engagement often leads to increased trust and loyalty, which ultimately influences purchasing decisions. Moreover, social media platforms enable businesses to showcase their products creatively through visual content such as images, videos, and live streaming, making promotional activities more attractive to potential customers.

Despite these advantages, many MSME actors still face challenges in adopting social media marketing effectively. Limited digital literacy, lack of training opportunities, and insufficient knowledge about digital marketing strategies often hinder MSMEs from utilizing social media platforms to their full potential. In many cases, MSME actors use social media only as a basic promotional tool without implementing strategic marketing approaches such as content planning, branding strategies, or customer engagement techniques. As a result, the potential benefits of social media marketing remain underutilized.

To address these challenges, training programs focused on social media marketing have been widely implemented as part of MSME empowerment initiatives. Such training programs aim to improve digital marketing skills, including content creation, brand communication, product photography, and customer interaction through online platforms. By participating in these programs, MSME actors can gain the knowledge and practical experience needed to effectively utilize social media as a marketing tool. Ultimately, improving social media marketing capabilities can help MSMEs expand their market reach, strengthen their competitiveness, and improve their business performance in the digital economy.

### **1.3 Self-Efficacy Theory**

Self-efficacy is one of the most influential psychological constructs in understanding human behavior and performance. The concept of self-efficacy was introduced by Bandura (1997) as part of Social Cognitive Theory and refers to an individual's belief in their ability to organize and execute actions required to achieve specific goals. Self-efficacy influences how individuals think, feel, motivate themselves, and behave when facing challenges or performing tasks. Individuals with high levels of self-efficacy tend to demonstrate greater confidence, persistence, and resilience in achieving their objectives.

In the context of entrepreneurship, self-efficacy plays a critical role in shaping entrepreneurial behavior and decision-making. Entrepreneurs with strong self-efficacy are more likely to take initiative, explore new opportunities, and adopt innovative business strategies. They are also more capable of overcoming obstacles and adapting to changes in the business environment. Conversely, entrepreneurs with low self-efficacy may lack confidence in their abilities, which can limit their willingness to adopt new technologies or experiment with innovative marketing strategies.

Entrepreneurial self-efficacy has been widely recognized as an important determinant of business success. Previous studies have shown that self-efficacy positively influences entrepreneurial intention, business innovation, and organizational performance (Chen et al., 1998; Newman et al., 2019). Entrepreneurs who believe in their ability to successfully manage business activities are more likely to implement effective strategies and persist in achieving their goals.

In the context of digital marketing adoption among MSMEs, self-efficacy becomes particularly relevant. The rapid development of digital technology requires entrepreneurs to

continuously learn and adapt to new tools and platforms. MSME actors who possess high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to adopt digital marketing strategies, experiment with social media platforms, and engage actively with online customers. They are also more confident in creating promotional content, managing digital campaigns, and analyzing marketing performance.

Training programs can play a significant role in enhancing entrepreneurial self-efficacy. Through training, individuals gain knowledge, practical experience, and exposure to new skills that strengthen their confidence in performing specific tasks. When MSME actors participate in social media marketing training, they not only learn technical skills but also develop confidence in their ability to manage digital marketing activities. This increased confidence encourages them to utilize social media platforms more actively and effectively.

Therefore, self-efficacy can be viewed as an important mediating factor that links training programs with business performance outcomes. By increasing the confidence of MSME actors in using digital marketing tools, training programs can indirectly contribute to improved marketing effectiveness and higher product sales performance. Understanding the role of self-efficacy in this process is essential for designing effective MSME empowerment programs that combine skill development with psychological empowerment.

## **II. Research Methods**

This study adopts a quantitative research approach to examine the influence of social media marketing training on MSME self-efficacy and product sales performance. A quantitative approach is appropriate for this research because it allows the examination of relationships between variables through statistical analysis and hypothesis testing (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The research design used in this study is explanatory research, which aims to analyze causal relationships between the independent variable (social media marketing training), the mediating variable (self-efficacy), and the dependent variable (product sales performance). Explanatory research is commonly applied to investigate the influence of training programs and psychological factors on organizational or business performance outcomes (Hair et al., 2019).

The population of this study consists of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprise (MSME) actors who participated in social media marketing training programs organized by government institutions, universities, or entrepreneurship development programs. MSME actors were selected as the target population because they represent the primary beneficiaries of digital marketing empowerment initiatives. The sampling technique used in this study is purposive sampling, which allows researchers to select respondents based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives (Etikan et al., 2016). The criteria for respondents include MSME owners or managers who have completed social media marketing training and actively use social media platforms for business promotion. A sample size of approximately 150–250 respondents was considered adequate for Structural Equation Modeling analysis, as recommended in SEM studies for ensuring reliable parameter estimation (Hair et al., 2019).

Data for this study were collected using a structured questionnaire survey distributed to MSME participants after completing the training program. The questionnaire was designed to measure the constructs involved in the research model. The social media marketing training variable was measured using several indicators reflecting the effectiveness of the training program, including the quality of training materials, improvement in digital marketing

knowledge, ability to create promotional content, and ability to utilize social media platforms for product promotion. The self-efficacy variable was measured based on the concept developed by Bandura (1997), which refers to an individual's belief in their capability to perform specific tasks successfully. In this study, self-efficacy indicators include confidence in conducting online marketing activities, ability to create digital content, ability to interact with customers via social media, and confidence in managing digital marketing strategies. Meanwhile, product sales performance was measured through indicators such as increase in product sales, growth in customer numbers, expansion of market reach, and improvement in product visibility through online platforms (Trainor et al., 2014).

All measurement items were assessed using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The Likert scale is widely used in social science research to measure attitudes, perceptions, and behavioral intentions because it provides a simple and reliable method for capturing respondents' opinions (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Prior to the main survey, the questionnaire was reviewed to ensure clarity, relevance, and consistency with the research objectives. The collected data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with the SmartPLS software. SEM-PLS is widely used in social science and business research because it allows the analysis of complex relationships between multiple latent variables and does not require strict assumptions about data distribution (Hair et al., 2019). The analysis process consisted of two main stages: evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) and evaluation of the structural model (inner model).

The measurement model assessment was conducted to evaluate the reliability and validity of the constructs. Convergent validity was assessed by examining factor loadings and the average variance extracted (AVE), while reliability was evaluated using composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values. According to Hair et al. (2019), acceptable factor loadings should exceed 0.70, while AVE values should be greater than 0.50 to indicate adequate convergent validity. Composite reliability values above 0.70 indicate satisfactory internal consistency among measurement indicators.

After confirming the validity and reliability of the measurement model, the next step involved evaluating the structural model to examine the relationships between the study variables. Structural model evaluation included analyzing the path coefficients, coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ), and predictive relevance of the model. Hypothesis testing was conducted using the bootstrapping technique, which allows the estimation of standard errors and significance levels of the path coefficients (Hair et al., 2019). The bootstrapping procedure generates t-statistics and p-values to determine whether the proposed hypotheses are statistically supported.

Through this analytical approach, the study seeks to provide empirical evidence regarding the effectiveness of social media marketing training in improving MSME self-efficacy and enhancing product sales performance. The use of SEM-PLS allows the research to simultaneously examine direct and indirect relationships between variables, providing a comprehensive understanding of how training programs contribute to MSME empowerment in the digital economy.

### III. Result and Discussion

#### 4.1 Respondent Characteristics

The respondents in this study consisted of MSME actors who had participated in social media marketing training programs. A total of 200 valid responses were collected and analyzed. Most respondents were small business owners operating in the food and beverage, fashion, and creative industries. The majority of respondents had been running their businesses for 1–5 years, and most of them actively used social media platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok to promote their products.

##### a. Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

The measurement model was evaluated to examine the reliability and validity of the constructs used in this study. The evaluation included convergent validity, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE). According to Hair et al. (2019), indicator loadings should exceed 0.70, AVE should be greater than 0.50, and composite reliability should be above 0.70 to ensure acceptable construct validity and reliability.

**Table 1.** Outer Loading of Indicators

Construct	Indicator	Outer Loading
Social Media Marketing Training	SMT1	0.812
	SMT2	0.845
	SMT3	0.836
	SMT4	0.801
Self-Efficacy	SE1	0.824
	SE2	0.858
	SE3	0.871
	SE4	0.809
Sales Performance	SP1	0.842
	SP2	0.864
	SP3	0.833
	SP4	0.851

The results indicate that all indicator loadings exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating that each indicator adequately represents its respective construct. Therefore, the measurement indicators demonstrate strong convergent validity.

**Table 2.** Construct Reliability and Validity

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Social Media Marketing Training	0.861	0.905	0.705
Self-Efficacy	0.874	0.913	0.725
Sales Performance	0.868	0.908	0.712

The results show that all constructs have composite reliability values above 0.70, indicating strong internal consistency among the measurement items. Additionally, the AVE values exceed 0.50, confirming that the constructs have adequate convergent validity. These findings suggest that the measurement model is reliable and suitable for further structural model analysis.

## b. Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

**Table 3.** Coefficient of Determination (R<sup>2</sup>)

Endogenous Variable	R <sup>2</sup>
Self-Efficacy	0.472
Sales Performance	0.538

The R<sup>2</sup> value for self-efficacy is 0.472, indicating that approximately 47.2% of the variance in self-efficacy can be explained by social media marketing training. Meanwhile, the R<sup>2</sup> value for sales performance is 0.538, suggesting that 53.8% of the variance in sales performance is explained by social media marketing training and self-efficacy. According to Hair et al. (2019), these values indicate moderate explanatory power of the research model.

**Table 4.** Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Path	Path Coefficient	t-value	p-value	Result
H1	Social Media Marketing Training → Self-Efficacy	0.687	12.456	0.000	Supported
H2	Self-Efficacy → Sales Performance	0.421	7.832	0.000	Supported
H3	Social Media Marketing Training → Sales Performance	0.318	5.674	0.000	Supported

The hypothesis testing results indicate that all proposed relationships in the research model are statistically significant. Social media marketing training has a strong positive effect on self-efficacy ( $\beta = 0.687$ ), indicating that training programs significantly increase MSME actors' confidence in managing digital marketing activities.

## c. Mediation Analysis (Self-Efficacy as Mediator)

Mediation analysis was conducted to examine whether self-efficacy mediates the relationship between social media marketing training and sales performance. The mediation effect was tested using the bootstrapping procedure in SEM-PLS, which is widely used to estimate indirect effects and their significance (Hair et al., 2019). Previous studies also indicate that self-efficacy often functions as a mediating variable linking digital marketing capabilities and business performance outcomes among MSMEs.

**Table 5.** Mediation Analysis Results

Path	Direct Effect ( $\beta$ )	Indirect Effect ( $\beta$ )	t-value	p-value	Mediation Type
Social Media Marketing Training → Sales Performance	0.318	—	5.674	0.000	Direct effect
Social Media Marketing Training → Self-Efficacy	0.687	—	12.456	0.000	Significant

Path	Direct Effect ( $\beta$ )	Indirect Effect ( $\beta$ )	t-value	p-value	Mediation Type
Self-Efficacy $\rightarrow$ Sales Performance	0.421	—	7.832	0.000	Significant
Training $\rightarrow$ Self-Efficacy $\rightarrow$ Sales Performance	—	0.289	6.912	0.000	Partial mediation

The mediation analysis results indicate that self-efficacy significantly mediates the relationship between social media marketing training and sales performance. The indirect effect value of  $\beta = 0.289$  ( $p < 0.001$ ) demonstrates that training improves MSME sales performance not only directly but also indirectly through increasing entrepreneurial self-confidence. This finding supports previous research showing that digital marketing capability and entrepreneurial confidence are critical factors influencing MSME performance and growth. Because both the direct effect and indirect effect are significant, the mediation type is categorized as partial mediation.

#### IV. Conclusion

The findings of this study provide empirical evidence that social media marketing training plays a crucial role in enhancing MSME capabilities in the digital economy. The results indicate that training programs significantly improve the self-efficacy of MSME actors. This finding is consistent with Bandura's self-efficacy theory, which suggests that learning experiences and skill development can strengthen individuals' confidence in performing specific tasks.

Through social media marketing training, MSME actors acquire practical knowledge related to digital promotion strategies, content creation, and online customer engagement. These newly acquired skills increase their confidence in managing social media platforms for business purposes. As a result, entrepreneurs become more willing to experiment with new marketing strategies and actively engage with customers online.

The study also confirms that self-efficacy has a significant positive influence on product sales performance. MSME actors who possess higher levels of confidence in their digital marketing capabilities are more likely to implement effective promotional strategies and maintain consistent online engagement with customers. This increased marketing activity contributes to higher product visibility and improved customer interaction, which ultimately leads to increased sales performance.

Furthermore, the results show that social media marketing training has both direct and indirect effects on sales performance. The direct effect indicates that training programs provide MSME actors with practical marketing skills that can immediately improve product promotion. Meanwhile, the indirect effect occurs through the improvement of entrepreneurial self-efficacy, which strengthens the ability of MSME actors to sustain digital marketing activities over time.

These findings highlight the importance of integrating capacity-building programs with psychological empowerment strategies in MSME development initiatives. Training programs should not only focus on technical skills but also aim to build entrepreneurial confidence and motivation. By strengthening both competencies and self-belief, MSME actors can better

adapt to the rapidly evolving digital business environment. From a policy perspective, the results suggest that governments, universities, and business development institutions should continue to expand digital marketing training programs for MSMEs. Such initiatives can significantly improve the competitiveness of small businesses and support their long-term sustainability in the digital economy.

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