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The Effect of Digital Chat and Phone Marketing in Increasing Patient Repeat Orders Through Closing Rate in Men's Health Services in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT
This study aims to analyze the influence of chat-based and telephone-based digital marketing on patient closing rates and repeat orders, and to examine the mediating role of closing rates in this relationship. The research employed a quantitative, survey-based approach with non-clinical healthcare workers serving as medical advisors in men's health clinics in Indonesia. Data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) to identify both direct and indirect relationships among variables. The findings reveal that digital marketing via chat and phone significantly affects patient conversion rates and repeat orders. Furthermore, closing rate was found to mediate the relationship between chat and telephone communication and repeat order behavior. These results indicate that the effectiveness of digital marketing strategies in healthcare services is not solely determined by the utilization of digital technology but also by the quality of communication demonstrated by healthcare personnel. The study highlights the importance of structured and strategic digital communication in strengthening patient engagement and loyalty. The findings provide practical implications for healthcare service providers, particularly clinic management, in developing more effective digital marketing strategies that emphasize communication quality, patient trust, and relationship continuity.

Keywords: Digital Marketing; Chat Communication; Telephone Marketing; Closing Rate; Repeat Order.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, the rapid advancement of digital technology has significantly transformed the way individuals access healthcare services. Healthcare systems have gradually shifted from a physician-centered model toward a patient-centered approach supported by digital access. Today, many patients initiate their healthcare journeys through digital platforms such as search engines, social media, and online communication channels. This transformation has been particularly evident in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia, where internet penetration and smartphone usage continue to increase significantly.

The COVID-19 pandemic further accelerated this transformation by encouraging the adoption of telemedicine and digital communication tools within healthcare services. Although the pandemic has subsided, the behavioral shift toward digital interaction in healthcare remains persistent. Patients increasingly prefer communication channels that allow them to obtain information quickly, privately, and conveniently before deciding to visit a healthcare provider.

In the context of men's health services, digital communication plays an even more critical role. Many men's health conditions involve sensitive or personal issues that often discourage patients from immediately seeking face-to-face consultations.

Digital channels such as chat and telephone communication provide an initial point of contact that allows patients to obtain information, discuss their concerns privately, and build trust before proceeding with treatment. Therefore, digital communication platforms have become essential tools in enhancing patient comfort, maintaining confidentiality, and fostering personalized interactions.

However, the success of digital transformation in healthcare services is not determined solely by technological availability. Human resources, particularly healthcare personnel who directly interact with patients, play a vital role in shaping patients' perceptions and treatment decisions. Effective communication skills, empathy, and persuasive ability are essential competencies that influence patient trust and treatment acceptance.

In increasingly competitive healthcare markets, clinics face the challenge not only of attracting new patients but also of retaining existing ones through repeat visits and long-term loyalty. Digital marketing strategies provide clinics with opportunities to conduct systematic follow-up communication and maintain relationships with patients. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of such strategies largely depends on the perceptions and involvement of healthcare personnel who act as frontline communicators.

In practice, some healthcare professionals still perceive digital marketing activities as administrative or promotional tasks that fall outside their professional responsibilities. However, their communication behavior—particularly their ability to respond empathetically, provide accurate information, and address patient concerns—can significantly influence closing rates and patient retention.

Despite the growing importance of digital communication in healthcare services, empirical studies examining the relationship between digital marketing, closing rates, and repeat-order behavior in men's health services in Indonesia remain limited. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap by investigating how chat and telephone communication influence closing rates and repeat orders, as well as examining the mediating role of closing rates in strengthening patient loyalty.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative non-experimental associative (explanatory) research design to examine the influence of digital communication media—specifically chat and telephone—on patient repeat orders, with closing rate acting as a mediating variable.

The population consisted of 30 healthcare professionals (medical advisors) working at Klinik Lelaki Indonesia. Due to the relatively small population size, the study applied a census sampling technique, meaning that all members of the population were included as research respondents.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire containing closed-ended questions measured on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The questionnaire measured four primary variables:

a. Chat communication
b. Telephone communication
c. Closing rate
d. Repeat order behavior

Each variable was developed based on relevant theoretical indicators derived from digital marketing and relationship marketing literature.

Data analysis was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with the SmartPLS software. The analysis procedure consisted of several stages:

a. Outer model evaluation, which examined the validity and reliability of measurement indicators.
b. Inner model evaluation, which assessed the structural relationships among variables using R^2, VIF, and Q^2 values.
c. Hypothesis testing conducted using the bootstrapping method with a significance level of 5% to determine both direct and indirect effects.

The research was conducted between June and September 2025 at PT Klinik Lelaki Indonesia.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Instrument Validity and Reliability

Instrument validity was assessed using SPSS version 26 by examining the corrected item–total correlation (r-count) for each questionnaire item. Using a pilot sample of 30 respondents at a 5% significance level, the r-table value was 0.361. Therefore, items were considered valid if the r-count exceeded 0.361 and the significance value was below 0.05.

The analysis showed that all indicators measuring Chat, Telephone, Closing Rate, and Repeat Order had significance values of 0.000 (< 0.05) and r-count values exceeding 0.361. Although several chat indicators were close to the threshold, they still satisfied the validity criteria. Consequently, all items were declared valid and suitable for further analysis.

Table 1. Reliability Test Results

Variable	Valid Item Count	Cronbach's Alpha	Cut-off Value	Reliability
Chat	18	0.815	0.70	Reliable
Telephone	12	0.945	0.70	Reliable
Closing Rate	12	0.961	0.70	Reliable
Repeat Order	12	0.945	0.70	Reliable

The reliability test results indicate that all research variables demonstrate satisfactory reliability. The Chat variable showed a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.815, indicating good internal consistency. Meanwhile, Telephone (0.945), Closing Rate (0.961), and Repeat Order (0.945) exhibited very high reliability levels. These findings confirm that the measurement instrument used in this study is consistent and reliable for measuring the research constructs.

2. Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis was conducted by calculating the mean score of each indicator using a five-point Likert scale to determine the overall category of each variable.

The Chat variable, consisting of 18 indicators, produced a high average score of 3.99. The highest indicator score was related to the ability to provide information relevant to patient problems (CH9 = 4.33), while the lowest score was associated with the use of emojis or symbols to emphasize messages (CH17 = 3.60). This indicates that chat communication is effective in delivering relevant and empathetic information, although improvements are still required in response speed and message enhancement.

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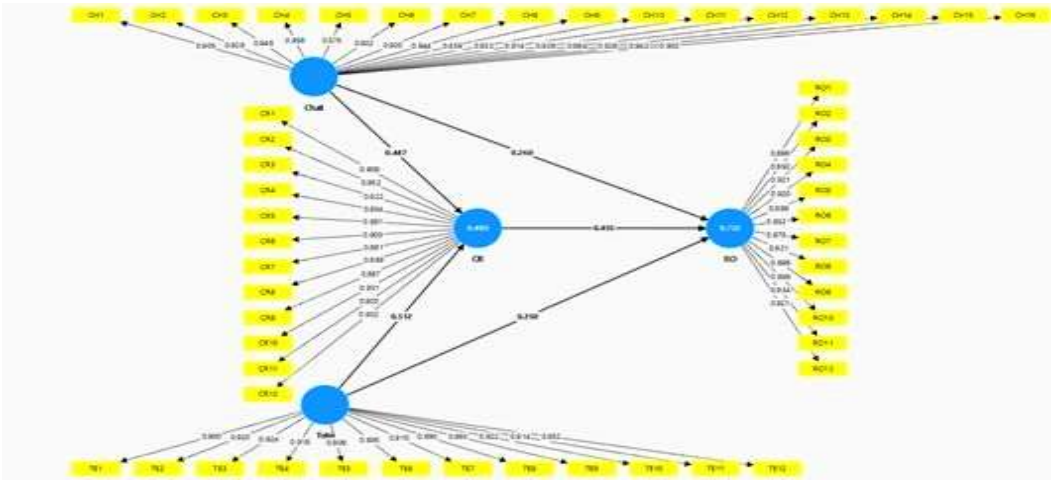
The Telephone variable showed a moderate average score of 3.36. Strengths were identified in accessibility and closing techniques (TE11 = 3.73), while weaknesses appeared in explaining services and handling patient objections (TE3 = 3.10).



The Closing Rate variable was categorized as high, with an average score of 3.94. Strong performance was observed in follow-up actions (CR8 = 4.17) and in clearly explaining treatment benefits (CR4 and CR5 = 4.10). However, identifying high-potential patients and reinforcing responses to objections still required improvement (CR3 and CR9 = 3.70).

The Repeat Order variable produced a moderate mean score of 3.61. The highest scores were associated with patient satisfaction (RO4 = 3.83) and emotional relationships with healthcare providers (RO6 = 3.93), while perceived tangible benefits and consistent repurchase behavior were relatively lower (RO3 and RO11 = 3.40).

3. Measurement Model Evaluation

Table 2. Discriminant Validity (Fornell–Larcker Criterion)

	CR	Chat	RO	Telp
CR	0.910			
Chat	0.659	0.918		
RO	0.781	0.730	0.902	
Telp	0.616	0.680	0.707	0.904

The outer model evaluation confirmed the validity and reliability of the constructs. Convergent validity was assessed using outer loading (> 0.70) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE > 0.50). The AVE values were:

a. Chat = 0.843
b. Closing Rate = 0.829
c. Repeat Order = 0.813
d. Telephone = 0.817

4. These results confirm strong convergent validity.

Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, HTMT ratio (< 0.85), and cross-loading values. The square root of AVE for each construct was greater than the correlations with other constructs, indicating that all variables are empirically distinct.

Table 3. Model Fit Evaluation

Variable	R-square	Q-square	SRMR
Closing Rate	0.486	0.393	0.073
Repeat Order	0.722	0.580	

The goodness-of-fit evaluation shows that the structural model has acceptable explanatory power. The R^2 value for Closing Rate was 0.486, indicating moderate explanatory strength, while Repeat Order achieved 0.722, indicating strong explanatory power. The SRMR value of 0.073 is below the threshold of 0.08, confirming good model fit.

Table 4. Effect Size (f^2)

Relationship	f^2
CR → RO	0.383
Chat → CR	0.209
Chat → RO	0.108
Telp → CR	0.102
Telp → RO	0.109

The effect size analysis indicates that Closing Rate has the strongest influence on Repeat Order, while Chat and Telephone exhibit moderate to small effects on other variables.

Table 5. Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	β	T-Statistics	P-Value	Result
Chat → Closing Rate	0.447	4.173	0.000	Accepted
Telephone → Closing Rate	0.312	2.946	0.002	Accepted
Chat → Repeat Order	0.260	3.353	0.000	Accepted
Telephone → Repeat Order	0.250	2.985	0.001	Accepted
Closing Rate → Repeat Order	0.455	7.282	0.000	Accepted
Chat → CR → RO	0.203	3.353	0.000	Accepted
Telephone → CR → RO	0.142	2.942	0.002	Accepted

All hypotheses were statistically supported (**$p < 0.05$**).

Discussion

The findings of this study demonstrate that digital communication channels—particularly chat and telephone—play a significant role in influencing closing rates and repeat order behavior in men's health services. Among the two communication channels examined, chat communication exhibited a stronger influence on closing rate compared to telephone communication. This finding suggests that text-based digital interaction allows healthcare personnel to deliver information more effectively, enabling patients to review explanations at their own pace and increasing their confidence in treatment decisions.

These findings align with previous studies in digital marketing that emphasize the effectiveness of personalized and real-time communication in strengthening customer engagement. Chat communication enables asynchronous interaction, which allows patients to ask questions and receive responses without the pressure of real-time conversation. This flexibility is particularly important in sensitive healthcare services such as men's health clinics, where patients may initially feel hesitant to discuss their conditions openly.

Furthermore, the results highlight the strategic importance of the closing rate as a mediating variable. Closing rate emerged as the strongest predictor of repeat order behavior, indicating that successful initial service conversion significantly

increases the likelihood of patient retention. From a relationship marketing perspective, positive early service experiences contribute to patient trust, satisfaction, and long-term loyalty.

Although chat and telephone communication showed relatively small direct effects on repeat-order behavior, their indirect effects through closing rate were statistically significant. This suggests that the effectiveness of digital marketing communication lies not merely in attracting patient attention but in facilitating high-quality conversion processes that ultimately lead to sustained patient engagement.

From a practical perspective, healthcare organizations should invest in improving the communication competencies of their medical advisors, particularly in digital communication skills such as empathetic messaging, effective information delivery, and persuasive closing techniques. Strengthening these competencies can enhance closing performance and ultimately improve patient retention.

CONCLUSION

The results of the SEM-PLS analysis confirm that chat and telephone communication significantly influence the closing rate and repeat-order behavior in men's healthcare services. Chat communication demonstrated a stronger effect on closing rate and repeat orders than telephone communication. Closing rate also showed the strongest direct influence on repeat order behavior, indicating its central role in fostering patient loyalty.

Furthermore, the mediation analysis confirmed that the closing rate significantly mediates the relationship between digital communication channels and repeat-order behavior. These findings suggest that digital communication strategies should not only focus on increasing patient inquiries but also on improving communication quality and conversion effectiveness.

Overall, structured and strategic digital communication through chat and telephone platforms can significantly enhance patient engagement, strengthen closing performance, and support sustainable repeat behavior in digital healthcare services.

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