

THE INFLUENCE OF *DIGITAL MARKETING* ON DECISION MAKING THROUGH *PERCEIVED VALUE* AND *HOSPITAL BRAND IMAGE* AT UNHAS MAKASSAR HOSPITAL

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Abstract

Background. Healthcare in the digital era increasingly relies on digital marketing strategies to attract and retain patients. In the midst of increasingly fierce competition, hospitals need to build a strong brand image and create value felt by patients through various digital channels. **Objective.** This study aims to evaluate the influence of Digital Marketing on patient decision making at UNHAS Makassar Hospital, with *Hospital Brand Image* and *Perceived Value* as mediating variables. **Method.** The research method uses a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional design, data was collected from patients via questionnaires from 104 respondents. Data analysis was carried out using *pathway analysis*. **Results.** The research results show that *Digital Marketing* significantly influences *the Hospital Brand Image* with an estimated value of 0.643 and a *Perceived Value* of 0.678. *Hospital Brand Image* has a significant influence on decision making with an estimated value of 0.296, while *Perceived Value* has an influence of 0.289. *Digital Marketing* also directly influences decision making with an estimated value of 0.333. Apart from the direct influence, there is an indirect influence through *Hospital Brand Image* (estimate 0.190) and *Perceived Value* (estimate 0.196). **Conclusion.** These findings confirm that a strong *Digital Marketing strategy* can strengthen a hospital's brand image and increase the value perceived by patients, which ultimately influences their decisions.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, Hospital Brand Image, Perceived Value, Patient Decision Making.

INTRODUCTION

The development of digital technology has changed the marketing and communications landscape in various industries, including the healthcare industry. Hospitals are required to utilize digital marketing as an effective marketing strategy to reach potential patients and build a strong brand image.

With more and more people seeking health information via digital platforms, digital marketing has become an important means for hospitals to communicate with their target audience (Subramaniam et al., 2019).

Building customer loyalty is a challenge for businesses, including hospitals. To maintain a business in the long term, customer satisfaction is necessary. Satisfied customers are more likely to be loyal to a company, reducing the likelihood of them switching to a competitor's service. According to Kotler (2007), customer satisfaction is a feeling that arises after customers compare one product with other products. This satisfaction shows that all customer desires are fulfilled.

One of the factors that influences customer satisfaction is *Perceived Value*. *Perceived Value* is the overall evaluation of consumers regarding what they spend compared to the benefits they receive from the product (Lai, 2004).

In increasingly fierce competition, companies need to provide significant added value to customers. Positive values from the company can increase customer satisfaction and loyalty, while negative values can cause disappointment and the possibility that customers will switch to competitors.

Apart from perceived value, brand image is also an important factor influencing customer satisfaction. To build a good brand image in the eyes of consumers, a company must show superiority compared to its competitors. A good brand image can make customers satisfied and loyal. According to Kotler (2009), Brand Image is a memory or impression about a particular brand that is formed in the minds of consumers so that the brand is easy to remember and understand.

In the hospital context, building customer satisfaction can be done by providing high-quality medical services, paying attention to patient needs and expectations, and ensuring that every interaction with patients provides added value. Hospitals must also build a positive image by showing the superiority of the medical services and facilities they have. In this way, patients will feel satisfied and tend to return to using the hospital's services in the future (Asnawi et al., 2021).

The main problem studied in this research is how digital marketing influences the decision making of prospective patients at Hasanuddin University RSPTN. This research is important to attract and retain patients and maintain hospital competitiveness.

The main focus is how digital marketing can increase perceived value and build a strong and positive brand image, thereby influencing prospective patient decisions. Apart from that, this research also looks at the preferences and behavior of prospective patients in accessing digital information.

With an effective digital marketing strategy, it is hoped that RSPTN Hasanuddin University can increase perceived value, build a positive brand image, and influence patient decisions, which ultimately increases competitiveness and the number of patient visits.

The purpose of this research is to determine the influence of *digital marketing* on decision making through *Perceived Value* and *Hospital Brand Image* at Hasanuddin University Hospital.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital Marketing Digital marketing is a marketing concept that involves the use of digital media and technology to promote products, services, or brands to the public online. According to Kannan (2017), digital marketing is an adaptive process and uses technology where companies collaborate with customers and partners to jointly create, communicate, deliver and maintain value to all stakeholders.

Hospital Brand Image

Brand image is a representation of all perceptions of a brand that are formed through information and past experiences with the brand. According to Keller (1993), brand image can be defined as a view or perception about a brand which is reflected in the brand associations that exist in consumers' minds.

Perceived Value

Perceived value is consumers' overall assessment of the utility of a product based on their perception of what is received and what is given. According to Zeithaml (1988), perceived value is consumers' perception of what they get as a result of what they give.

Decision-making

Decision making is a process in which prospective patients evaluate various health service alternatives and ultimately decide to choose services at a particular hospital based on certain considerations. According to Kotler and Armstrong (2018), purchasing decisions are consumers' choices about which brand to buy.

MATERIALS METHODS

Research design

This research uses a quantitative approach with logistic regression analysis methods and a cross sectional study approach.

Location and Time

Research The research was conducted at Hasanuddin University Hospital in May 2024.

Population and Sample

The research population was all patients in the outpatient unit and the surrounding community at Hasanuddin University Hospital. The sample was determined using the Lemeshow formula with a total of 104 respondents.

Data collection technique

Data was collected using a questionnaire in the form of a Google Form questionnaire which was filled in by respondents.

Data Analysis Methods

When analyzing research data, there are three types of analysis that are generally used. First, univariate analysis is used to get a general picture by describing each research variable through a frequency table. Second, univariate analysis to describe the characteristics of each variable. Bivariate **analysis** uses the chi-square test to test the relationship between variables. Multivariate analysis uses path analysis to assess the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable together. Data were analyzed using the SPSS program with a significance level of $p < 0.05$.

RESULT

Characteristics of Respondents This research involved 104 respondents at RSPTN Hasanuddin University. The majority of respondents had a tertiary educational background (62.5%), were in the age range 21-40 years (55.8%), and had visited less than 5 times (52.9%). Regarding media use, websites are the most accessed platform (36.5%), followed by Instagram (32.7%), and Facebook (30.8%). The gender composition of respondents was divided equally between men and women. These results show the demographic diversity of respondents which can provide a comprehensive perspective on the variables studied (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018).

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents Based on Characteristics at Hasanuddin University RSPTN

Characteristics		n	%
Education	SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	39	37.5
	PT	65	62.5
Age	< 20 years	2	1.9
	21-40 years old	58	55.8
	41-60 years old	44	42.3
Gender	Man	52	50.0
	Woman	52	50.0
Visit	< 5 times	55	52.9
	> 5 times	49	47.1
Status	Marry	47	45.2
	Not married yet	57	54.8
Media	Facebook	32	30.8
	Instagram	34	32.7
	Website	38	36.5
Amount		104	100.0

Descriptive Analysis of Variables The majority of respondents gave high ratings to Digital Marketing (71.2%), Hospital Brand Image (72.1%), Perceived Value (76%), and Decision Making (67.3%). This indicates that the digital marketing strategy of Hasanuddin University RSPTN is quite effective in building brand image and value felt by patients, which in turn influences their decisions (Kannan, 2017).

Table 2: Distribution of Respondents' Answers to Research Variables by category

Variable		n	%
<i>Digital Marketing</i>	Tall	74	71.2
	Low	30	28.8
<i>Hospital Brand image</i>	Tall	75	72.1
	Low	29	27.9
<i>Perceived Value</i>	Tall	79	76.0
	Low	25	24.0
Making Verdict Decisions	Tall	70	67.3
	Low	34	32.7
Amount		104	100.0

Source: Primary Data, 2024

Path Analysis The results of path analysis show that Digital Marketing has a significant direct influence on Hospital Brand Image (estimate = 0.643, $p < 0.001$) and Perceived Value (estimate = 0.678, $p < 0.001$).

Hospital Brand Image (estimate = 0.296, $p < 0.001$) and Perceived Value (estimate = 0.289, $p < 0.001$) also have a significant direct influence on Decision Making.

Digital Marketing also has a direct influence on Decision Making (estimate = 0.333, $p < 0.001$) as well as an indirect influence through Hospital Brand Image (estimate = 0.190) and Perceived Value (estimate = 0.196) (Keller, 1993; Zeithaml, 1988).

Table 3: Analysis of the Influence of Independent Variables on the Dependent Variable

Variable			Estimate	S.E	CR	P	Label
Digital Marketing	--->	Hospital Brand Image	0.643	0.059	8,510	0,000	Direct
Digital Marketing	--->	Perceived Value	0.678	0.054	9,349	0,000	Direct
Hospital Brand Image	--->	Decision-making	0.296	0.090	3,711	0,000	Direct
Perceived Value	--->	Decision-making	0.289	0.098	3,471	0,000	Direct
Digital Marketing	--->	Decision-making	0.333	0.086	3,408	0,000	Direct
Digital Marketing	--->	Hospital Brand Image	0.190				Indirect
Digital Marketing	--->	Perceived Value	0.196				Indirect
		>Decision Making					

Source: Primary Data, 2024

DISCUSSION

• The Influence of Digital Marketing on Hospital Brand Image

The research results show that Digital Marketing has a significant and strong influence on the Hospital Brand Image at RSPTN Hasanuddin University (estimate = 0.643, $p < 0.001$). This finding is in line with research by Thaker et al. (2022) who found that digital marketing strategies have a positive impact on hospital brand image. Digital Marketing allows hospitals to communicate their brand identity, vision and mission, service excellence and achievements more effectively.

Through various digital platforms such as official websites, social media and mobile applications, hospitals can present richer and more interactive content, such as virtual tours of facilities or doctor profile videos. This can help build positive perceptions about a hospital's quality and professionalism, which in turn strengthens its brand image (Kotler et al., 2021).

• The Influence of Digital Marketing on Perceived Value

Digital Marketing also shows a significant influence on Perceived Value (estimate = 0.678, $p < 0.001$). These results are consistent with the findings of Dwivedi et al. (2021) which shows that digital marketing can increase consumers' perceived value of products and services.

Digital Marketing allows hospitals to convey more comprehensive information about the services, facilities and advantages they offer. For example, detailed explanations of the latest medical technology used or patient testimonials can increase the perceived value of hospital services. This is in line with the concept put forward by Zeithaml (1988) that perceived value is consumers' overall assessment of the utility of a product based on their perception of what is received and what is given.

• The Influence of Digital Marketing on Decision Making

This research found that Digital Marketing has a significant direct influence on Decision Making (estimate = 0.333, $p < 0.001$). These findings support the research results of Saura et al. (2021) which emphasizes the direct impact of digital marketing strategies on consumer decisions.

Digital Marketing allows hospitals to provide easily accessible and comprehensive information, facilitate direct interactions with prospective patients, and present

previous patient testimonials and reviews. All of this can help prospective patients in their decision-making process, in accordance with the Theory of Planned Behavior proposed by Ajzen (1991).

- **The Influence of Hospital Brand Image on Decision Making**

Hospital Brand Image has a significant influence on Decision Making (estimate = 0.296, $p < 0.001$). These results are consistent with research by Sumaedi et al. (2021) who found a positive relationship between hospital image and patient decisions.

A strong and positive brand image tends to be associated with good service quality, trustworthiness, and a trustworthy reputation. This can influence prospective patients' decisions in choosing health services, in accordance with the concept put forward by Keller (1993) regarding the influence of brand image on consumer behavior.

- **The Influence of Perceived Value on Decision Making**

Perceived Value also shows a significant influence on Decision Making (estimate = 0.289, $p < 0.001$). This finding is in line with research by Konuk (2019) which shows that perceived value influences consumer purchasing decisions.

Patients tend to choose health services that they perceive provide the best value. If patients feel the costs are commensurate with the quality of service they receive, they are more likely to choose that hospital. This is in accordance with the value theory proposed by Zeithaml (1988).

- **Most Influential Variables**

Digital Marketing is the variable that has the most influence on Decision Making, with a total influence of 0.719 (direct influence 0.333 and indirect 0.386). These findings emphasize the crucial role of digital marketing strategies in the context of modern healthcare, as stated by Kannan and Li (2017).

CONCLUSION

The results of this research confirm the importance of an effective and comprehensive Digital Marketing strategy for Hasanuddin University RSPTN. Digital Marketing not only influences Hospital Brand Image and Perceived Value, but also has a significant direct impact on the patient decision making process. Therefore, investing in the development and implementation of a well-targeted Digital Marketing strategy can provide significant competitive advantages for hospitals.

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