EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF PERCEIVED SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING ACTIVITIES ON K-POP FAN BEHAVIOR IN INDONESIA: A MEDIATION MODEL IN THE ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY (STUDY CASE FANS OF SM ENTERTAINMENT ARTIST)

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Abstract

Social media marketing has become a key strategy for building relationships between brands and consumers. In the entertainment industry especially in K-Pop companies like SM Entertainment actively implement Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) to boost fan engagement and influence purchasing decisions. This study aims to examine the effect of perceived SMMAs on purchase intention, brand loyalty, and impulsive buying among K-Pop fans in Indonesia, while considering the mediating roles of brand trust, brand experience, and brand love. The study focuses on K-Pop fans who are active on social media and interact with promotional content from SM Entertainment's artists. Data were collected from 316 respondents via an online survey and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on the Stimulus–Organism–Response (S-O-R) framework. In this model, SMMAs act as the stimulus, brand trust, brand experience, and brand love serve as the organism, and purchase intention, brand loyalty, and impulsive buying represent the consumer response. The findings show that perceived SMMAs significantly influence brand trust, which in turn enhances brand experience and brand love. These three factors directly and sequentially impact purchase intention, brand loyalty, and impulsive buying. The results emphasize the importance of social media marketing strategies in shaping trust, emotional connection, and meaningful experiences that drive fan behavior. Practically, entertainment companies can use these insights to design more effective and emotionally engaging digital marketing strategies to stay competitive.

Keywords: Social Media Marketing, Brand Trust, Brand Experience, Brand Love, Purchase Intention, Brand Loyalty, Impulsive Buying, K-Pop, SM Entertainment

INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of social media in the contemporary digital era has substantially altered patterns of communication and social interaction. Social media has become an essential aspect of daily life, facilitating more efficient means for individuals to connect, disseminate information, and establish networks. According to data from We Are Social and Hootsuite (2022), 58.4% of the global population were active social media users, a figure that increased to 59.4% in 2023. In the business domain, social media has evolved into a pivotal marketing instrument. Platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, TikTok, and LinkedIn are extensively utilized by companies to promote products, enhance brand awareness, and engage with consumers across international markets. These platforms enable a more interactive and personalized approach to marketing through strategic social media marketing initiatives. Tuten and Solomon (2017) define social media marketing as the application of digital channels to communicate, exchange information, and deliver valuable offerings to targeted audiences (Tuten & Solomon, 2017). As the number of social media users continues to rise, organizations are increasingly required to develop innovative and adaptive marketing strategies in order to maintain relevance and competitiveness within the rapidly evolving digital environment (Sijabat et al., 2023).

Social media not only serves as a communication and marketing tool but has also changed how the entertainment industry reaches its audience. Various sectors in the entertainment industry, including film, music, and live performances, increasingly rely on social media to build connections with fans and enhance content exposure. Through platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok, entertainment companies can effectively promote their products and create more immersive experiences for their audiences. One of the entertainment industries that heavily relies on social media marketing is the Korean entertainment industry.

Korea is known as one of "The Four Asian Tigers" due to its success in exportoriented manufacturing industries, which have driven extraordinary economic growth. Extensive research has been conducted to understand the country's political and market institutions, as well as its development process, to create an economic growth model focused on various value-added manufacturing sectors such as television, ships, fashion, and mobile phones. Today, Korea is also expanding its exports into the cultural sector, including the Korean Wave (Shin & Kim, 2013).

The global expansion of the Korean Wave, or Hallyu, has extended beyond East Asia, introducing a wide array of cultural exports including cinema, television content, culinary arts, fashion, and especially music. Among these, Korean popular music (K-pop) has achieved remarkable international recognition, facilitated by the rapid progress in digital technology and information dissemination (Fithratullah, 2019). A notable milestone occurred in 2009 when the Wonder Girls' track "Nobody" became the first K-pop single to enter the Billboard Hot 100. This was followed by Psy's "Gangnam Style" in 2012, which not only dominated global music charts but also became the first video on YouTube to exceed one billion views, ultimately securing the second spot on the Billboard Hot 100 (Kim & Kang, 2023).

The internationalization of K-pop is driven by significant entertainment agencies such as SM Entertainment, which is the largest entertainment agency in Asia and is considered a leader of the Korean Wave. In 1996, SM Entertainment produced the boyband H.O.T, paving the way for hundreds of other Korean boybands and girl groups. Lee Soo Man, the founder of SM Entertainment, created a unique system to maintain the popularity of K-pop groups. SM Entertainment dominates 60% of the Korean music industry, demonstrating its market power by selling the most albums and merchandise. K-pop is well-received in Asian countries due to shared values and cultural similarities, and it is often perceived as part of the national culture (Saraswati et al., 2023).

In 2023, SM Entertainment reported global revenues amounting to approximately 961.07 billion South Korean won, reflecting a consistent upward trend in earnings over recent years. As one of South Korea’s leading entertainment conglomerates, SM Entertainment oversees a roster of prominent artists, including Super Junior, Girls’ Generation, SHINee, EXO, Red Velvet, NCT, aespa, and RIIZE. While originally established with a primary focus on music production and artist management, the company has since diversified its operations to encompass sectors such as travel services, advertising, and video content production (Statista, 2024).

The growth of K-Pop has been remarkably rapid in Indonesia. The rising popularity of K-pop has given rise to new variations within the genre itself in music, film, and lifestyle. Since 1973, strong relations have been established between South Korea and Indonesia (Yudhistira & Paksi, 2022). In the Asian region, South Korea has experienced rapid economic growth and has become a developed country. Through several industrial collaborations, South Korea has made significant financial investments in Indonesia. In Southeast Asia, Indonesia is considered a prospective industrial market. Around 2009, K-pop music started gaining popularity among Indonesians, mainly due to the widespread use of social media and the internet. Indonesia is one of the fastest growing K-Pop markets in Southeast Asia (Jung, 2011). As a country with a large population and rich cultural diversity, Indonesia has become a highly potential market for the Korean entertainment industry, particularly K-Pop. Interest in Korean culture, especially K-pop music, continues to rise among Indonesian youth, creating significant opportunities for Korean entertainment companies to expand their presence in the country (Gusti et al., 2022).

Recognizing this vast market potential and the high enthusiasm of Indonesian KPop fans, SM Entertainment decided to open a branch office in Indonesia. In 2019, SM Entertainment officially established its representative office in Indonesia, located at FX Sudirman, which was inaugurated on February 21, 2019. The purpose of this office was to enhance the promotion of SM Entertainment artists in Indonesia. The representative office also aims to facilitate collaborations with companies or television stations that wish to partner with SM Entertainment (Setiawan, 2019). This initiative is part of the company's long-term plan to invest in talent development and local collaborations. It is also a strategic move to further global expansion and to bring the brand closer to Indonesian fans.

Until now, many SM Entertainment artists have collaborated with Indonesian brands and television stations. For instance, aespa, a girl group under SM Entertainment, was chosen as the Brand Ambassador for Richoco in February 2024, which significantly boosted Richoco's popularity, particularly among K-Pop fans. Additionally, SM Entertainment specifically created an Instagram account dedicated to Indonesian fans, @smtown_idn, which features Indonesian-language content. This account is designed to engage directly with Indonesian fans through relevant, interactive, and locally adapted content. Through this platform, SM Entertainment shares various types of content, including concert announcements, fan meeting promotions, album and merchandise releases, and exclusive behind-the-scenes material.

Koay et al. (2023) found that Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) positively impact brand trust, which subsequently enhances both brand experience and brand love. These emotional and experiential responses, in turn, were shown to significantly contribute to consumers' purchase intentions. Moreover, their study revealed that the effect of SMMAs on purchase intention is sequentially mediated by brand trust, brand experience, and brand love. The present research builds upon Koay et al.'s (2023) framework, with several modifications to the variables, aiming to extend the understanding of the factors influencing purchase intention—specifically within the context of Indonesian fans of SM Entertainment's K-Pop artists. The original findings by Koay et al. (2023) support the notion that SMMAs contribute to the development of brand trust, which subsequently fosters positive brand experiences and emotional attachment, ultimately leading to a stronger intent to purchase (Koay et al., 2023). However, this study enriches the model by adding brand loyalty and impulsive buying variables to understand how SMMAs carried out by SM Entertainment not only drive purchase intentions but also form long-term loyalty and impulsive buying tendencies among its fans. In addition, this study examines purchase intention not only in those who have never purchased but also in those who have purchased related products, such as albums, merchandise, or concert tickets of SM Entertainment artists.

This study aims to examine the direct impact of Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) on purchase intentions, brand loyalty, and impulsive buying behavior among K-Pop enthusiasts in Indonesia. The study examines the essential function of social media in enabling connections between fans and artists, while also investigating the sequential mediating roles of brand trust, brand experience, and brand love in the connection between SMMAs and consumer purchase behavior. This study seeks to enhance the understanding of digital marketing dynamics in the entertainment sector by analyzing these interrelated aspects. The results are expected to provide actionable insights for entertainment firms, especially those in Indonesia, by guiding the creation of more focused and efficient social media campaigns that improve fan interaction and cultivate brand loyalty. By employing suitably customized strategies, organizations can more effectively capitalize on the Indonesian market's potential and foster lasting fan relationships through engaging and interactive digital experiences.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Cognitive-Behavioral Theory

Cognitive-Behavioral Theory (CBT) is a psychological approach that explains how thoughts (cognition), emotions, and behavior interact to determine an individual's response to a stimulus. This theory states that the way a person processes information will affect how he or she feels and acts (Beck, 1976). In the context of marketing, especially digital and social media, this theory is relevant to understanding how consumers' perceptions of a brand or marketing activity will affect their attitudes and actions toward that brand.

Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Theory

The S-O-R theory, also known as the Mehrabian-Russell model, was developed in the context of environmental psychology by Mehrabian and Russell (1974). This theory states that the external environment as a stimulus (S) influences the internal conditions of an individual. These internal conditions then function as organisms (O) that determine the behavioral responses (R) of the individual (Mehrabian, 1974).

Perceived Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs)

Perceived Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) refers to consumers' perceptions of various social media marketing activities conducted in an e-commerce context (Yadav & Rahman, 2017). This perception can be operationalized as a formative reflective construct with five dimensions: entertainment, trend, customization, interaction, and word-of-mouth . In other words, consumers will have a positive perception of a brand's social media marketing activities if the activities are fun, trendy, tailored to individual preferences, interactive, and if consumers spread positive information about the brand. The widespread use of social media as a marketing strategy by companies can be attributed to its ability to increase brand awareness, create value, and build relationships with customers effectively (Ibrahim et al., 2020).

Brand Trust

Brand trust can be defined as consumer confidence that they can rely on the seller to provide services as promised. Meanwhile, relationship value refers to consumer perceptions of the benefits obtained compared to the costs incurred to maintain an ongoing exchange relationship (Agustin & Singh, 2005). In addition, Sahin et al. (2011) explained that trust in a brand that has been purchased can increase the credibility of the brand, which ultimately plays an important role in encouraging consumers to make repeat purchases. High trust in a brand creates a sense of security for consumers, so they are more likely to continue using the same product or service in the long term (Sahin et al., 2011).

Brand Experience

Brand experience refers to consumers' internal reactions, including sensations, emotions, thoughts, and actions, that are evoked by stimuli from brand design, brand identity, marketing communications, and the surrounding environment. The strength and intensity of brand experience can have varying outcomes, which can be positive or negative, and can have lasting implications on customer behavior (Brakus et al., 2009). Brand experiences are often embedded in long-term memory and contribute significantly to a variety of beneficial outcomes, particularly consumer happiness and brand loyalty (Khan & Rahman, 2015).

Brand Love

Brand love refers to the level of emotional attachment that satisfied consumers have to a particular brand. Brand love includes enthusiasm for the brand, emotional attachment, favorable evaluation, positive sentiment toward the brand, and expressions of love for the brand (Ahuvia, 2005). Ranjbarian et al. (2012) asserted that customers' love for a brand is parallel to their emotional attachment to an individual. Although consumers share the same viewpoint, brand love and interpersonal love are different concepts. In romantic relationships, affection is reciprocal between people, whereas brand love is unilateral (Ranjbarian et al., 2012).

Purchase Intentions

Purchase intentions or purchase intentions according to Morinez et al. (2007) in Mirabi, Akbariyeh, and Tahmasebifard (2015) refer to a situation where consumers tend to choose a product to buy based on certain circumstances (Mirabi et al., 2015). Unlike purchase decisions or purchase decisions, purchase intentions are more closely related to customer behavior, perceptions, and attitudes. Ghosh's (1990) research shows that purchase intentions are the right predictors of purchasing behavior (Ghosh, 1990). Generally, during the purchasing process, buyers are influenced by internal influences (Gogoi, 2013). Bettman (1979) suggests that relevant components include consumer memory, which comes from internal and external sources. Internal memory refers to the consumer's personal experience with a product or service. External memory refers to information related to a product or service, which can come from family, friends, and neighbors (Bettman, 1979). Furthermore, brands can influence consumers who are considering a purchase by disseminating information relevant to their products or services therefore, it can be asserted that the marketing message delivered by a brand is an external source of information (Hanaysha, 2018). Purchase intention is influenced by price, perceived quality, and perceived value, along with internal and external factors (Grewal et al., 1998; Zeithaml, 1988).

Brand Loyalty

Given the importance of marketing functions, brand loyalty is one of the most frequently discussed topics among marketers. Many studies have discussed how to define and assess what brand loyalty is. According to Dick and Basu (1994) brand loyalty is a strong belief that customers have in a brand that encourages customers to repurchase certain products repeatedly in the future (Dick & Basu, 1994). One of the most important elements according to Limpasirisuwan and Donwa (2017) brand loyalty itself reflects how well a business or company is performing. Because it allows someone to assess behavior and attitudes and become more integrated, brand loyalty itself brings a competitive advantage over competitors (Limpasirisuwan & Donkwa, 2017).

Impulsive Buying

As stated by Lehmann, Krug, and Falaster (2019), impulsive buying refers to a condition in which consumers make unanticipated purchases of goods or services, ignoring any alternatives and potential future consequences. They emphasize that impulsive consumers show a greater tendency to buy (Lehmann et al., 2020). Impulsive consumers exhibit detrimental behavior by ignoring the long-term implications of their personal finances, prioritizing immediate post-purchase satisfaction (Rook, 1987). However, personal psychology is not the only determinant that influences customers' impulsive behavior; elements such as sales promotions, store environment, and reference group influences significantly influence impulsivity (Novia & Harmon, 2017).

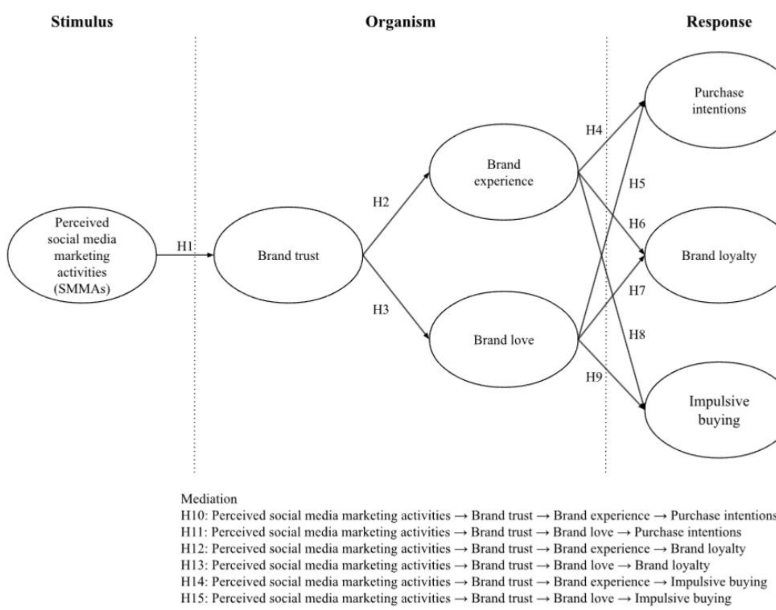
Hypothesis

H1: Perceived SMMAs have a significant positive effect on brand trust
H2: Brand trust has a significant positive effect on brand experience
H3: Brand trust has a significant positive effect on brand love
H4: Brand experience has a significant positive effect on purchase intentions
H5: Brand love has a significant positive effect on purchase intentions
H6: Brand experience has a significant positive effect on brand loyalty
H7: Brand love has a significant positive effect on brand loyalty
H8: Brand experience has a significant positive effect on impulsive buying
H9: Brand love has a significant positive effect on impulsive buying
H10: The relationship between perceived SMMAs and purchase intentions is sequentially and positively mediated by brand trust and brand experience.
H11: The relationship between perceived SMMAs and purchase intentions is sequentially and positively mediated by brand trust and brand love
H12: The relationship between perceived SMMAs and brand loyalty is sequentially and positively mediated by brand trust and brand experience.
H13: The relationship between perceived SMMAs and brand loyalty is sequentially and positively mediated by brand trust and brand love.

H14: The relationship between perceived SMMAs and impulsive buying is sequentially and positively mediated by brand trust and brand experience.
H15: The relationship between perceived SMMAs and impulsive buying is sequentially and positively mediated by brand trust and brand love.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study utilizes the research by Koay et al. (2023) with several adjustments to enhance the comprehension of the determinants affecting purchase intention among SM Entertainment K-Pop fans in Indonesia. The research conducted by Koay et al. (2023) demonstrated that Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) positively impact brand trust, therefore affecting brand experience and brand love, which eventually enhances purchase intention (Koay et al., 2023). However, this study enhances the model by incorporating brand loyalty and impulsive buying variables to elucidate how SMMAs executed by SM Entertainment not only stimulate purchase intention but also cultivate enduring loyalty and impulsive buying behaviors among its fans. This study investigates purchase intention among individuals who have neither made a purchase nor those who have acquired related products, including albums, merchandise, or concert tickets for SM Entertainment artists.



Partial Least Squares (PLS) is a statistical method grounded in covariance-based analysis, widely applied in regression contexts involving numerous and potentially intercorrelated independent variables. This study utilized the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) technique to examine the interrelationships among key constructs within the proposed research framework. The model encompasses Perceived Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs), Brand Trust, Brand Experience, Brand Love, Purchase Intentions, Brand Loyalty, and Impulsive Buying, all explored within the context of K-Pop fandom engagement with SM Entertainment artists in Indonesia. PLS-SEM was deemed appropriate due to its capacity to manage complex models that include multiple mediating variables. Moreover, it is well-suited for exploratory research designs, accommodates deviations from normality, and performs effectively with diverse sample sizes

(Benitez et al., 2020; Hair et al., 2019). For data processing, this study utilized SmartPLS 3, a software tool specifically designed for PLS-SEM analysis.

To evaluate the impact of perceived Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) on customer behavior among K-Pop fans, purposive sampling was utilized to guarantee sample relevance. Participants were mandated to meet two explicit criteria: (1) they must have an active Instagram account, and (2) they must self-identify as fans of SM Entertainment artists and actively follow at least one of these artists on Instagram.

To collect data, a structured questionnaire was developed and initially subjected to a pilot test involving 30 participants to assess its clarity and reliability. The pilot results indicated no major issues, allowing for the use of the finalized questionnaire in the main study. The survey was distributed online via Google Forms, with the link circulated through the researchers' personal social media platforms (Instagram and Twitter) as well as through personal networks. Following the application of inclusion criteria and the exclusion of invalid responses, a total of 316 usable responses were collected and included in the final analysis.

Of the 316 respondents, 243 (76.9%) were female, and 73 (23.1%) were male. The respondents came from various regions across Indonesia. In terms of age distribution, 62 respondents (19.6%) were aged between 18–20 years, 251 respondents (79.4%) were aged between 21–30 years, and only 3 respondents (0.9%) were over 30 years old. The majority of participants thus fell within the 21–30 age group, indicating a concentration of young adult K-Pop fans active on social media.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of measurement model (outer model)

In this measurement model, two types of tests were conducted sequentially: a reliability test and a validity test. The results of the outer model were obtained through data analysis using SmartPLS 3 with a total of 316 samples.

The reliability test was conducted to to assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire items that had been previously validated. This method assesses the degree to which the instrument consistently measures the target constructs. A construct is deemed trustworthy when it meets the threshold criterion for both Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability; specifically, Cronbach's Alpha must surpass 0.60, and Composite Reliability must exceed 0.70 (Hair et al., 2011). A construct is deemed dependable if its reliability coefficients exceed 0.70. A Cronbach's Alpha score below 0.70 signifies inadequate internal consistency. The results of the reliability analysis, obtained from the SmartPLS software, are presented in the table below.

Table 1.
The Reliability Test

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability
Social Media Marketing Activities	0.924	0.925	0.935
Brand Trust	0.819	0.826	0.880
Brand Experience	0.941	0.944	0.948
Brand Love	0.933	0.936	0.943
Purchase Intention	0.842	0.854	0.904
Brand Loyalty	0.814	0.832	0.889
Impulsive Buying	0.900	0.902	0.930

The results in the table above indicate that all constructs in this investigation have robust reliability, as shown by Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values beyond the 0.70 threshold. This signifies that the measurement items consistently and reliably reflect their corresponding constructs. Thus, the measurement model meets the internal consistency criteria required for further investigations.

Convergent validity evaluates the extent to which indicators of a certain construct exhibit strong correlations, ensuring that each construct accurately represents its intended concept without considerable overlap with others (Hair et al., 2021). The validity is assessed by analyzing factor loadings and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). A construct is considered valid if its indicators exhibit factor loadings of 0.708 or above and an AVE value exceeding 0.50. An AVE of 0.50 or above indicates that the construct explains at least 50% of the variance in its indicators (Hair et al., 2021). The findings from the convergent validity test, generated through SmartPLS 3, are summarized in the following table.

Table 2.
The Results of The Convergent Validity Test

Variable	Indicator	Loading Factor	AVE
Perceived Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs)	SMMA1	0.753	0.567
	SMMA2	0.735	
	SMMA3	0.731	
	SMMA4	0.743	
	SMMA5	0.735	
	SMMA6	0.747	
	SMMA7	0.761	
	SMMA8	0.754	
	SMMA9	0.765	
	SMMA10	0.787	
	SMMA11	0.768	
Brand Trust	BT1	0.791	0.646
	BT2	0.804	
	BT3	0.801	
	BT4	0.820	
Brand Experience	BE1	0.770	0.605
	BE2	0.764	
	BE3	0.766	
	BE4	0.766	
	BE5	0.781	
	BE6	0.790	
	BE7	0.782	
	BE8	0.786	
	BE9	0.813	
	BE10	0.771	
	BE11	0.756	
	BE12	0.792	
Brand Love	BL1	0.757	0.622

	BL2	0.768	
	BL3	0.813	
	BL4	0.785	
	BL5	0.804	
	BL6	0.780	
	BL7	0.823	
	BL8	0.802	
	BL9	0.814	
	BL10	0.738	
Purchase Intention	PI1	0.848	0.759
	PI2	0.852	
	PI3	0.913	
Brand Loyalty	BLO1	0.827	0.727
	BLO2	0.880	
	BLO3	0.850	
Impulsive Buying	IB1	0.923	0.769
	IB2	0.859	
	IB4	0.865	
	IB5	0.859	

Based on the results obtained in this study, the factor loading values for each indicator reached ≥ 0.7. This indicates that all indicators used are valid and accurately reflect the constructs being measured. Furthermore, the AVE values for each variable were also above the threshold of ≥ 0.5, demonstrating that all indicators have a strong relationship with their respective constructs. Therefore, the constructs can be considered valid and suitable for further analysis.

Analysis of structural model (inner model)

After completing the requirements of the outer model evaluation, the subsequent stage is to conduct the inner model (structural model) analysis. The inner model is evaluated by analyzing the R-squared (R^2) values, which reflect the model's explanatory capacity for the dependent constructs, along with the t-statistics obtained from the route coefficient analysis.

Table 3.
The Results of R Square and Q Square

Variable	R Square	Q Square
Brand Experience (BE)	0.356	0.207
Brand Love (BL)	0.383	0.227
Brand Loyalty (BLO)	0.453	0.316
Brand Trust (BT)	0.376	0.231
Impulsive Buying (IB)	0.473	0.361
Purchase Intention (PI)	0.472	0.350

The table indicates that the R-squared (R^2) value for Brand Experience (BE) is 0.356, implying that the independent variables in the model account for about 35.6% of the variance in Brand Experience. For Brand Love (BL), a R^2 value of 0.383 signifies that about 38.3% of the variance is explained by the predictors incorporated in the model. Brand Loyalty

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(BLO) exhibits a R² value of 0.453, indicating that 45.3% of the variation is accounted for by the independent variables.

Correspondingly, Brand Trust (BT) exhibits a R² value of 0.376, signifying that 38.2% of its variation is accounted for by the model. The R² for Impulsive Buying (IB) is 0.473, indicating that 47.3% of the variance in this variable is accounted for by the model's predictors. Finally, Purchase Intention (PI) has a R² value of 0.472, indicating that 47.2% of its variance is attributable to the independent factors examined in the study.

The Q² values indicate that all variables in the research model exhibit strong predictive significance, as they surpass 0.2, signifying the model's capacity to elucidate variation in the data. Brand Experience (BE), exhibiting a Q² rating of 0.207, signifies a moderate effect. Likewise, Brand Love (BL) possesses a Q² score of 0.227, indicating a medium influence. Brand Loyalty (BLO) exhibits a Q² value of 0.316, indicating a substantial effect and a noteworthy contribution to the model. Brand Trust (BT), exhibiting a Q² score of 0.231, indicates a moderate effect.

The variable Impulsive Buying (IB) exhibits a Q² value of 0.361, signifying a considerable effect, hence suggesting its significant contribution to the model and robust predictive usefulness. Finally, Purchase Intention (PI), with a Q² value of 0.350, reveals a substantial influence, signifying considerable importance and significant predictive capability.

The model demonstrates strong predictive capability, with Impulsive Buying and Purchase Intention having the most significant influence, followed by Brand Loyalty, while Brand Experience, Brand Love, and Brand Trust have moderate effects.

Hypothesis Testing

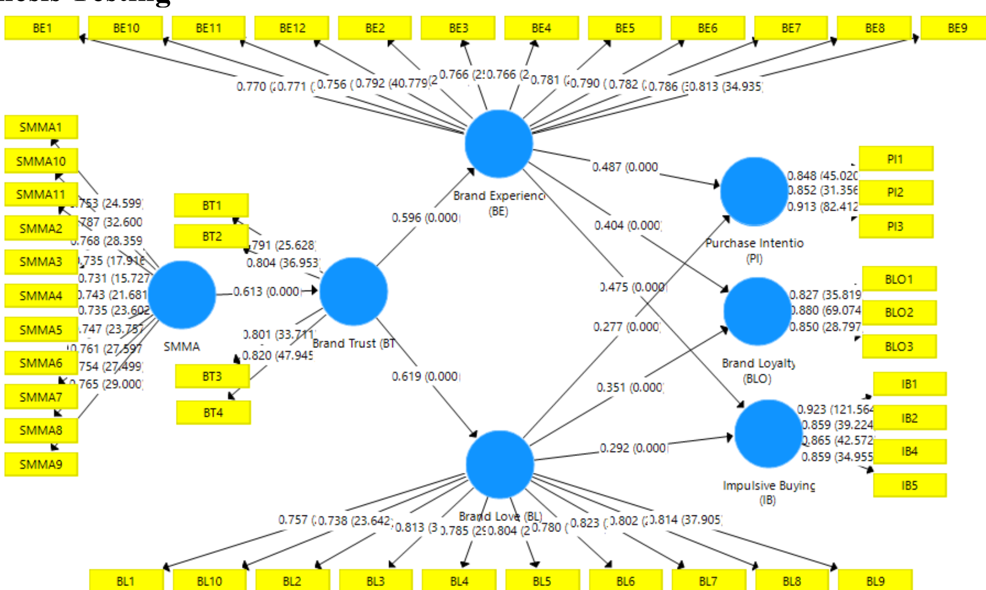

Figure 1.
Bootstrapping

Table 4.
The Results of Hypothesis Test

Hypothesis	Path Coeff	T Statistics	P Value	Concl.
H1: SMMA -> Brand Trust (BT)	0.613	15.823	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted
H2: Brand Trust (BT) -> Brand Experience (BE)	0.596	15.486	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted
H3: Brand Trust (BT) -> Brand Love (BL)	0.619	16.085	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted
H4: Brand Experience (BE) -> Purchase Intention (PI)	0.487	8.438	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted
H5: Brand Love (BL) -> Purchase Intention (PI)	0.277	4.806	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted
H6: Brand Experience (BE) -> Brand Loyalty (BLO)	0.404	7.140	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted
H7: Brand Love (BL) -> Brand Loyalty (BLO)	0.351	6.092	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted
H8: Brand Experience (BE) -> Impulsive Buying (IB)	0.475	10.626	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted
H9: Brand Love (BL) -> Impulsive Buying (IB)	0.292	5.494	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted
H10: SMMA -> Brand Trust (BT) -> Brand Experience (BE) -> Purchase Intention (PI)	0.178	6.156	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted
H11: SMMA -> Brand Trust (BT) -> Brand Love (BL) ->	0.105	4.545	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted

Purchase Intention (PI)				
H12: SMMA -> Brand Trust (BT) -> Brand Experience (BE) -> Brand Loyalty (BLO)	0.148	5.587	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted
H13: SMMA -> Brand Trust (BT) -> Brand Love (BL) -> Brand Loyalty (BLO)	0.133	4.875	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted
H14: SMMA -> Brand Trust (BT) -> Brand Experience (BE) -> Impulsive Buying (IB)	0.173	6.995	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted
H15: SMMA -> Brand Trust (BT) -> Brand Love (BL) -> Impulsive Buying (IB)	0.111	5.277	0.000	Hypothesis Accepted

Based on the results of the data analysis, This study demonstrates that Perceived Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) significantly enhance Brand Trust (BT). This discovery corroborates earlier studies by Puspaningrum (2020) and Althuwaini (2022), which indicated that SMMAs enhance brand awareness, thereby fortifying brand trust. This suggests that the social media marketing efforts executed by SM Entertainment in Indonesia such as actively interacting with fans on platforms like Instagram successfully cultivate fans' faith in the brand or stars they endorse (Althuwaini, 2022; PUSPANINGRUM, 2020).

The results further indicate that Brand Trust has a large and favorable impact on both Brand Experience (BE) and Brand Love (BL). This indicates that increased trust among fans in SM Entertainment correlates with enhanced brand experiences and stronger emotional ties to the brand or idol. These findings correspond with those of Maura et al. (2022) and Fahira & Djamaludin (2023), who highlighted that nurturing brand trust enhances brand experiences and is pivotal in developing brand loyalty—an indispensable element for attaining sustained brand success (Fahira & Moh. Djemdjem Djamaludin, 2023; Maura et al., 2022). Similarly, Joshi and Garg (2021) noted that trust in a brand is a forerunner to the emergence of brand love (Joshi & Garg, 2021).

In addition, the analysis reveals that both Brand Experience and Brand Love significantly and positively influence Purchase Intentions (PI). This indicates that when fans experience pleasant interactions and develop strong emotional connections with a brand, they are more likely to acquire associated products and services, including music records, merchandise, or concert tickets. The results align with the research conducted by Aurelia and Widiantari (2022), which emphasized the significance of brand image and awareness in influencing the connection between brand experience and purchase intention (Aurelia & Widiantari, 2022). Li & Nan (2023) also found that consumers with a strong affinity for a brand exhibit greater loyalty and a heightened propensity to endorse it to others (Li & Nan, 2023).

Furthermore, Brand Experience exerts a substantial positive influence on Brand Loyalty (BLO), suggesting that individuals who have favorable interactions with a brand are more inclined to maintain loyalty, increase their purchases, and persist in their support for their idols. The study by Meidina et al. (2022) demonstrates that brand experience significantly contributes to the enhancement of brand loyalty (Meidina et al., 2022). Likewise, Brand Love enhances brand loyalty, indicating that individuals who experience an emotional connection to their idols are generally more committed. This is in line with Bairrada et al. (2019), who demonstrated a strong relationship between brand love and brand loyalty, reinforcing that deep emotional attachment often translates into consistent purchasing behavior (Bairrada et al., 2019).

The study also indicates that both Brand Experience and Brand Love significantly influence Impulsive Buying (IB). This indicates that fans who are emotionally connected to the company and have experienced favorable interactions on social media are more likely to engage in impulsive purchases, such as spontaneously acquiring unique products or concert tickets. These findings align with the research conducted by Akbar et al. (2020), which shown that emotional experiences can result in impulsive customer purchases (AKBAR et al., 2020). This is also supported by the trust-based model indicates that individuals who harbor affection for a brand are more inclined to respond favorably and make expedited purchasing decisions compared to those lacking emotional connections (Khairil Bustaman & Elya Dasuki, 2022).

This study also revealed significant evidence of sequential mediation pathways within the proposed model. Firstly, Brand Trust and Brand Experience, together with Brand Trust and Brand Love, were recognized as mediators in the association between Perceived Social Media Marketing Activities (SMMAs) and Purchase Intentions (PI). The results indicate that effective social media engagement techniques cultivate trust among followers, so enhancing both the experiential and emotional aspects of brand contact, ultimately increasing consumers' propensity to purchase. The findings corroborate the research of Akoğlu and Özbek (2022), which established that brand trust considerably mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty, also influencing purchase behavior (Akoglu & Özbek, 2022). Ferreira et al. (2022) further supported this notion demonstrating that brand love amplifies the impact of brand experience on purchase intention, so establishing a reinforcing positive cycle (Ferreira et al., 2022).

Secondly, the mediating roles of Brand Trust and Brand Experience, in conjunction with Brand Trust and Brand Love, were also noted in the link between Perceived SMMAs and Brand Loyalty (BLO). This indicates that loyalty is cultivated not in isolation but through the establishment of trust and emotionally impactful brand interactions. This observation aligns with Hajjid et al. (2022), who highlighted the persistent nature of consumer loyalty rooted in trust and emotional connections (Hajjid et al., 2022). Ambarwati et al. (2024) and Yusuf & Purwanto (2023) similarly discovered that customer interaction with a brand via engaging social media marketing activities fosters increased trust and deeper emotional connections, resulting in enhanced brand loyalty (Yusuf & Purwanto, 2023).

Thirdly, Brand Trust and Brand Experience, together with Brand Trust and Brand Love, were demonstrated to buffer the link between Perceived SMMAs and Impulsive Buying (IB). This indicates that proficient social media marketing can incite impulsive purchasing behavior by fostering trust and emotional connections. Safeer (2024) corroborates these findings, highlighting the mediating influence of brand trust and brand love on the relationship between SMMAs and impulsive purchasing behavior (Safeer, 2024). Ferreira et al. (2019) also highlighted that brand trust constitutes a robust foundation for establishing interactions between customers and brands. When customers see a company as trustworthy, they are more inclined to engage in impulsive buying (Ferreira et al., 2019).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the findings of this study underscore the effectiveness of SM Entertainment's social media marketing strategies in fostering brand trust and emotional engagement among fans, offering a valuable reference for entertainment companies in Indonesia. Positive brand experiences and strong emotional bonds between fans and their idols—cultivated through social media interactions—significantly contribute to brand loyalty, purchase intentions, and impulsive buying behavior. These factors are critical for enhancing competitiveness and driving market growth within Indonesia's entertainment industry, particularly in the context of K-pop. However, the study has several limitations. First, it relied solely on a quantitative approach, which limits a deeper understanding of respondents' subjective emotions, motivations, and perceptions that could be more thoroughly explored through qualitative or mixed-method approaches. Second, the study focused only on Instagram as the platform for social media marketing activities, which may not fully capture the varied impact of other platforms like TikTok, Twitter (X), or YouTube. Lastly, the study exclusively examined Indonesian fans of K-pop, specifically those engaged with SM Entertainment, without investigating local entertainment industries or fanbases of Indonesian artists. As a result, the generalizability of the findings may be limited. Future research should consider exploring other entertainment sectors, such as film or traditional music, to determine whether similar patterns of social media influence are observed.

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