

## The Role of Digital Marketing and Brand Awareness in Increasing Decisions to Use Sohiba Khitan Services

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**Abstract.** *Digital marketing plays an essential role in enhancing the visibility and competitiveness of health services. In the context of modern circumcision services, digital marketing serves as a strategic tool to strengthen brand awareness and influence consumer decision-making processes. The increasing public demand for reliable circumcision services and the shift in consumer behavior toward digital-based service searches highlights the importance of analyzing the relationship between digital marketing, brand awareness, and service usage decisions at Sohiba Khitan. This research is classified as explanatory research using a quantitative approach. The sample consisted of 109 respondents, representing users or parents of users of Sohiba Khitan services. Data were collected through questionnaires. The analysis technique employed the SEM-PLS method using SmartPLS software to examine both direct and indirect relationships among variables. The results show that digital marketing has a positive and significant effect on brand awareness, as indicated by a p-value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ , a T-Statistics value of  $9.088 > 1.96$ , and an original sample value of 0.827 (positive). Brand awareness has a positive and significant effect on service usage decisions, demonstrated by a p-value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ , a T-Statistics value of  $10.721 > 1.96$ , and an original sample value of 0.820 (positive). Digital marketing has a positive but not significant effect on service usage decisions, indicated by a p-value of  $0.422 > 0.05$ , a T-Statistics value of  $0.804 < 1.96$ , and an original sample value of 0.082 (positive). Furthermore, brand awareness is proven to mediate the effect of digital marketing on service usage decisions, supported by an indirect effect p-value of  $0.000 < 0.05$ , a T-Statistics value of  $6.977 > 1.96$ , and an original sample mediation value of 0.679 (positive).*

**Keywords:** Awareness; Decisions; Digital; Marketing.

### 1. Introduction

In today's digital era, conventional marketing is increasingly shifting toward technology-based marketing, which is more effective in reaching a wider audience. Digital marketing has become a key strategy in the healthcare industry, enabling providers to increase brand awareness, build credibility, and enhance patient engagement (Chaffey & Smith, 2022).

With various digital channels such as social media, websites, and paid advertising, healthcare institutions can convey information more quickly and accurately to their target market (Kotler, Kartajaya & Setiawan, 2021). Digital marketing also plays a role in increasing public trust in medical services. A study conducted by Hidayah et al. (2021) showed that implementing an effective digital marketing strategy can increase the number of patients and their satisfaction with healthcare services. This is due to easy access to information regarding the services offered, patient testimonials, and direct communication through digital platforms such as social media and official websites.

*Digital marketing* The healthcare industry has grown rapidly globally. According to Kingsnorth (2022), the application of digital marketing, such as content personalization, customer data utilization, and customer relationship management (CRM), can increase the effectiveness of marketing communications in general. This strategy also helps organizations, including healthcare providers, build closer relationships with customers. This trend is evident in large hospitals and clinics in developed countries that have integrated digital marketing with technology-based healthcare services, such as telemedicine, medical chatbots, and health education-based social media campaigns (Chaffey & Smith, 2022). Research by Kristianawati and Sulistyani (2023) at Indriati Hospital in Boyolali showed that digital marketing has a significant influence on brand awareness and patient trust, which in turn influences patient visit decisions. This demonstrates that digital marketing is not merely a promotional tool but also a strategic element in increasing patient engagement and influencing healthcare user purchasing behavior.

People's behavior in seeking healthcare services has changed drastically, along with the development of digital technology. One significant change is the increasing number of people searching for healthcare services online before making a decision (Anggraeni et al., 2021). Research conducted by Hidayah et al. (2022) shows that more than 70% of patients search for health information online before making a decision. Therefore, healthcare institutions that actively engage in digital marketing have a greater opportunity to attract new patients than those that rely solely on conventional marketing.

This trend is also occurring in Indonesia, where more and more hospitals and clinics are starting to rely on digital platforms to reach patients, whether through social media, websites, or telemedicine apps. Research by Anggraeni et al. (2021) confirms that appropriate digital marketing strategies, such as the use of social media and search engine optimization (SEO), can increase service visibility and expand market reach. This is supported by data from Google Trends, which shows an increase in searches related to medical services, including circumcision clinics, in recent years (Hidayah et al., 2021). This shift indicates that an online presence for healthcare services is no longer optional but has become a key factor in attracting new patients. For example, many healthcare clinics have employed search engine optimization (SEO) strategies to ensure their websites appear on the first page of Google searches when someone searches for "best circumcision clinic in [location]." Furthermore, clinics that are active on social media by sharing educational

content about medical procedures and the benefits of their services are more likely to gain the trust of potential patients than clinics without a strong digital presence (Chaffey & Smith, 2022).

Although the use of digital marketing in the healthcare industry continues to increase, the results of the Systematic Literature Review by Goel et al. (2024) indicate a major gap in the literature on digital healthcare adoption from a consumer perspective. Their research findings lead to future research proposals regarding the need for further research into the influence of digital marketing on consumer decision-making processes. Their systematic review also emphasizes the importance of understanding consumer behavior in the healthcare context by examining the antecedents, decisions, and outcomes related to digital marketing adoption, which remain underexplored in existing research.

In the world of digital marketing, brand awareness is a crucial factor in determining a business's success (Kingsnorth, 2022). Brand awareness refers to the extent to which consumers recognize and remember a brand within a specific product or service category (Kingsnorth, 2022). Therefore, building brand awareness through digital marketing is a pressing need for service providers to stay ahead of the competition in healthcare.

Sohiba Khitan is a specialized circumcision clinic in Pangandaran that strives to provide comfortable and painless circumcision services. Sohiba Khitan offers innovative methods and supportive facilities. In terms of patient achievement, the number of patients using Sohiba Khitan's circumcision services from June 2024 to April 2025 has been met, with 223 patients out of a target of 210 patients (103%), as shown in the table.

Sohiba Circumcision Patient Data Table						
No	Month	Year	Target Patients	Number	of Realization	Percentage
1	June	2024	15		10	66%
2	July	2024	25		12	48%
No	Month	Year	Target Patients	Number	of Realization	Percentage
3	August	2024	15		16	106%
4	September	2024	15		12	80%
5	October	2024	15		17	113%
6	November	2024	15		17	113%
7	December	2024	25		30	120%
8	January	2025	25		28	112%
9	February	2025	15		18	120%
10	March	2025	15		16	106%

11	April	2025	30	47	156%
TOTAL			210	223	103%

The achievement of the above targets is commendable, considering that Sohiba Khitan is relatively new and therefore has not set higher targets for the first year. For the second year and beyond, the company will evaluate its business performance and increase its customer targets. Therefore, more persistent efforts are needed to market its products and compete with established services. Other clinics that are more aggressive in digital marketing have the potential to attract more patients, even if they offer similar services. Based on initial observations, Sohiba Khitan, although implementing digital marketing, has not yet fully optimized it. Therefore, Sohiba Khitan needs to adopt a more strategic digital marketing approach.

Based on the research gap and gap phenomenon described above, this thesis research is proposed with the title: The Role of Digital Marketing and Brand Awareness in Increasing the Decision of Sohiba Khitan Service Users.

## 2. Research Methods

This research is a quantitative study with an explanatory approach, aiming to explain the relationship between digital marketing variables, brand awareness, and service usage decisions. This approach was used because the study aimed to examine the influence of digital marketing on service usage decisions, both directly and through brand awareness. According to Sugiyono (2021), explanatory research aims to identify causal relationships between research variables using statistical analysis techniques. Therefore, this study used a survey method with a questionnaire as the primary instrument to collect data from respondents who were potential patients or users of Sohiba Khitan health services.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. Respondent Description

Respondents in this study were parents or guardians who had used circumcision services at Sohiba Khitan. Data collection was conducted online through a Google Forms questionnaire and offline with service users registered in the clinic's internal database. A total of 109 respondents were collected and analyzed.

The respondents who completed the questionnaire were directly involved in the process of selecting circumcision services for their children or immediate family members. This provides strong validity to the data, as the respondents are the primary decision-makers in using Sohiba Khitan services.

Respondent demographic characteristics, including gender, age, highest level of education, relationship with patients, and form of interaction with Sohiba Khitan social media, will be presented in the next sub-chapter (4.2). Understanding this respondent profile is important

for understanding the social context and consumer behavior towards digital marketing strategies, brand awareness, and service decision-making.

Respondent characteristics in this study were grouped by gender, age, highest educational level, and relationship to the patient. The purpose of this presentation is to provide an overview of the respondents' backgrounds, which may influence their responses to digital marketing, brand awareness, and service usage decisions.

### 1) Respondent Gender.

The following table shows the gender distribution of respondents:

1. Respondent Gender Table		
Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Man	16	14.68%
Woman	93	85.32%
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100%</b>

Based on the data processing results, the majority of respondents in this study were female, 93 (85.32%), while 16 (14.68%) were male. This finding indicates that women, particularly mothers, play a dominant role in decision-making regarding child health services, including choosing a circumcision location. This phenomenon aligns with literature that states that mothers generally play the primary decision-making role in family health matters due to their high emotional involvement in the child's comfort and safety.

### 2) Respondent Age

Respondent Age Table		
Age (years)	Frequency	Percentage
< 25	3	2.75%
25 - 30	35	32.11%
31 - 35	38	34.86%
36 - 40	23	21.10%
> 40	10	9.17%
<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>100%</b>

The majority of respondents were of productive age. The largest group was 31–35 years old, with 38 people (34.86%), followed by 25–30 years old, with 35 people (32.11%). This distribution indicates that most respondents were young adults with relatively good digital skills, making it easier for them to access healthcare information through digital media.



## 3) Respondent's Last Education

Respondents' Last Education Table

Last education	Frequency	Percentage (%)
High School/Equivalent	48	44.04
D3	9	8.26
S1	34	31.19
S2	1	0.92
Other	17	15.60
Total	109	100.00

Majority respondents own The highest level of education was high school/equivalent, namely 48 people (44.04%). Bachelor's degree graduates came in second with 34 people (31.19%), followed by D3 graduates with 9 people (8.26%). The highest level of education for respondents with a master's degree was only 1 person (0.92%). The Other category (15.60%) included respondents with elementary school and junior high school/Islamic junior high school education. This composition indicates that the majority of respondents have a secondary or higher educational background, which makes it easier for them to understand health service information delivered through digital media.

## 4) Respondent Relationship with Patient

Respondent-Patient Relationship Table

Relationship with Patients	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Parent	106	97.25
Grandparents	1	0.92
Uncle / Aunt	2	1.83
Older brother	0	0.00
Total	109	100.00

The majority of respondents were parents of patients, totaling 106 (97.25%). Two respondents were uncles or aunts (1.83%), while only one was a grandparent (0.92%). This confirms that the decision to use circumcision services at Sohiba Khitan is largely made directly by the patient's parents.

## 5) Interaction with Social Media

Social Media Interaction Table

Types of Interactions	Amount	Percentage (%)
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View Sohiba Khitan's post on the homepage social media	70	64.22
Like or comment on Sohiba's posts Circumcision	11	10.09
Share or save Sohiba content Circumcision	4	3.67
Clicking link from media social to WhatsApp, website, or registration form	24	20.02
Never seen or interacted with Sohiba Khitan social media	0	0
Total	109	100.00

The majority of respondents (64.22%) interacted with Sohiba Khitan through viewing posts on their social media homepages. A total of 20.02% of respondents reported clicking on social media links to WhatsApp, websites, or registration forms. Another 10.09% interacted by liking or commenting on posts, while only 3.67% shared or saved content. These findings indicate that social media plays a significant role in increasing Sohiba Khitan's brand awareness, although the level of active interaction among respondents remains relatively limited.

### 3.2. Hypothesis Testing

#### 1) Direct Effect

Structural model coefficient analysis is used to test hypotheses by determining which relationships have a significant influence. If the p-value < a (0.05) then the relationship is significant, conversely if the p-value > a (0.05) then the relationship is not significant (Joseph F Hair et al., 2017).

#### Hypothesis Test Table

Original Sample (O) Sample Mean (M) Standard Deviation (STDEV) T Statistics (|O/STDEV|) PValues

DigitalMarketing -> Brand Awareness	0.827	0.816	0.091	9,088	0,000
Brand Awareness -> Brand Decision	0.820	0.812	0.077	10,721	0,000

Consumers	Go				
Digital	->				
Marketing					
Decision					
		0.082	0.085	0.103	0.804
					<b>0.422</b>
Consumer					

The table shows the hypothesis results obtained from SEM testing. The results of the first hypothesis test, namely the influence of Digital Marketing on Brand Awareness, showed a p-value of  $0.000 < 0.05$  with the original sample = 0.827 (positive). In these results, the first hypothesis is accepted, which shows that Digital Marketing has a positive and significant effect on increasing Brand Awareness.

The results of the second hypothesis test, namely the influence of Brand Awareness on Consumer Decisions, showed p-values of  $0.000 < 0.05$  with the original sample = 0.820 (positive). In this case, Brand Awareness has a positive and significant influence on the decision to use the service.

The results of the third hypothesis test, namely the influence of digital marketing on service usage decisions, showed a p-value of  $0.422 > 0.05$  with the original sample = 0.082 (positive). This indicates that digital marketing has a positive but insignificant effect on brand awareness.

## 2) Indirect Effect

Indirect Effect Table

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standar d Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics ( O/STDEV )	P Values
DigitalMa rketing -> Brand	0.679	0.663	0.097	6,977	<b>0,000</b>

The results of the indirect influence test show that the path Digital Marketing → Brand Awareness → Decision to Use Services has a coefficient value of 0.679 (positive), with a p-value of 0.000. This value is far below the significance limit of 0.05, so it can be concluded that Digital Marketing indirectly has a positive and significant effect on the Decision to Use Services through Brand Awareness. This finding confirms that the success of digital marketing in driving usage decisions is not determined by a direct relationship, but through the process of building strong brand awareness.

Thus, Brand Awareness is proven to play a significant role as a mediator in this research model. This mediation effect indicates that an effective digital marketing strategy needs to



be directed at strengthening public awareness of the Sohiba Khitan brand first, before being able to influence final user decisions. These results emphasize the importance of Brand Awareness as a mechanism that bridges the influence of digital marketing on consumer behavior, while strengthening the causal relationship between the variables in this study.

### 3.2. Discussion

#### 1) The Influence of Digital Marketing on Brand Awareness

The research results show that digital marketing has a positive and significant impact on brand awareness. This indicates that the better the digital marketing strategy is implemented, the higher the level of public awareness of the Sohiba Khitan brand.

These findings support Kotler & Keller's (2016) theory, which emphasizes that digital marketing strategies can strengthen brand perception through online channels. Digital marketing serves not only as a promotional medium but also as an interactive communication tool that enables organizations to build rapport with consumers. Kingsnorth (2022) also emphasized that digital marketing success is closely linked to the ability to create educational and relevant content and the consistent use of digital platforms.

The results of this study are consistent with a study by Kristianawati & Sulistyani (2023), which found that hospitals actively using social media, SEO, and content marketing significantly increased brand awareness. Similarly, Pradiani's (2018) research confirmed that digital marketing activities based on education and interaction can strengthen consumer brand awareness.

In the context of Sohiba Khitan, these findings are highly relevant. The digital marketing strategies implemented, such as providing educational content about circumcision procedures, promoting through social media (Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp), and optimizing SEO on Google, have proven effective in strengthening the brand's image in the community. Although Sohiba Khitan is still a relatively new clinic, the presence of digital marketing makes the clinic more recognizable and memorable to potential patients. This is reflected in the brand awareness indicator, which achieved a high index score, above 90%. Therefore, it can be concluded that digital marketing is a crucial key in building brand awareness for Sohiba Khitan in Pangandaran.

#### 2) The Influence of Brand Awareness on Service Usage Decisions

The results of the hypothesis testing also showed that brand awareness had a positive and significant influence on the decision to use the service. This means that the higher the public's awareness of Sohiba Khitan, the more likely they are to use the clinic's circumcision services.

This finding supports the concept proposed by Kotler & Keller (2016), which states that brand awareness is a fundamental element in the consumer decision-making process.

Consumers with high levels of brand awareness are more likely to trust, feel confident, and ultimately choose services they are familiar with.

This research also aligns with the results of studies by Yanti (2023), Hidayah et al. (2022), and Ul-haq (2023), which emphasized that brand awareness is a determining factor in patients' decisions regarding healthcare services. Clinics or hospitals with a well-known reputation and strong digital presence tend to be more trusted by the public. Furthermore, research by Kristianawati & Sulistyani (2023) also emphasized that brand awareness plays a crucial role in building patient loyalty.

The practical implication of these findings is that Sohiba Khitan needs to continue maintaining and increasing brand awareness through a consistent and targeted digital marketing strategy. Parents' decisions to circumcise their children are based not only on price or location, but also on the belief that Sohiba Khitan is a trusted and well-known service. With high brand awareness, Sohiba Khitan will more easily gain word-of-mouth recommendations and loyalty from patients who have used its services.

### 3) The Influence of Digital Marketing on Service Usage Decisions

In contrast to the two previous hypotheses, the results of this study indicate that digital marketing has a positive but insignificant effect on the decision to use services. This means that Sohiba Khitan's improved digital marketing does not necessarily improve patient decisions.

This phenomenon can be explained through integrated marketing communications theory. According to Kotler, Kartajaya, & Setiawan (2021), digital marketing serves as an initial means of introducing a brand and building exposure, but final consumer decisions are often influenced by other factors, such as brand trust, testimonials from previous patients, and real-life experiences. In other words, digital marketing is more effective if it first increases brand awareness, which then impacts the decision to use the service.

This finding is consistent with research by Goel et al. (2024), which asserts that digital healthcare adoption from a consumer perspective often requires intermediary brand awareness before a decision to use is made. Digital marketing plays a crucial role in the information search and perception formation phase, but the final decision is still influenced by the brand's familiarity and trustworthiness.

In the context of Sohiba Khitan, these results provide an important lesson. Digital marketing activities, such as paid advertising or social media promotions, do not necessarily lead to parents immediately deciding to take their children to Sohiba Khitan. However, when these activities successfully increase brand awareness, people become more confident and ultimately decide to use the service. This is evidenced by the results of the mediation analysis, which showed that brand awareness significantly mediated the influence of digital marketing on the decision to use the service ( $p$ -value 0.000).

Therefore, Sohiba Khitan's digital marketing strategy should focus on building and strengthening brand awareness first, such as through educational content, patient testimonials, and consistent communication on social media. Once brand awareness is established, digital marketing will be more effective in driving decisions to use the service.

#### 4. Conclusion

Based on the results of data analysis using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) method and the discussion outlined in Chapter IV, several important conclusions can be drawn as follows: Digital Marketing has a positive and significant effect on Brand Awareness. The results show that the better the implementation of digital marketing, the higher the level of public awareness of the Sohiba Khitan brand. This means that the better the digital marketing strategy in the form of educational content, social media, and search engine optimization (SEO), the stronger the public's brand awareness of Sohiba Khitan will be. Brand Awareness has a positive and significant effect on the Decision to Use Services. The higher the public awareness of Sohiba Khitan, the stronger the decision to use the service. This confirms that brand awareness is a key factor in the decision-making process, where people are more likely to choose services that are known, trusted, and have a good reputation. Digital Marketing has a positive but insignificant effect on the Decision to Use Services. Increasing digital marketing does not necessarily encourage patients to decide to use the service. However, when a digital marketing strategy succeeds in increasing brand awareness, it significantly influences the decision to use the service. This means that the role of digital marketing in the context of Sohiba Khitan is more effective as an instrument for building brand awareness, which then becomes the main determinant in patient decisions. Digital marketing indirectly has a positive effect on the decision to use services through brand awareness. Digital marketing indirectly has a positive and significant effect on the decision to use services through brand awareness. This finding confirms that the success of digital marketing in driving usage decisions is not determined by direct relationships, but through the process of building strong brand awareness.

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