

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**THE INFLUENCE OF SOCIAL  
MEDIA CONTENT ON  
BUMIPUTERA MSMES' BUSINESS  
PERFORMANCE: THE MEDIATING  
ROLE OF PERCEIVED CONSUMER  
ENGAGEMENT**

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## ABSTRACT

In the dynamic digital era, the rapid migration of businesses to online platforms has reshaped the commercial landscape. Social media has emerged as a dominant marketing tool, steadily eclipsing traditional media. Content disseminated online wields substantial influence, capable of significantly impacting an organisation's reputation and success. Scholarly research has underscored the pivotal role of social media posts in fostering interactive engagements between organisations and consumers, thereby enhancing overall business performance. Global statistics mirror an upward trajectory in social media users, solidifying its position as a paramount platform for firms to prioritise. Additionally, governments worldwide are actively advocating for heightened social media participation among micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), recognising their pivotal role in fuelling a nation's economic growth. Despite this recognition, statistics revealed a prevailing lack of awareness among MSMEs regarding the significance of integrating social media into their business strategies. Thus, this study aimed to scrutinise the intricate relationship between diverse social media content and business performance while probing the mediating impact of perceived consumer engagement on these direct relationships. The study employed purposive sampling methodology and selected Bumiputera MSMEs that incorporated social media for their business in Terengganu, Malaysia. A total of 153 datasets were cleared for further analysis after thorough data screening was done. Descriptive statistics were conducted using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. Subsequently, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analyses were applied using SmartPLS 4 software to validate the hypotheses formulated for the study. This investigation sought to bridge the gap between social media content, perceived consumer engagement, and MSMEs' business performance, while offering empirical insights that can guide these enterprises in harnessing the potential of social media to fortify their market presence and overall success. From the key findings, the study indicated that different kinds of social media content have different influences on perceived consumer engagement and business performance. Meanwhile, mediation occurred in three out of four settings. Several obstacles arose while conducting the study, but the researcher managed to overcome them. The study contributed theoretically by combining two existing theories, the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) and the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, together. Managerial implications and recommendations for future studies were also discussed, hoping to shed some light and guide the way especially for MSMEs, not just Bumiputera owned in Terengganu, but the whole Malaysia, to take advantage of in posting content on social media to engage with their consumers, thus, improving the businesses' overall performance. Ultimately, Bumiputera MSMEs may put to practice the findings of the study for the benefit of their business performance.

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*“Perseverance is not a long race; it is many short races one after the other.”*

— Walter Elliot

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the researcher discussed the industry overview, which explained the related industry as a whole; the background of the study, a look into the social media scene in Malaysia; the problem statement, which was the reason for this study; research objectives, which were the aims to be achieved with the findings; research questions, that have been answered at the end of the study; the significance of the study, who benefited from the study; the scope of the study, which revealed the respondents of the study; and finally, the definition of terms, where key terms used throughout the study were defined.

### 1.2 Background of the Study

In recent years, the global business landscape has undergone a transformative shift driven by the proliferation of digital technologies and online platforms. Business performance is increasingly dependent on the strategic adoption of digital tools, especially in navigating global competition and recovering from the disruptions caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (Papadopoulos et al., 2020). Moreover, business performance has also significantly benefited from social media integration, as highlighted by Alalwan et al. (2017), which has since evolved from a communication tool into a core element of digital marketing strategies. Business performance could be enhanced through improved customer acquisition, stronger brand loyalty, and increased sales; outcomes directly influenced by effective social media use. They are further supported when businesses, regardless of size, recognise the value of curated social media content in shaping consumer perceptions and engagement. Dwivedi et al. (2021) have claimed that business performance may be closely linked to how firms leverage social media to build brand presence and foster meaningful consumer interaction.

Amid these global dynamics, micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in developing economies are increasingly leveraging social media platforms to bridge resource gaps and compete in saturated markets. In Malaysia, MSMEs constitute the backbone of the national economy, accounting for 97.4 per cent of total business establishments and contributing 38.4 per cent to the nation's gross domestic product