

The Influence of Community Marketing, Service Quality, and Digital Marketing on Visit Decisions Mediated by Trust in Hospitals (Study at Bali Mandara Eye Hospital)

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ABSTRACT

Increasing competition in the healthcare sector requires hospitals to be able to boost patients' visiting decisions through various marketing strategies and improvements in service quality. In addition, patient trust becomes an important factor that can influence patients' decisions in choosing healthcare services. This study aims to analyze the influence of community marketing, service quality, and digital marketing on patients' visiting decisions, with patient trust as a mediating variable at Bali Mandara Eye Hospital. This study uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design. The study sample consists of 125 respondents who are patients of Bali Mandara Eye Hospital and were selected using purposive sampling. Data collection was carried out through the distribution of questionnaires, while data analysis used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS) with the help of the SmartPLS 4.0 application. The results of the study show that community marketing, service quality, and digital marketing have a positive and significant effect on patients' visiting decisions

INTRODUCTION

Competition among hospitals in Indonesia is no longer just determined by the ability to provide quality medical services, but also by how well hospitals can build patient trust and influence people's decisions in choosing healthcare services. With increasing digital information access and higher public expectations for service quality, patients' decisions to visit a hospital have become an important indicator of the success of a hospital's marketing strategy. Therefore, understanding the factors that affect patients' decisions to visit is a strategic issue in managing modern hospitals. Patients' decisions to visit a hospital are crucial in the healthcare system because they determine timely access to medical services, enable early diagnosis, prevent complications, and improve the efficiency of healthcare resource utilization. Various studies show that delays in seeking healthcare can worsen a patient's clinical condition and increase the disease burden, highlighting the importance of making quick and accurate decisions in healthcare settings (Luo et al., 2025). Evidence-based decision-making also helps improve the quality of care and patient safety (Baynouna Al Ketbi, 2021). Additionally, word of mouth and the value patients perceive influence their intention to revisit, reflecting the crucial role of perceived quality and service experience in shaping patient behavior (Frances et al., 2025).

Even so, in practice, many people still delay going to the hospital due to various obstacles, such as limited access, uncertainty about risk perception, and biases in assessing their own health conditions. Many people postpone visits because of high costs, long travel distances, or long waiting times – travel time, service wait times, and transportation costs are significant barriers to accessing healthcare. These obstacles are linked to poorer access to medical care and can lead to delays in deciding to visit healthcare facilities (Purwito et al., 2025). Additionally, uncertainty in risk perception and self-assessment of health conditions affects the decision to go to healthcare facilities (Luo et al., 2025). Poor communication between patients and healthcare workers also hinders the decision to visit. Communication aspects like empathy, support, positive attitude, and equality are significantly related to patients' decisions to use hospital services. Lack of good communication can reduce trust and patients' decisions to come back (Meilia et al., 2025). Cultural factors and stigma around certain illnesses can add to people's hesitation in deciding to seek treatment (Kong et al., 2025).

Preliminary studies in various hospitals show that there are problems when it comes to deciding to visit. Some potential patients delay or hesitate to come because of a lack of information, high perceived costs, and worries about the examination process. Additionally, psychological factors like fear of medical procedures make people even less willing to visit. This situation shows that there's a need for more persuasive communication and service strategies to encourage people to go to the hospital.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Various studies show that community marketing, service quality, and digital marketing play an important role in influencing patients' decisions to visit hospitals, both directly and through building trust.

Community marketing is a strategy that can build long-term relationships between hospitals and the community through health education, social activities, and community involvement. Research by Demir (2025), Carman et al. (2025), and Keller et al. (2025) shows that community activities increase trust, loyalty, and the community's intention to use healthcare services. These findings are supported by Putra and Hariyono (2025), who found that community marketing boosts positive perceptions of hospitals and encourages more patient visits.

Service quality is also a key factor in patients' decisions when choosing healthcare services. Qiu et al. (2024) explain that service quality dimensions, like reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurance, and tangibles, affect patient satisfaction and trust. Walean et al. (2025) found that good service experiences boost patient trust and encourage repeat visits. These findings confirm that patient trust is shaped not only by clinical outcomes but also by the quality of service interactions they receive.

Besides that, digital marketing is becoming more important in building communication and the image of hospitals. Amanda and Achmadi (2025), Abdyllah (2024), and Setyawati and Ernawaty (2024) found that social media, websites, digital reviews, and transparency of information can boost patients' credibility and trust. Digital marketing also makes it easier to access health information, which positively influences decisions to visit.

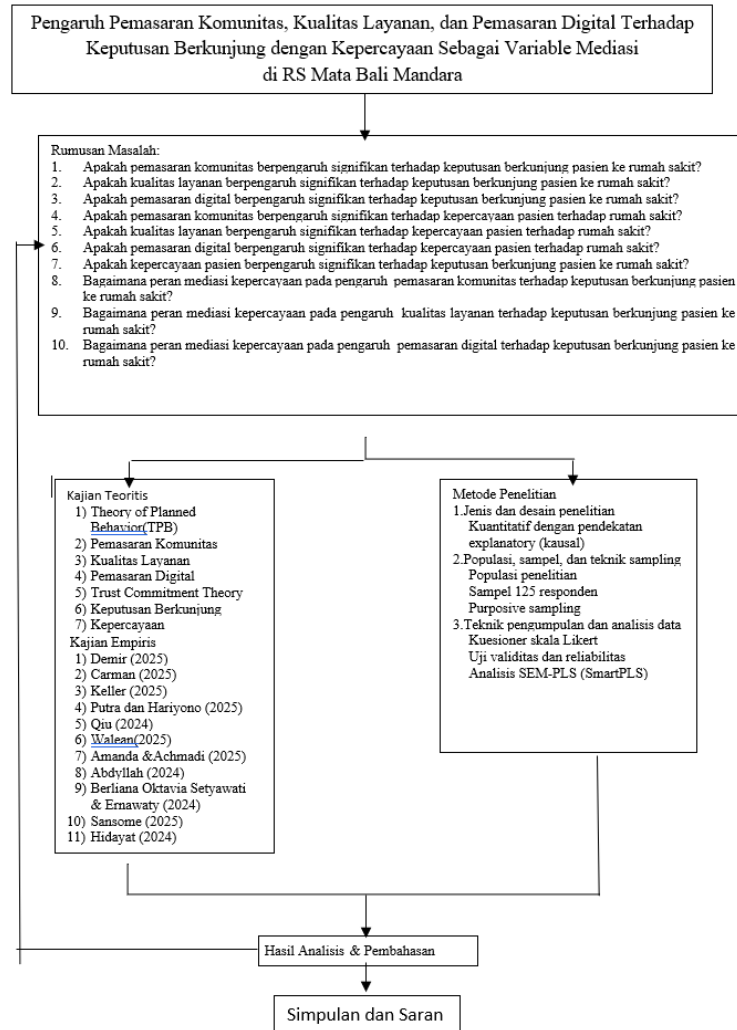
Patient trust is often identified as a mediating variable between marketing strategies and the decision to visit. According to the Theory of Trust-Commitment (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), trust forms the foundation of a long-term relationship between organizations and consumers. Research by Sansome et al. (2025), Hidayat (2024), Amanda and Achmadi (2025), and Putra et al. (2025) shows that trust significantly mediates the impact of community marketing, service quality, and digital marketing on patients' visiting decisions.

Based on that empirical study, it can be concluded that community marketing, service quality, and digital marketing affect patients' visiting decisions, both directly and through trust. However, research that integrates all three of these variables into a single model with trust as a mediating variable is still relatively limited, especially in the context of hospitals in Indonesia.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a quantitative approach with an associative research type, which is research aimed at analyzing the causal relationship between independent and dependent variables through empirical hypothesis testing. A quantitative approach was chosen because it allows variables to be measured objectively in numerical form and statistical analysis to test previously developed theories (Sugiyono, 2017). This study is designed to test the influence of community marketing, service quality, and digital marketing on patients' decisions to visit the hospital, with patient trust as a mediating variable, and to test the direct effect of patient trust on the visit decision. The research model is

analyzed using the Partial Least Squares–Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method with the help of SmartPLS 4.0 software. The research design can be seen in Figure 1 as follows:



Gambar 4.1
Desain Penelitian

RESEARCH RESULT

Overview of Bali Mandara Eye Hospital

1. Bali Mandara Eye Hospital Profile

Bali Mandara Eye Hospital is a class A eye hospital owned by the Bali Provincial Government that serves as a referral center for eye health services in Bali and surrounding areas. Besides providing health services, the hospital also carries out education, training, research, and community service activities.

Research shows that Bali Mandara Eye Hospital actively implements community marketing strategies, improves service quality, and uses digital marketing in efforts to boost public trust and influence patients' decisions to visit. Community marketing is carried out through eye health screening activities, health education, health promotion in schools and communities, social service activities, as well as the Vision Impairment and Blindness Control Program (PGPK) conducted in various regencies/cities across Bali.

In digital marketing, hospitals make use of official websites, social media, YouTube, podcasts, and various educational and promotional health service content that are published regularly. This strategy aims to improve access to information, strengthen the hospital's image, and build public trust in the services provided.

In terms of service quality, the hospital continues to improve by providing competent healthcare staff, professional service, responsiveness, safety, and a focus on patient needs. These efforts are expected to increase patient satisfaction and trust, as well as encourage people to choose Bali Mandara Eye Hospital as their go-to eye care facility.

2. Vision and Mission

The vision of Bali Mandara Eye Hospital is to become an internationally recognized hospital excelling in quality, innovation, and science-based services, grounded in Balinese local wisdom and trusted both nationally and globally.

To realize this vision, the hospital carries out its mission by providing safe and high-quality eye health services, developing innovations and collaborations in services, education, training, and research, as well as implementing professional, humane, and sustainable hospital management.

3. Research Location

Bali Mandara Eye Hospital is located at 8 Angsoka Street, Denpasar, Bali, with the phone number (0361) 243350. This location was chosen because it fits the research aims focusing on community marketing, service quality, digital marketing, trust, and patients' visiting decisions.

4. Organizational Structure

The organizational structure of Bali Mandara Eye Hospital is shown in Figure 2. This structure shows the division of tasks, functions, and responsibilities of each work unit in supporting the delivery of health services, hospital management, as well as the implementation of marketing programs and service quality improvement.

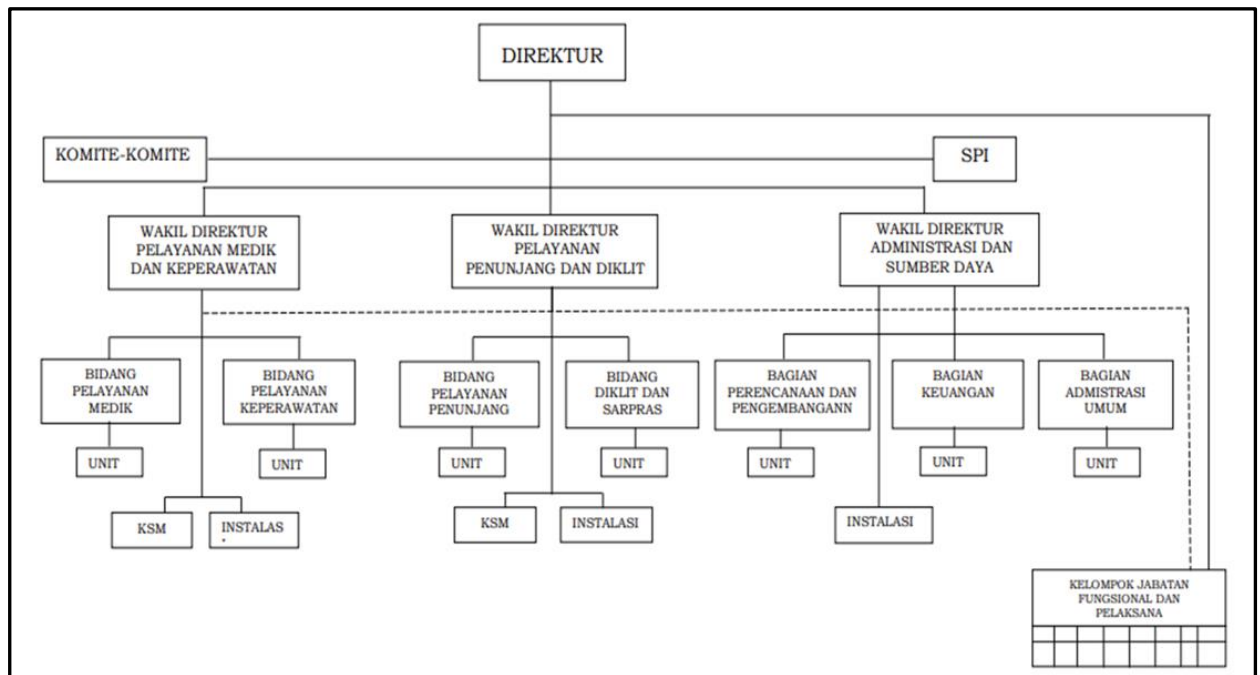


Figure 2. Organizational Structure of Bali Mandara Eye Hospital

Source: Director's Decision Number: B.43.100.3.3/26/Adum/RSM.BM

Research Analysis Results

In this study, data analysis was carried out using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method with the help of SmartPLS 4.0 software. The PLS method is one of the approaches in Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) used to analyze the relationships between latent variables simultaneously in a research model. This method was chosen because it can accommodate relatively complex research models, can be used with a limited sample size, and does not require normally distributed data.

PLS analysis is carried out in two main stages, namely the evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) and the evaluation of the structural model (inner model). The evaluation of the measurement model aims to test the quality of the research instruments through testing the validity and reliability of the constructs. Validity testing includes convergent validity, which is evaluated through outer loading values and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), as well as discriminant validity, which is evaluated through cross loading values, the Fornell-Larcker Criterion, and the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). Meanwhile, construct reliability testing is done using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values.

Next, the structural model (inner model) evaluation is carried out to test the relationships between variables in the research model. This testing includes evaluating R-square (R^2) values, Predictive Relevance (Q^2), Path Coefficients, as well as direct and indirect effects (mediation) between variables through the bootstrapping procedure. The results of this test are used to determine the direction, strength, and significance of the relationships between variables according to the hypotheses proposed in the study.

Evaluation of Measurement Model (Outer Model)

The measurement model evaluation checks the validity and reliability of the indicators that measure constructs or latent variables. In this study, all five latent variables—Community Marketing (X1), Service Quality (X2), Digital Marketing (X3), Trust (M1), and Visit Decision (Y1)—are measurement models with reflective indicators. So, in evaluating the measurement model, we check the convergent and discriminant validity of the indicators, and test the construct reliability using Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability.

The testing of the outer model consists of:

1. Convergent Validity

Convergent validity aims to measure the validity of indicators as measures of constructs, which can be seen from the outer loading (SmartPLS output). An indicator is considered valid if it has a loading factor above 0.70. In addition, the outer loading value can show the contribution of each indicator/item to its latent variable. An indicator's outer loading with the highest value indicates that it is the strongest, or in other words, the most important measure of its latent variable. Below are the results of the Convergent Validity presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Outer Loading Results

	Confidence (M1)	Visiting Decision (Y1)	Service Quality (X2)	Digital Marketing (X3)	Community Marketing (X1)
X1-1					0.729
X1-2					0.715
X1-3					0.805
X1-4					0.719
X1-5					0.787
X2-1			0.808		
X2-2			0.807		
X2-3			0.881		
X2-4			0.828		
X2-5			0.793		
X3-1				0.755	
X3-2				0.791	
X3-3				0.746	
X3-4				0.72	
X3-5				0.74	
M1	0.718				
M2	0.794				
M3	0.836				
M4	0.817				
M5	0.877				
Y1		0.755			
Y2		0.74			

	Confidence (M1)	Visiting Decision (Y1)	Service Quality (X2)	Digital Marketing (X3)	Community Marketing (X1)
Y3		0.702			
Y4		0.734			
Y5		0.701			

Source: Appendix 11

Based on the results of the convergent validity test using outer loading values, all indicators of community marketing, service quality, digital marketing, patient trust, and visit decisions have outer loading values above 0.70. These results show that all the indicators used in the study have met the convergent validity criteria and are able to reflect the constructs being measured well.

For the community marketing variable (X1), the outer loading values range from 0.715 to 0.805. The highest value is found in indicator X1-3 at 0.805, while the lowest is in indicator X1-2 at 0.715. This shows that all the community marketing indicators are able to explain the measured construct pretty well.

The service quality variable (X2) has outer loading values ranging from 0.793 to 0.881. The highest value is on indicator X2-3 at 0.881, while the lowest is on indicator X2-5 at 0.793. These results show that all the service quality indicators have a strong ability to represent the service quality construct.

Next, the digital marketing variable (X3) has outer loading values ranging from 0.720 to 0.791. The highest value was obtained by indicator X3-2 at 0.791, while the lowest was obtained by indicator X3-4 at 0.720. So, all the digital marketing indicators are considered valid and can reflect the digital marketing variable well.

For the patient trust variable (M), the outer loading values range from 0.718 to 0.877. The highest value is found in indicator M5 at 0.877, while the lowest value is in indicator M1 at 0.718. These results show that all indicators have a strong relationship with the patient trust construct.

Meanwhile, the decision to visit variable (Y) has outer loading values ranging from 0.701 to 0.755. The highest value is found in indicator Y1 at 0.755, while the lowest is in indicator Y5 at 0.701. Even though some indicators are close to the minimum limit, all indicators still meet the convergent validity criteria because they have outer loading values above 0.70.

Overall, all the indicators in this study are considered valid and suitable for further analysis because they have met the convergent validity requirements with outer loading values greater than 0.70. This result shows that each indicator can represent the construct being measured well and consistently.

To strengthen the testing of construct validity, it's necessary to conduct an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) test.

The AVE value is used to measure how well a construct can explain the variance of the indicators that make it up. A construct is said to have good convergent validity if the AVE value is greater than 0.50. This value shows that the construct can explain more than 50 percent of the variance of the indicators used in the study.

The AVE test results in this study are presented in Table 2

Table 2. AVE Values

	<i>Average variance extracted (AVE)</i>
Confidence (M1)	0.656
Visiting Decision (Y1)	0.528
Service Quality (X2)	0.679
Digital Marketing (X3)	0.564
Community Marketing (X1)	0.565

Source: Appendix 11

Based on Table 5.14, it is known that all variables have AVE values above 0.50, thus meeting the requirements for convergent validity. The highest AVE value is held by the Service Quality variable (X2) at 0.679, while the lowest AVE value is held by the Visit Decision variable (Y) at 0.528. Nevertheless, all constructs still meet the required minimum limit.

DISCUSSION

The research findings show that service quality significantly affects patients' decisions to visit, both directly and indirectly through patient trust. The indirect effect through trust (0.296) is greater than the direct effect (0.217), indicating that trust plays an important role as a mediating variable.

The high ratings from respondents regarding service quality and patient trust, both scoring an average of 4.57 (very good category), show that professional, responsive, empathetic service supported by adequate facilities can build patients' trust in the hospital. This trust then encourages patients' confidence to choose and use the available healthcare services.

These findings indicate that improving service quality not only directly affects the decision to visit, but also strengthens patient trust, which ultimately boosts the decision to visit. This study's results align with previous research and support SERVQUAL and Trust Theory, which emphasize that service quality is a key factor in building trust and influencing consumer behavior in decision-making.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the research results and discussion on the influence of community marketing, service quality, and digital marketing on visit decisions mediated by patient trust at Bali Mandara Eye Hospital, it can be concluded as follows:

1. Community marketing has a positive and significant impact on patients' decisions to visit Bali Mandara Eye Hospital. This result shows that the better the community marketing activities carried out by the hospital, the higher the patients' decision to visit and use the available health services.
2. Service quality has a positive and significant effect on patients' decisions to visit Bali Mandara Eye Hospital. This result shows that improving service quality can encourage more patients to choose to use the hospital's healthcare services.

3. Digital marketing has a positive and significant impact on patients' decisions to visit Bali Mandara Eye Hospital. The better the digital marketing strategy implemented, the higher the patients' decision to visit the hospital.
4. Community marketing has a positive and significant impact on patient trust at Bali Mandara Eye Hospital. Consistently carried out community marketing activities can boost patients' confidence and trust in the hospital.
5. Service quality has a positive and significant effect on patient trust at Bali Mandara Eye Hospital. Service quality is the factor that has the strongest influence in shaping patient trust compared to other variables in this study.
6. Digital marketing has a positive and significant impact on patient trust at Bali Mandara Eye Hospital. Providing information that is easily accessible, transparent, and credible through digital media can boost patients' trust in the hospital.
7. Patient trust has a positive and significant effect on patients' decisions to visit Bali Mandara Eye Hospital. The higher the level of patient trust in the hospital, the higher the likelihood that patients will decide to use the available healthcare services.
8. Patient trust is not able to mediate the effect of community marketing on patients' decisions to visit Bali Mandara Eye Hospital. Even though community marketing affects patient trust, the indirect effect formed through trust is not statistically significant.
9. Patient trust is able to partially mediate the effect of service quality on patients' decisions to visit Bali Mandara Eye Hospital. This result shows that service quality not only directly influences the decision to visit, but also through increasing patients' trust in the hospital.
10. Patient trust is able to partially mediate the effect of digital marketing on patients' decisions to visit Bali Mandara Eye Hospital. This result shows that digital marketing can boost visit decisions both directly and by increasing patient trust.

Overall, the research results show that service quality is the most dominant factor in building patient trust, while patient trust plays an important role in influencing patients' decisions to visit Bali Mandara Eye Hospital. These findings confirm that efforts to improve service quality and build patient trust need to be top priorities in the hospital's service development strategy.

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