The Impact of Search Engine Optimization (SEO) Techniques on the Sales Performance of E-Commerce MSMEs at the Shopee Campus in Semarang City

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Abstract. Good sales performance can benefit the company. That is because if the salesperson can achieve high sales targets, the profits will be higher too. This study aims to empirically examine the effect of Search Engine Optimization (SEO) techniques on sales performance. The research method used is a correlative quantitative with a cross-sectional approach. The population consisted of MSMEs members at the Shopee Campus in Semarang City. The research sample consisted of 100 respondents selected through a purposive sampling technique. Data collection through distributing Google form questionnaires and data analysis using Smart PLS version 4, data analysis using Partial Least Square (PLS). The results of this study indicate that SEO techniques have a positive and significant effect on sales performance. Utilizing digital marketing SEO techniques among MSMEs is a solution to improve their sales performance.

Keywords: Search Engine Optimization (SEO); Sales Performance, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)

INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of MSME performance in Indonesia reflects an interesting dynamic. The use of digital technology in financial transactions is increasing, providing opportunities for MSMEs to access wider markets and improve their operational efficiency. This also encourages innovation in business models, where MSMEs can utilize e-commerce and fintech payment platforms to transact and expand their product reach and interact more closely with consumers. This development shows that adaptation to digital technology is not just a trend, but an urgent need for MSMEs to remain competitive and survive amidst rapid market changes.

Advances in financial technology (fintech) and electronic commerce (e-commerce) have offered innovative solutions to address these challenges (Yulida, 2019). Fintech Payment covers various digital financial services such as electronic payments, e-wallets, and online loans that make it easier for MSMEs to conduct financial transactions quickly and efficiently. Meanwhile, e-commerce provides a platform for MSMEs to sell their products online, expand market reach and increase brand visibility(Rahayu & Ningtyas, 2021). Hopefully, MSMEs will be able to adapt quickly to market changes and take advantage of existing opportunities to expand their reach and improve the quality of their products.

Several previous studies on fintech, e-commerce, and MSME performance have been conducted by B. Rahardjo, Budi; Khairul (2019) which concluded that fintech plays a key role in improving MSME performance, while Sadrakh Zefanya Putra et al. (2023) revealed that e-commerce has a major influence on economic growth in MSMEs. Referring to a study conducted by Paripurna, Raihan; Ajija (2019), although the use of payment gateways was identified, its influence on MSME income was not significant. In addition, research by

Handayani, Nurdiana; Badjuri (2022) shows that fintech payments do not have a direct positive influence on MSME development.

In this study, cashless society is a moderating variable defined as an event where people make transactions in a non-cash manner and lead to digital-based activities. The development of a cashless society will affect the transformation of the payment system and the development of digital-based businesses to improve the performance of MSME players. Several studies on cashless society have been conducted by various researchers, including Kustina & Aji, (2023), who found that the cashless society variable can moderate and strengthen the impact of payment gateways on the financial performance of MSME players. The development of a cashless society will affect the transformation of the payment system and the development of digital-based businesses to improve the performance of MSME players. Cashless society research has been researched by Kustina & Aji (2023) findings that cashless society variable can moderate and strengthen the impact of payment gateways on the financial performance of MSMEs. Cashless society accelerates the adoption of digital payments, which in turn strengthens the ability of MSMEs to utilize fintech payment and e-commerce technology. With faster, safer, and more efficient digital transactions, MSMEs can better manage their supply chains, increase market access, and improve financial performance and business sustainability.

Several previous studies have shown differences in results related to the impact of fintech payments on MSME performance. This difference prompted the author to examine the integration of fintech payments and e-commerce on MSME performance using cashless society as a moderating variable. The purpose of this study is to analyze the impact of fintech payment and e-commerce integration on MSME performance moderated by the cashless society variable. Statistical tests will be conducted to test the hypothesis and identify key factors that influence MSME performance. The hypotheses proposed in this study are as follows:

H1: It is suspected that Fintech Payment has an effect on MSME Performance

H2: It is suspected that E-Commerce has an effect on MSME performance

H3: Cashless Society can moderate the influence of Fintech Payment on MSME Performance

H4: Cashless Society can moderate the influence of E-Commerce on MSME Performance

Through this hypothesis, this study aims to provide in-depth insight into the key factors that influence the performance of MSMEs in the context of e-commerce and digital payment technology which is strengthened by the cashless society variable.

METHOD

The research design is a quantitative correlative with a cross-sectional approach, which examines with the premise that the main purpose of the most basic type of research in a cross-sectional survey is to observe (collect data about) certain events, often at one point in time.(Esitti & Kasap, 2019). This assumption allows the quantitative correlative research methodology to work with the assumption that the primary purpose of the most basic study is to observe (collect data about) a particular event. To answer the research questions, this study adopts descriptive research techniques and survey measures to capture the objective and social reality of sales performance. This allows this study to answer the research questions. The initial step in this method is to study the relevant literature to identify the subjects listed. The research framework is created after evaluating previous studies in the

field. Structural equation modeling (SEM) is used in conjunction with the survey to establish and validate the predicted relationships.

The sample of this study consisted of 100 E-Commerce MSME owners at the Shopee Campus in Semarang City. The research period was from January to August 2024. A total of 100 questionnaires were sent to respondents. However, only responses from respondents indicated that they used at least one variation of the form and provided answers to the questionnaire items for the study. There were 100 valid questionnaires sent. The researcher created a questionnaire and collected data using Google Forms. Data from Google Forms were then stored in Google Drive. The identities of the respondents were kept confidential because each questionnaire and invitation to participate in this study were issued without any identifying information.

The validity of the proposed theoretical model was validated using cross-sectional data. Information was collected using a procedure based on a survey of the target population. Indications were rated on a five-point Likert scale in each area. The anchors on the scale ranged from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5, with 1 representing Strongly Disagree and 5 representing Strongly Agree. This study used a 5-point Likert scale because it requires less time and effort and allows respondents to remain neutral by selecting the option "neither agree nor disagree". On the Likert scale. In addition, a five-point Likert scale was used in this study because previous research has shown the benefits of using this strategy(Chatterjee, Chaudhuri, González, Kumar, & Singh, 2022; Dubey et al., 2019; Gupta, Justy, Kamboj, Kumar, & Kristoffersen, 2021).

In this study, the data has been analyzed with the help of Smart PLS version 4 statistical software for partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM)(K. Latif, Malik, Pitafi, Kanwal, & Latif, 2020). PLS-SEM is a statistical tool used by several researchers in their research studies. PLS-SEM uses powerful, superior, flexible, and adequate statistical tools to produce a fairly competent analysis model.(Aman, Abbas, Mahmood, Nurunnabi, & Bano, 2019; Avotra, Chenyun, Yongmin, Lijuan, & Nawaz, 2021; KF Latif et al., 2020; Lotfi, Yousefi, & Jafari, 2018; Pitafi, Kanwal, & Khan , 2020). The second part of the questionnaire is used for hypothesis testing.(NeJhaddadgar, Ziapour, Abbas, Mardi, & Zare, 2020; Pitafi, Rasheed, Kanwal, & Ren, 2020; Yao, Ziapour, Abbas, Toraji, & NeJhaddadgar, 2022). Data analysis for hypothesis testing is based on two stages. The first is the estimation of the measurement model, and the second is the estimation of the structural model.(Islam, Islam, et al., 2021; Islam, Pitafi, Akhtar, & Xiaobei, 2021; Islam, Pitafi, Arya, et al., 2021; Zhou et al., 2022). In the first stage of measurement model estimation, survey data are screened for valid and reliable items in the discriminant and convergent validity scales of the measured data.(Marchena-Giráldez, Acebes-Sánchez, Román, & Granado-Peinado, 2021). In addition, factor loadings, Cronbach alpha, and average variance extracted (AVE) were used for validity checks. Hypotheses were tested for acceptance or rejection using the values, t-statistics, and p-values obtained for each hypothesis..

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Validity and Reliability Test

Table 1 shows the convergent validity, indicator reliability, and construct reliability and validity. The results of the reliability test are shown in Table 1, and were achieved by calculating Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). The results of the reliability test are presented in Table 1. The researcher found that the numbers ranged > 0.7, the highest value reported. Cronbach's Alpha was used to analyze the

collected data, and this is the conclusion drawn in accordance with the suggestions given by several researchers. (Bjekić, Strugar Jelača, Berber, & Aleksić, 2021; Taber, 2018). The composite dependency values of the constructs varied > 0.7, the highest value recorded for composite dependency. The researchers argue that an adequate Critical Composite (CR) threshold should be set at not less than 0.7, which should be considered acceptable. As a result of the results shown in Table 1 below, the researchers can conclude that the CR criteria have been met. This allows us to conclude that the CR criteria have been met. Composite reliability can be used as an alternative to Cronbach Alpha because the CR value is slightly higher than the Cronbach Alpha value, but the difference between the two is not very significant.(Malkewitz, Schwall, Meesters, & Hardt, 2023).

The validity convergence was evaluated by testing the average variance obtained (AVE). The AVE values are shown in Table 1. The results are > 0.5, which is the highest number ever recorded. The absolute minimum value of AVE that can be considered satisfactory is 0.5.(Rouf & Akhtaruddin, 2018). It has been determined that the acceptability threshold has been reached and convergent validity has been met in all four dimensions. The information presented in Table 1 which can be seen below forms the basis of these findings.(Ab Hamid, Sami, & Mohmad Sidek, 2017).

Table 1. Correlation, Reliability Measurement, and Validity

Construct	Item	*Loading*	*Cronbach's Alpha*	CR	AVE
SEO Techniques (TS)	TS1	0.927	0.927	0.945	0.776
	TS2	0.839			
	TS3	0.883			
	TS4	0.828			
	TS5	0.924			
Sales Performance (KP)	KP1	0.904	0.912	0.934	0.739
	KP2	0.868			
	KP3	0.830			
	KP4	0.821			
	KP5	0.873			

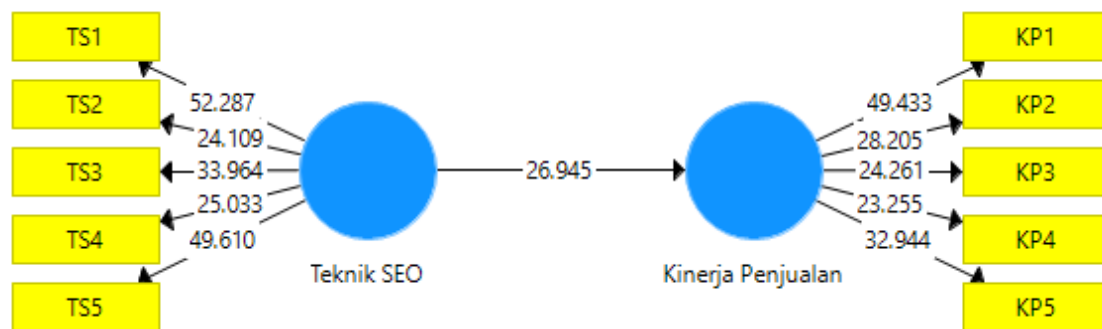Source: Data processed by SmartPLS 4.0, 2024

Structural Model Estimation
The next step in the partial least squares structural model equation is to estimate the structural model. The structural model estimates the β values, t-statistics, and outcomes that allow the study to accept or reject the proposed hypothesis. Table 2 and Figure 2 show the structural model algorithm obtained for this study. The structural model obtained shows the relationship of β values. The standardized β value explains the change in the dependent variable with a unit change in the independent variable. This is a measure of each relationship shown in this study. A higher β value indicates a significant effect on the dependent variable. On the other hand, the t-statistic represents and validates the magnitude of the β value. Table 2 presents the results of the β values, t-statistics, and outcomes. This finding validates one hypothesis proposed for the direct effect of this study at $p < 0.05$. Thus, this finding shows a significant t-statistic and a substantial β value. Hypothesis Ha, states that there is a positive relationship between SEO techniques and sales performance. The result accepted Ha with a β value = 0.811 and t-statistic = 26.945.

Table 2. Structural Relationships

Hypothesis		Path Coefficient	*t-value*	Results
SEO Techniques→ Sales Performance	Ha	0.811	26,945	Support

Source: Data processed by SmartPLS 4.0, 2024

Source: Data processed by SmartPLS 4.0, 2024
Figure 1. Structural Model

This finding confirms the interrelated relationship between SEO techniques and the sales performance of E-Commerce MSMEs at the Shopee Campus in Semarang City.(Andespa, Yeni, Fernando, & Sari, 2023; Azhar et al., 2022; Hendrawan et al., 2019; Liubana et al., 2023; Manik, 2019; Safeer & Le, 2023). A positive and significant relationship emphasizes the importance of a well-crafted and effectively executed SEO engineering plan in shaping customer perceptions of MSME products.(Chairunnisa & Ruswanti, 2023). The positive influence of SEO techniques on sales performance is in line with existing theories, fostering a sense of trust and loyalty among Shopee customers.(Andriyani & Yudhistira, 2023; Basrowi, Ali, Suryanto, & Utami, 2023). Effective engagement through digital channels of SEO techniques contributes to improved sales performance. Strategies such as targeted advertising resonate with customers, fostering a sense of connectedness and loyalty. Strong relationships reaffirm the economic significance of growing a loyal customer base, which contributes to improved sales performance. Positive associations underscore the role of brand perception as a catalyst for consumer purchasing decisions, which directly impacts sales performance. Positive relationships highlight the instrumental role of digital SEO techniques in driving actual sales, which positively impacts sales performance.(Liubana et al., 2023).

Search engines like Google and the large number of social media users can be used as a good promotional opportunity to offer products that buyers like.(Harto, 2019). Search engine optimization or SEO is the optimization of a website to be placed in the best position. Search engines work like reading and then clicking on other links on the page. The difference is that Google uses Googlebot. Googlebot is a large group of computers that perform searches millions of times faster than humans.(Azhar et al., 2022). SEO intends to advance the quantity and also the quality of visitor traces through search engines to a particular website using the working stages or algorithms on the search engine. SEO usage techniques are categorized into 2 types of ways, namely on-site optimization and off-side optimization(Indriyatmoko & Rahardi, 2021).

A website is a link that connects to the entire digital world and perhaps the most important part of any digital marketing strategy, online activities will direct you to potential customers. Many businesses use web marketing to boost the popularity of their website, by conveying information and using the right keywords to make it easier for them to find the information they need. All the information you want will be easy to find using a smartphone. How to improve sales performance by using search engine optimization (SEO) techniques(Azhar et al., 2022).

CONCLUSION

The conclusion of this study is that there is a positive relationship between SEO techniques and the sales performance of E-Commerce MSMEs at the Shopee Campus in Semarang City. MSMEs are very good at utilizing technological advances in the form of SEO techniques. The use of digital marketing SEO techniques among MSMEs is a solution to increase MSME sales performance. In addition, local, national, and even international digital marketing SEO techniques can be used to educate a wider market reach so that purchasing MSME products become very easy.

The comprehensive analysis of this study, supported by robust statistical measures, provides actionable insights for operating MSME businesses. Moving forward, continued adaptation and integration of these strategies is critical for continued success in the competitive e-commerce MSME landscape. This study only covers the positive antecedents of SEO techniques. It does not cover the potential outcomes of brand loyalty and customer experience antecedents. Future research can expand the proposed model with different variables, settings, and countries that will provide variable insights into customer experience and brand loyalty in different organizational contexts and cultures. For example, branding constructs, such as brand knowledge, passion, love, relationship quality, commitment, and attitude, play a key role in customer experience and brand loyalty. A more comprehensive study can be considered by adding or modifying mediating or moderating variables in future research..

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