

The Influence of Social Media Marketing and E-WOM on Behavioral Intention Moderated by Trust in Patients at Sumber Waras Hospital

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the effect of social media marketing and electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) on behavioral intention moderated by trust among patients at Sumber Waras Hospital. This research uses a quantitative approach with explanatory causality research to examine the causal relationships between variables. Data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed to 230 respondents who were patients of Sumber Waras Hospital and active users of social media. The sampling technique used was non-probability sampling with a judgment sampling method. Data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS software. The results indicate that social media marketing and E-WOM have a positive and significant effect on patients' behavioral intention. Furthermore, trust is proven to moderate the relationship between social media marketing and behavioral intention, indicating that higher patient trust strengthens the influence of social media marketing on behavioral intention. However, trust does not moderate the relationship between E-WOM and behavioral intention. Overall, the findings suggest that social media marketing and E-WOM are important factors in shaping patients' intentions to use and recommend healthcare services. Therefore, hospitals should optimize social media marketing strategies and encourage positive online reviews to enhance patient trust and behavioral intention toward healthcare services.



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INTRODUCTION

The rapid development of information technology has brought about significant changes in various sectors of life, including the healthcare sector. This development has intensified competition among healthcare providers, requiring hospitals to adapt to digital transformation to meet the increasing needs and expectations of the public. Hospitals no longer rely solely on conventional promotions but also utilize various digital platforms to build communication and relationships with patients. This digital transformation has become a strategic necessity for hospitals to increase competitiveness and attract public interest in healthcare services (Mulyana & Febrian, 2024).

In line with efforts to digitize the healthcare sector, the government, through the Ministry of Communication and Informatics, continues to strengthen the infrastructure and ecosystem of digital-based healthcare services, including the development of telemedicine services and broader use of information technology. This opens up opportunities for hospitals to utilize digital media as an effective marketing tool and disseminate health information to the public (Rizkinaswara, 2021).

This study focuses on factors influencing patient behavioral intention at Sumber Waras Hospital, namely social media marketing and electronic word of mouth (E-WOM), with trust as a mediating variable. Changes in public behavior in seeking health information through social media and online reviews make these two factors crucial in influencing patients' decisions to use healthcare services. In this context, trust is crucial because it can strengthen the influence of digital information on patients' intention to visit or use hospital services. The findings of Choung et al. (2023) indicate that trust plays a significant role in shaping consumer intentions towards a product or service.

This study was conducted due to the discrepancies in previous research findings regarding the influence of social media marketing and e-WOM on behavioral intention. Furthermore, research integrating these two variables with trust as a moderating variable in the context of healthcare services in Indonesia is still relatively limited. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute to understanding patient behavior in the digital era through a study entitled "The Influence of Social Media Marketing and E-WOM on Behavioral Intention Moderated by Trust in Patients at Sumber Waras Hospital".

LITERATURE REVIEW

Behavioral Intention

Scientists have long discussed behavioral intention due to its prominent role in determining actual behavior. According to Fishbein & Ajzen (1975), behavioral intention is the degree to which a person has formulated a conscious plan to perform or not perform a certain behavior in the future. According to Kotler & Keller (2021), behavioral intention is a condition where a customer has the intention or attitude of being loyal to a brand, product, or company and is willing to share stories about the company's advantages. According to Schiffman & Kanuk (2020), behavioral intention is the frequency of purchases or the proportion of total purchases of buyers who are loyal to a particular brand. Behavioral intention is a customer's determination to own, use, or dispose of a product or service, as well as a person's desire to use information technology for their desired goals.

Social Media Marketing

According to Kotler & Keller (2021) Social media marketing is a marketing communication activity that uses electronic media to attract consumers in various ways to build awareness and company image, and increase product sales. Yunikartika & Harti (2022) state that digital marketing conducted through social media platforms aims to attract consumers' attention, so they better understand and are interested in the products or services offered. When consumers are able to observe and respond positively to promotional content, this can encourage behavioral intentions, such as the intention to purchase or use the service. According to Zakaria & Nadjib (2023), social media marketing can increase consumer interest and loyalty through the delivery of interactive, relevant, and personalized information, thus creating a closer relationship between service providers and potential customers. Furthermore, Zakaria & Nadjib (2023) suggest that social media provides a space for hospitals to build a positive image and strengthen public trust through consistent, informative, and educational content.

H1: There is an influence of social media marketing on behavioral intention.

Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM)

Electronic Word of Mouth (E-WOM) refers to any form of statement or review, whether positive or negative, conveyed by existing consumers to other potential consumers via the internet (Lestari & Gunawan, 2021). This information can include personal experiences, suggestions, or even assessments of a product or service, and is often an important reference in the consumer decision-making process. In today's digital era, E-WOM plays an increasingly strategic role in shaping public perception of a brand or service institution, including in the healthcare sector. Tanjung & Keni (2023) stated that content voluntarily shared by service users, especially through social media and online review platforms, is perceived as more authentic, honest, and unbiased than formal promotional messages created by companies. Therefore, E-WOM can create a stronger sense of trust, as consumers tend to trust the experiences of others who are perceived as neutral and relevant to their own needs. In a study by Anjani et al. (2022), which tested five hypotheses, it was found that E-WOM significantly influenced trust and repurchase intentions, and trust also mediated this relationship. Firmansyah & Wiyadi's (2023) research tested 7 hypotheses and found that E-WOM influences trust.

H2: There is an Influence of E-WOM on Behavioral Intention

Trust

According to Kotler & Keller (2021), trust is a company's willingness to rely on a business partner, which depends on interpersonal and interorganizational factors such as competence, integrity, honesty, and kindness. In this case, trust acts as a moderating variable that bridges the influence between social

media marketing and behavioral intention. This means that effective and credible messages from social media will first build patient trust, before ultimately encouraging them to make a visit intention. Afisa & Muhajirin (2024) stated that trust in a hospital is an important foundation in increasing return visit intention and the desire to recommend to others. This view is reinforced by Kristianawati & Sulistyani (2023), who emphasized that the perception of hospital credibility will grow along with positive experiences and consistent communication provided, ultimately strengthening trust and driving patient visit intention decisions. Darmawan et al. (2022) emphasized that effectively delivered word of mouth can help consumers determine the healthcare services that best suit their needs. When patients receive positive information, either directly or through digital media, it forms public opinion, strengthening their confidence in the quality of the services offered. This finding is supported by studies by Stefanny et al. (2022), Sari et al. (2022), and Susanti & Wulandari (2021), which found that e-WOM significantly contributes to building brand trust.

H3: Trust Moderates the Effect of E-WOM on Behavioral Intention

H4: Trust Moderates the Influence of E-WOM on Behavioral Intention

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a quantitative approach with explanatory causality research that aims to examine the causal relationship between social media marketing, electronic word of mouth (E-WOM), trust, and behavioral intention in patients at Sumber Waras Hospital. In this study, social media marketing and E-WOM act as independent variables, behavioral intention as the dependent variable, and trust as a moderating variable. The study population was all patients at Sumber Waras Hospital who use social media. The sampling technique used non-probability sampling with a judgment sampling method, namely respondents were selected based on certain criteria, such as having used Sumber Waras Hospital services and actively using social media. Primary data were collected through online questionnaires using Google Forms. Data analysis was performed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS) with the help of SmartPLS software. The analysis included testing the measurement model (outer model) and structural model (inner model) to test the validity, reliability, and relationships between research variables.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In this study, the researcher used a measurement method using the SEM-PLS data analysis tool, in which there are two stages of measurement that need to be carried out, namely the measurement model (measurement model / outer model) and the structural model (structural model / inner model):

Outer Model

convergent validity testing, and the next stage is discriminant validity testing. The following are the results of the convergent validity analysis.

Table 1 Convergent Validity Analysis Test (n=230)

	Social Media Marketing	Trust	Behavioral Intention	E-Wom
SM1	0.859			
SM2	0.832			
SM3	0.837			
SM4	0.850			
SM5	0.830			
SM6	0.883			
SM7	0.865			
SM8	0.876			
SM9	0.789			
T1		0.867		
T2		0.808		
T3		0.774		
T4		0.816		
T5		0.840		

	Social Media Marketing	Trust	Behavioral Intention	E-Wom
T6		0,811		
BI1			0,782	
BI2			0,804	
BI3			0,819	
BI4			0,851	
BI5			0,823	
BI6			0,826	
BI7			0,752	
BI8			0,812	
BI9			0,797	
BI10			0,808	
E1				0,713
E2				0,753
E3				0,865
E4				0,861
E5				0,796
E6				0,735

Source: Processed data (2026)

The results of the convergence validity analysis test include the outer loading and AVE values. All reflective constructs with loading values above 0.70 are considered valid. The researchers concluded that the outer loading values met the criteria because the test results exceeded the minimum value of 0.70. The convergence validity analysis also included the AVE value, which is part of the analysis. The results of the AVE test can be seen in the table below.

Table 2 Results of Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

	AVE value
Social Media Marketing	0.718
Trust	0.672
Behavioral Intention	0.652
E-Wom	0.623

Source: Processed data (2026)

It can be seen that all AVE values for each variable are declared valid because they are > 0.50 . Therefore, based on the results of the convergent validity test, it can be concluded that the indicators used in this study are valid.

Based on the PLS method, the reliability of the indicators in this study was determined from the composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values for each indicator block. The following are the results of the Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability tests in this study.

Table 3 Results of Cronbach Alpha and Composite Reliability Tests

	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability
Social Media Marketing	0.951	0.953	0.958
Trust	0.902	0.903	0.925
Behavioral Intention	0.941	0.942	0.949
E-Wom	0.878	0.879	0.908

Source: Processed data (2026)

The Cronbach alpha and composite reliability tests show that all indicators are declared reliable because they produce Cronbach alpha and composite reliability values above 0.7 so they can be used in hypothesis testing.

Inner Model

In this measurement model, it is important to look for the VIF (Variance Inflation Factor) to test for

collinearity statistics or multicollinearity. The following table presents the results of the collinearity statistics test.

Table 4 Collinearity Statistics Results

	VIF
BI1	2,448
BI2	2,582
BI3	3,417
BI4	3,313
BI5	3,450
BI6	2,953
BI7	2,132
BI8	2,927
BI9	2,405
BI10	2,698
E1	1,689
E2	2,319
E3	3,704
E4	3,312
E5	2,123
E6	1,748
SM1	3,171
SM2	2,577
SM3	3,078
SM4	3,028
SM5	3,227
SM6	4,559
SM7	4,016
SM8	3,789
SM9	2,324
T1	3,887
T2	2,892
T3	2,099
T4	2,751
T5	4,484
T6	3,439

Source: Processed data (2026)

The collinearity test results shown in the table, it can be concluded that all VIF values are below 5.00. Therefore, it can be concluded that there are no multicollinearity issues in the model testing. Next, the inner model is evaluated by examining the coefficient of determination. The following table presents the coefficient of determination values generated for this study.

Table 5 Output Results of R-Square Value

	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
Behavioral Intention	0.947	0.946

Source: Processed data (2026)

R-square value for the behavioral intention variable is 0.947, indicating that 94.7% of the behavioral intention variable can be influenced by Social Media Marketing and E-WOM variables. In the inner model analysis in PLS, there is also an F2 (F-square) analysis. F-square is useful for testing whether the measure used assesses the relative impact of exogenous variables on endogenous variables.

Table 6 Model Fit Results

	Behavioral Intention
Social Media Marketing	0.433
E-Wom	0.158

Source: Processed data (2026)

F-square value of product quality on customer loyalty is greater than 0.35, indicating a strong influence. Meanwhile, service quality on customer loyalty has an F-square value greater than 0.15, indicating a moderate or sufficient influence.

t-Test Results

The output of the Structural Model Test (T-Values) can be seen in the following table.

Table 7 Inner Model Output Results

Hypothesis	Sig.	t-statistic
Moderating Effect 1 → Behavioral Intention	0,014	2,454
Moderating Effect 2 → Behavioral Intention	0,288	1,064
Social Media Marketing → Behavioral Intention	0,000	5,185
E-Wom → Behavioral Intention	0,000	3,598

Source: Processed data (2026)

Discussion

Social media marketing has been shown to have a significant direct influence on patient behavioral intention at Sumber Waras Hospital. This is evidenced by the t-statistic value of 5.836, which is greater than the t-table value of 1.96, and the p-value of 0.000, which is smaller than $\alpha = 0.05$. The results of this study indicate that social media marketing activities carried out by the hospital can increase patient intentions to reuse and recommend healthcare services to others. Informative, educational, and easily accessible information through social media can shape positive patient perceptions of the hospital, thereby encouraging behavioral intention. The better the social media marketing strategy implemented, the higher the patient's behavioral intention. The results of this study are in line with research by Rozenblum et al. (2020), Yunikartika and Harti (2022), and Josephine et al. (2024), which found that social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on behavioral intention.

Electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) has been shown to have a significant direct influence on patient behavioral intention at Sumber Waras Hospital. This is evidenced by the t-statistic value of 2.040, which is greater than the t-table value of 1.96, and the p-value of 0.042, which is smaller than $\alpha = 0.05$. The results of this study indicate that reviews, recommendations, and patient experiences shared through digital media can influence patient intentions in choosing healthcare services. Positive information received by the public will increase confidence in the quality of hospital services, thus encouraging the intention to use or recommend those services. The more positive E-WOM received, the higher the patient's behavioral intention. The results of this study support the findings of Octavia and Pramono (2024), Rahmah and Riyadi (2025), and Handranata et al. (2023) who found that E-WOM has a positive and significant effect on behavioral intention.

Trust has been shown to moderate the influence of social media marketing on patient behavioral intention at Sumber Waras Hospital. This is evidenced by the t-statistic value of 2.454, which is greater than the t-table value of 1.96, and the p-value of 0.014, which is smaller than $\alpha = 0.05$. The results of this study indicate that patient trust strengthens the effectiveness of marketing activities through social media in shaping behavioral intention. Health information, service promotions, and communications delivered through social media will be more effective in driving patient intention if supported by a high level of trust in the hospital. The higher the trust a patient has, the stronger the influence of social media marketing on behavioral intention. The results of this study are in line with Moslehpour et al. (2021) and Subedi & Bhandari (2024), who explain that trust plays a crucial role in increasing the effectiveness of digital marketing on consumer behavioral intention.

Trust was not proven to moderate the influence of E-WOM on patient behavioral intention at Sumber Waras Hospital. This is evidenced by the t-statistic value of 1.064, which is smaller than the t-table value of 1.96, and the p-value of 0.288, which is greater than $\alpha = 0.05$. The results of this study indicate that the influence of E-WOM on behavioral intention occurs directly without being influenced by the level of patient trust in the hospital. Patients tend to consider the quality, relevance, and credibility of information obtained from online reviews more than the level of trust they have in the hospital. Thus, trust is unable to strengthen or weaken the relationship between E-WOM and behavioral intention. The results of this study are in line with Ismagilova et al. (2020) and Erkan and Evans (2016) who stated

that E-WOM can directly influence consumer behavioral intention through the quality of information received.

CONCLUSION

study aims to analyze the influence of social media marketing and electronic word of mouth (E-WOM) on behavioral intention, moderated by trust, among patients at Sumber Waras Hospital. Based on the results of the analysis using SEM-PLS, several conclusions were obtained. First, social media marketing has a positive and significant effect on patient behavioral intention. This result indicates that informative, interactive, and educational marketing activities through social media can increase patient intention to use or recommend hospital services. Second, E-WOM has a positive and significant effect on patient behavioral intention. This finding indicates that reviews, recommendations, and experiences shared through digital media are important sources of information in influencing patient intention to use healthcare services. Third, trust has been shown to moderate the influence of social media marketing on behavioral intention. This indicates that a high level of patient trust can strengthen the effectiveness of marketing through social media in shaping patient behavioral intention. Fourth, trust has not been shown to moderate the influence of E-WOM on behavioral intention. This finding indicates that the influence of E-WOM on behavioral intention tends to occur directly without being influenced by the level of patient trust in the hospital. Overall, the study results confirm that social media marketing and e-WOM are important factors in increasing patient behavioral intention. Furthermore, trust acts as a moderating variable that strengthens the influence of social media marketing on behavioral intention, but does not strengthen the relationship between e-WOM and behavioral intention. Therefore, Sumber Waras Hospital needs to optimize its social media marketing strategy and encourage positive patient reviews and recommendations to increase public interest in using healthcare services.

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