

Impact of Social Media Ads and Word of Mouth on Patient Treatment Decisions

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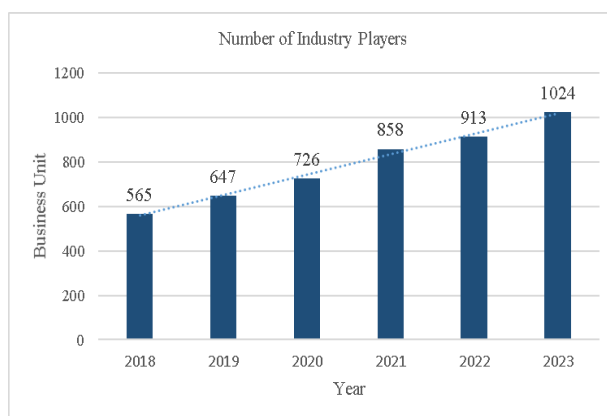
ABSTRACT

The beauty industry in Indonesia has experienced significant growth due to the increasing interest in innovative beauty treatments and products. Clinics such as Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic Batununggal Branch play an important role in fulfilling this demand by offering modern treatments and high-quality skincare products. However, there are challenges in reaching and retaining customers in the midst of strong competition. This study aims to determine the effect of social media advertising and word of mouth on patient decisions to choose treatments at the Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic Batununggal Branch. The method used is multiple linear regression analysis using SPSS software version 25, with data collected through questionnaires. The results showed that both social media advertising and word of mouth significantly influenced the patients' decision to have treatment at the clinic. The findings provide valuable insights to optimize the clinic's marketing strategy, increase new patient acquisition, and maintain customer loyalty. As a result, understanding the power of social media advertising and word-of-mouth recommendations is critical to the success of Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic Batununggal Branch in maintaining its competitiveness in the competitive beauty industry in Indonesia.

Keywords: Social Media Advertising, Word of Mouth, Patient Treatment Decisions.

1. INTRODUCTION

The beauty industry in Indonesia has become one of the sectors that has experienced rapid growth in recent years. This growth is characterized by an increase in the number of beauty industry players in Indonesia from 2018 to 2023.



Source: Directorate of Cosmetics Supervision, data reprocessed

Figure 1. Number of Industry Players

Based on Figure 1, the growth in the number of industry players shows the growing interest of entrepreneurs to contribute to this fast-growing industry. This increase also reflects the growing market demand for beauty products, along with the increasing awareness of the public, especially women, on the importance of grooming and maintaining their appearance.

With the increasing need for facial and body treatments, the beauty clinic business is also growing, following the growth of the beauty industry. Beauty clinics serve as one of the means of marketing the products produced by this industry. Apart from selling beauty products, beauty clinics

also offer services performed by medical personnel. In general, there are three types of beauty clinics that are grouped based on the products sold, namely clinics that focus on selling skincare products, clinics that provide skin care, and clinics that offer "face contouring" treatments.

Over time, beauty clinics have competed to market their products through various means, from finding strategic locations, recruiting famous medical personnel, working with artists as brand ambassadors, creating luxurious interiors, to selling prestigious products, and so on. However, in services, it is not only advertising that is important, but also the impression that visitors get is crucial.

Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic as one of the leading beauty clinics, offers a variety of beauty treatments, especially facial contouring treatments. Using the latest and innovative technology, the clinic provides advanced and safe solutions to meet modern beauty needs. The clinic's commitment to quality is also reflected in the provision of skincare products and services using products that have been tested halal and licensed by BPOM/Kemenkes, this aims to provide additional confidence for customers about the safety and effectiveness of the products they use.

However, in the midst of increasingly fierce competition in the market, challenges related to achieving the target number of customers is one of the main focuses. The following is data on the number of patient visits for treatment at Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic: Based on Figure 1, the growth in the number of industry players shows the growing interest of entrepreneurs in contributing to this fast-growing industry. This increase also reflects the growing market demand for beauty products, along with the increasing awareness of the public, especially women, on the importance of grooming and maintaining their appearance. But not all patients who diligently seek body treatments at various beauty clinics are female. Known as metrosexual males these days, men also appear to desire to keep up by keeping their appearances tidy and new. The general public is becoming more interested in and conscious of self-care (Samoedra et al. 2023).

With the increasing need for facial and body treatments, the beauty clinic business is also growing, following the growth of the beauty industry. Beauty clinics serve as one of the means of marketing the products produced by this industry. Apart from selling beauty products, beauty clinics also offer services performed by medical personnel. In general, there are three types of beauty clinics that are grouped based on the products sold, namely clinics that focus on selling skincare products, clinics that provide skin care, and clinics that offer "face contouring" treatments.

Over time, beauty clinics have competed to market their products through various means, from finding strategic locations, recruiting famous medical personnel, working with artists as brand ambassadors, creating luxurious interiors, to selling prestigious products, and so on. Every player in the industry is required to continuously innovate. However, in services, it is not only advertising that is important, but also the impression that visitors get is crucial.

Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic, as one of the leading beauty clinics, offers a variety of beauty treatments, especially facial contouring treatments. Using the latest and innovative technology, the clinic provides advanced and safe solutions to meet modern beauty needs. The clinic's commitment to quality is also reflected in the provision of skincare products and services using products that have been tested halal and licensed by BPOM/Kemenkes, the aim is to provide additional conviction for patients about the safety and effectiveness of the products they use.

However, in the midst of increasingly fierce competition in the market, challenges related to achieving the target number of patients become one of the main focuses. The following is data on the number of patient visits for treatment at Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic:

Table 1 Total Number of Patient Visits at Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic

Year	Month	Total Number of Patient Visits	
		Target Amount	Target Achievement
2022	April	340	354
	May	350	246
	June	320	306
	July	362	315
	August	346	305
	September	370	331
	October	380	313

	Novemb er	379	374
	Desembe r	407	332
2023	January	408	365
	February	424	298
	March	398	285
	April	379	247
	May	332	292
	June	329	268
	July	333	301
	August	344	277
	Septemb er	338	316
	October	357	247
	Novemb er	336	322
	Desembe r	358	328
	January	358	307
	February	382	274
	March	363	326

Source: Primary data processed in 2024

Based on Table 1, the number of patients visiting for treatment has fluctuated and has not been able to reach the target set by the clinic. The fluctuations that occur indicate the dynamics in the preferences and frequency of patient visits to the clinic during this period. In an effort to attract patient attention and expand market share, Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic utilizes various marketing strategies, namely social media advertising, advertising coverage, word-of-mouth, PR, and packaging improvements, including increasing visitor comfort.

Researchers have conducted an initial pre-survey by distributing questionnaires, the following are the results of the pre-survey of consumers:

Table 2 Pre-Survey Result

Question	Answer	
	Yes	No
Did you have a treatment at Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic based on recommendations from other people?	51,22 %	48,78 %
Do social media advertisements influence your decision to have treatment at Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic?	29,27 %	70,73 %
Have you ever had a treatment at Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic after seeing an advertisement or promotion through other platforms?	19,51 %	80,49 %

Source: Primary data processed in 2024

Based on Table 2 regarding the results of the pre-survey, it can be concluded that most respondents, namely 51.22%, took treatment at Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic because they received recommendations from other people. As many as 29.27% chose to do treatment at Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic because of advertisements on social media. While the remaining 19.51% chose to do treatment at Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic because of other platforms. This shows that word-of-mouth and social media advertising influence patient decisions to take treatments at Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic.

Social media advertising has now become one of the platforms where clinics can interact directly with potential audiences. By utilizing available features such as photos, videos, testimonials, and advertisements on social media, Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic has the opportunity to showcase a variety of products and treatments in an engaging and effective manner. According to (Nurhaliza 2022), social media marketing also offers the unique ability to target specific segments and demographics that align with the company's objectives. Research conducted by (Alamsyah et al. 2023) demonstrated that social media advertising influences patients' decisions to purchase fashion products. Similarly, research by (Richadinata and Astitiani 2021) aligns with that, indicating that social media advertisements have a significant impact on patients' purchasing decisions. However, this contrasts with the research by (Nurhaliza 2022), which suggests that social media advertisements have no influence on patients' purchasing decisions whatsoever.

In addition to social media advertising, word-of-mouth marketing strategies also play an important role in increasing the number of visitors at Amabelle Aesthetics Clinic. Word-of-mouth communication, according to (Kotler and Keller 2012), is a communication method that takes the shape of individual and group recommendations for a good or service that tries to offer personal information. Recommendations from friends, family, and influencers have great weight in patient decision making. Word-of-mouth (WOM) marketing has the potential to influence patient decisions because information coming from known people is often considered more credible. Word-of-mouth communication and brand awareness are linked. Essentially, this means that word-of-mouth marketing will increase brand awareness because it will make a lot of people who were previously unaware of the brand familiar (Mahaputra and Saputra 2021).

Based on the background of the problems above, the authors are interested in examining the phenomenon entitled "Impact of Social Media Ads and Word-of-mouth on Patient Treatment Decisions".

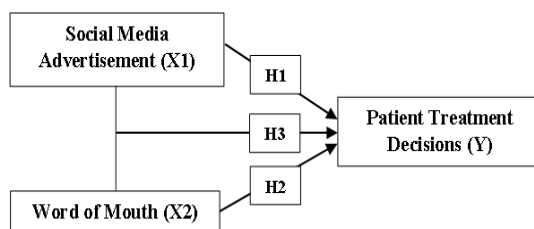


Figure 2. Research Paradigm

2. METHODS

This research uses a quantitative approach. The data collection technique was carried out by distributing questionnaires via Google Forms. The sampling technique used nonprobability sampling with purposive sampling method. Purposive sampling guarantees the study's generalizability and the consistency, dependability, and use of the data gathered (Alexiades 1996). The sample size used in the study was calculated using the Slovinformula, which amounted to 100 samples. The data analysis technique used is multiple regression linear analysis using SPSS software version 25.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Results

3.1.1 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Table 3 Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Coefficients ^a						
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t		Collinearity Statistics
	B	Standard Error	Beta			

			ro r			Si g.	Toleran ce	VI F
1	(Constant)	7.09 9	2.377		2.9 87	.0 04		
	Social Media Ads	.360	.094	.340	3.8 40	.0 00	.487	2.0 52
	Word of Mouth	.336	.058	.511	5.7 80	.0 00	.487	2.0 52
a. Dependent Variable: Treatment Decisions								

Source: Primary data processed in 2024

From Table 3, the following regression equation is obtained:

$$Y = 7,099 + 0,360X_1 + 0,336X_2 + e$$

Annotation:

Y : Patient Treatment Decisions

X₁ : Social Media Advertisement

X₂ : Word-of-mouth

E : Standard Error (5%)

Based on this equation, it can be described as follows:

1. The constant value is 7.099 which illustrates that all independent variables, namely Social Media Advertisement and Word-of-mouth, are equal to 0, then the dependent variable, namely Patient Treatment Decision, will increase by 7.099.
2. The regression coefficient value of Social Media Advertisement is 0.360 which illustrates that if Social Media Advertisement increases by 1 unit, the value will increase Patient Treatment Decision by 0.360. On the other hand, if Social Media Advertisement decreases by 1 unit, the value will decrease Patient Treatment Decision by 0.360.
3. The Word-of-mouth regression coefficient value is 0.336 which illustrates that if Word-of-mouth increases by 1 unit, the value will increase the Patient Treatment Decision by 0.336. On the other hand, if it decreases by 1 unit, the value will decrease the Patient Treatment Decision by 0.336.

3.1.2 Hypothesis Test

T-Test

Table 4 T-Test

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Si g.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VI F
1	(Constant)	7.099	2.377		2.9 87	.0 04		
	Social Media Ads	.360	.094	.340	3.8 40	.0 00	.487	2.0 52
	Word of Mouth	.336	.058	.511	5.7 80	.0 00	.487	2.0 52
a. Dependent Variable: Treatment Decisions								

Source: Primary data processed in 2024

Based on Tabel 4, the tcount value for the Social Media Ads (X1) variable is 3,840; While ttable value with degree of freedom (Df) = $100-2-1 = 97$, with a significance level (α) = 5% is 1,984. The tcount value for the Social Media Ads (X1) variable is $3,840 > \text{ttable value is } 1,984$ and also the significance level of $p\text{-value} = 0,000 < 0,05$, then H_a is acceptend and H_0 is rejected.

The tcount value for the Word-of-mouth (X2) variable is 5,780; While ttable value with degree of freedom (Df) = $100-2-1 = 97$, with a significance level (α) = 5% is 1,984. The tcount value for Word of Mouth (X2) variable is $5,780 > \text{ttable value is } 1,984$ and also the significance level of $p\text{-value} = 0,000 < 0,05$, then H_a is acceptend and H_0 is rejected.

F-Test

Table 5 F-Test

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1194.769	2	597.385	81.997	.000 ^b
	Residual	713.970	98	7.285		
	Total	1908.739	100			
a. Dependent Variable: Treatment Decisions						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Word of Mouth, Social Media Ads						

Source: Primary data processed in 2024

Based on Table 5, the Fcount value is 81,997; While Ftable value with degree of freedom (Df) = $100-2-1 = 97$ is 3,09. Therefore, Fcount value is $81,997 > \text{Ftable value is } 3,09$, with significance $p\text{-value} = 0,000 < 0,05$, then H_a accepted dan H_0 is rejected. It can be concluded that Social Media Ads and Word of Mouth simultaneously have a significant effect on Patient Treatment Decisions.

3.1.3 Coefficient of Determination

Table 6 Coefficient of Determination

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.791 ^a	.626	.618	2.69915	1.487
a. Predictors: (Constant), Word of Mouth, Social Media Ads					
b. Dependent Variable: Treatment Decisions					

Source: Primary data processed in 2024

Based on Table 6, the R value is 0,626 atau 62,6% which means that Social Media Ads and Word-of-mouth affect Patient Treatment Decisions by 62,6% and while the remaining 47.4% is influenced by other variables not included in this research.

3.2 Discussion

3.2.1 The Influence of Social Media Advertisement on Patient Treatment Decision

The results showed that social media advertisement has an effect on patient decisions in conducting treatments at Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic Batununggal Branch. Based on the equation obtained from multiple linear regression analysis, if social media advertisement increases by 1 unit,

the value will increase patient treatment decision by 0.360. The same thing applies if social media advertisement is decreased by 1 unit, the value of patient treatment decision will decrease by 0.360. In this context, the more effective and engaging a social media advertisement is, the more likely patients are to decide to undergo treatments, particularly at Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic. This finding is supported by the research conducted by (Alamsyah et al. 2023), which demonstrated that social media advertising influences patient decisions to purchase fashion products. Similarly, the research by (Richadinata and Astitiani 2021) aligns with these results, indicating that social media advertisements have a significant effect on purchasing decisions.

According to a recent American Society for Dermatologic Surgery poll, social media was placed sixth when it came to deciding whether to get cosmetic surgery and in the top three when it came to things to take into account when buying skin care products (Boen and Jerdan 2022). It is well known that younger patients use social media and the internet to research potential doctors and treatments or therapies (Tan et al. 2020). Furthermore, 41% of patients use Instagram to follow their current or potential provider, and 43% of patients use the provider's social media presence to decide when to make an appointment (Vannucci et al. 2017). Unfortunately, there is a lot of false information on social media, particularly when it comes to cosmetic treatments, which puts patients at risk for injury (Wang et al. 2020). It is in Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic's best interest to be transparent about the treatments and products being offered to the patients. The clinic also encourages patients to be transparent about the health conditions potentially relating to the products and or treatments demanded.

3.2.2 The Influence of Word of Mouth on Patient Treatment Decision

The results show that word-of-mouth influences patient decisions in conducting treatments at Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic Batununggal Branch. Based on the equation obtained from the multiple linear regression analysis, if the value of word-of-mouth increases by 1 unit, the value of patient treatment decision will increase by 0.336. On the other hand, if the value of word-of-mouth decreases by 1 unit, the value of patient treatment decision will decrease by 0.336. Word-of-mouth is highly effective because patients tend to trust recommendations from others who have direct

experience. Stories and personal experiences shared by someone can provide an objective view of the quality and benefits of a product or service. This can build trust and encourage potential patients to try the product or service. This statement is in line with research conducted by (Purnama et al. 2019) that word-of-mouth has a significant effect on purchasing decisions for body care products and services. This is also supported by research conducted by (Pamungkas 2017), that word-of-mouth has a significant effect on purchasing decision at Bontacos.

Numerous elements, including patient choice (Marsha 1983), service switching (Florian and Tomas 2004), purchase decision (O'Reilly and Marx 2011), and opinion of the product/services (Sweeney et al. 2014), have been proven to be impacted by word-of-mouth. Additionally, brand choice is made easier for patients. It can occasionally be more successful than the conventional marketing techniques of personal selling and different forms of advertising (James et al. 1969). Patients are more receptive to word-of-mouth marketing (WOM) than to other forms of advertising because they view WOM as authentic, personalized, and produced by individuals who are not biased toward promoting a product (Silverman 1997).

Three essential elements of word-of-mouth communication were identified by (Mazzarol et al. 2007): the valence of the message, its richness in content, and the advocacy's potency. Vibrantness and intensity also stood out as significant motifs. Richness was centered on the amount of storytelling, or the language employed, such as evocative phrases. The theme strength improves the WOM communication process by focusing on the manner (passionate, aggressive, etc.) or aim of the communication rather than the content.

3.2.3 The Influence of Social Media Advertisement and Word of Mouth on Patient Treatment Decision

The results show that WOM and social media advertisements at Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic simultaneously influence patients' decision to have treatments. Based on the pre-survey, 51.22% respondents claim to have had a treatment at Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic because other people recommended it to them. In contrast, only 29.27% respondents claim to have had a treatment at Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic because they were influenced by social media advertisements. It is also found that social media advertisements and word-of-mouth affect patient treatment decisions by 62.6% and the remaining 47.4% is influenced by other variables not included in this research. Based

on the equation obtained from the multiple linear regression analysis, it is known that the regression coefficient value of social media advertisement is 0.360 and that the regression coefficient value of WOM is 0.336, with a small difference in value of 0.024.

Both forms of marketing simultaneously impact patients' decision to undergo treatments, but WOM has a significantly higher impact based on survey. WOM can be considered the most powerful source of information because it involves friends and family members, commonly viewed as trustworthy people (Gildin 2003). This finding aligns with (Pamungkas 2017) who stated that promotion through social media and word-of-mouth simultaneously have a significant effect on purchasing decision. This statement is also supported by research conducted by (Nurhaliza 2022), that simultaneously advertising on social media and word-of-mouth have a significant effect on purchasing decisions.

Social media advertising has great potential to influence patients' decisions regarding aesthetic treatments in Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic. As stated in (Vannucci et al. 2017), a significant number of patients rely on the provider's (clinic) social media presence to decide whether they want an appointment. This supporting research could be the basis for Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic's social media presence improvements in the near future. Evaluation of WOM about Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic could also be the basis for future improvements and or adjustments.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussions above, it can be concluded that at Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic Batununggal Branch, word-of-mouth marketing and social media advertisements simultaneously impact patients' decisions in having treatments. Although the number based on the pre-survey shows a significant difference in affect, the coefficient of determination shows that the difference of affect is not too significant. Positive word-of-mouth and improved social media marketing will be able to attract patients to carry out treatments at Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic Batununggal Branch. The findings of this research can be optimized by management to take action in future business decisions.

Recommendation

The recommendations that can be given by the author are:

1. Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic should put more effort into producing material for social media in order to increase patient understanding and pique interest, which will then impact decision-making regarding treatment.
2. Amabelle Aesthetic Clinic is also anticipated to raise patient satisfaction and encourage patients to give favorable recommendations to friends and family by enhancing service quality and product value.

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