

## ***Revisit Intention Shaped by Digital Appeal and Interpersonal Recommendation***

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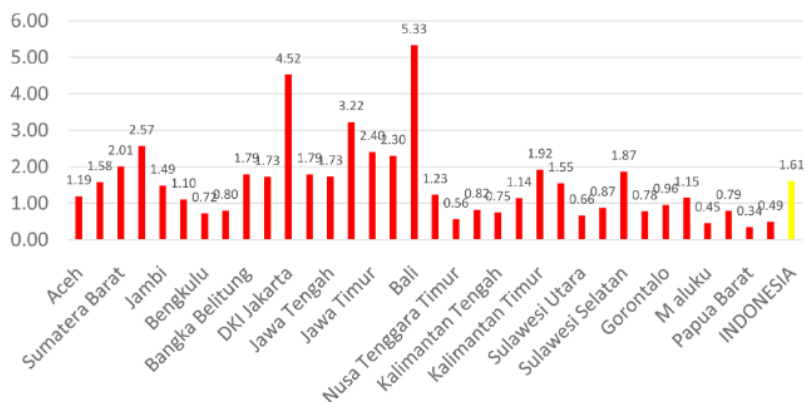
### **Abstract**

*This study proposes a research model and empirically examines the factors influencing patients' revisit intention toward private dental practices. Drawing upon the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE), the study develops a theoretically grounded framework to analyze how communication strategies shape behavioral intentions. Using a quantitative approach, data were collected through questionnaires administered to 131 patients who had visited private dental practices in Bali Province within the past six months. The data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0. The results reveal that word of mouth significantly influences patients' revisit intention both directly and indirectly, while social media content affects revisit intention through the mediating role of brand image. These findings underscore the critical role of brand image in translating communication efforts into patients' behavioral intentions. The study provides managerial insights for private dental practice managers in designing effective, adaptive, and sustainable communication strategies to strengthen brand image and enhance patients' likelihood of returning.*

**Keywords:** *Revisit Intention, Word of Mouth, Social Media Content, Brand Image, Private Dental Practice.*

## **1. Introduction**

Competition in the dental healthcare sector has intensified significantly, particularly among private dental practices operating in regions with a high concentration of medical professionals, such as Bali Province. As shown in Figure 1, Bali records an average of 5.33 dentists per public health center (Puskesmas), the highest nationally and substantially exceeding the Indonesian average of 1.61 (Gofur et al., 2021). This disproportionate distribution reflects increasing competitive pressure among dental practices in attracting and retaining patients. In such a competitive environment, private practices can no longer rely solely on clinical expertise but must also adopt strategic efforts to build sustainable, long-term relationships with patients. One critical indicator of healthcare service sustainability is revisit intention, defined as a patient's willingness to return to the same service provider after prior treatment experience (Abbasi et al., 2021; Wibowo & Junaedi, 2019). Revisit intention therefore serves not only as a reflection of patient satisfaction and trust but also as a key determinant of long-term practice sustainability and competitive advantage within the healthcare sector.



**Figure 1. Average Number of Dentists per Community Health Center (Puskesmas) Across Provinces**

Source: Gofur et al. (2021)

Figure 1 illustrates the disproportionately high concentration of dentists in Bali relative to other provinces, indicating intensified competitive dynamics in the dental healthcare sector.

Patients’ intention to revisit a dental practice is significantly influenced by the effectiveness of its marketing strategies. The strategic use of educational social media content and positive word-of-mouth communication is a critical determinant in sustaining repeat visits by enhancing patient awareness, trust, and perceived credibility (Juliawati et al., 2023). In addition, contemporary patients demonstrate increasingly selective and information-driven behavior; they actively seek and evaluate information before choosing a private dental practice. Consequently, social media has evolved into a critical platform through which patients assess service providers’ reputations, compare available alternatives, and form preliminary judgments about service quality (Taneja et al., 2022).

The rapid advancement of digital technology has significantly accelerated the integration of social media into marketing communication strategies within the healthcare sector. For private dental practices, social media content serves as a strategic platform to disseminate educational information, demonstrate professional competence, and cultivate sustained engagement with patients. Empirical evidence indicates that well-designed social media content can shape patients’ perceptions, strengthen relational bonds, and enhance perceived service credibility (Ibrahim et al., 2021). Nevertheless, recent studies suggest that the effect of social media on revisit intention is not consistently direct; rather, it often operates through cognitive and affective mechanisms shaped by patients’ evaluations of the service context and the impressions formed in their minds (Poluan et al., 2022; Bawono & Subagio, 2025). This implies that the effectiveness of social media in driving repeat visits may depend on intermediary perceptual factors rather than mere exposure to digital content.

Beyond digital communication, word of mouth (WOM) continues to serve as a highly influential information source in the healthcare sector. Derived from recommendations and firsthand experiences shared by trusted individuals, WOM carries substantial credibility and persuasive power. Within the framework of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), WOM reflects subjective norms that shape individuals’ behavioral intentions by signaling socially endorsed choices (Ajzen, 1991; Aziz et al., 2020). Empirical evidence further demonstrates that WOM significantly influences patients’ revisit intention in healthcare settings, reinforcing its strategic importance in service-based industries (Abutar & Wuisan, 2024).

Perceptions formed through both social media content and WOM contribute to the development of brand image, conceptualized as the network of associations and impressions embedded in patients' minds regarding a healthcare provider. A favorable brand image strengthens trust, mitigates perceived risk, and fosters positive attitudes toward revisiting decisions (Keller, 1993; Maryam et al., 2022). From the TPB perspective, brand image contributes to shaping attitudes toward behavior, while within the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) framework, it functions as a central mechanism translating marketing stimuli into behavioral responses (Keller, 1993). Thus, brand image may operate as a critical intermediary linking communication strategies to revisit intention.

Although prior studies have explored the influence of social media and WOM on brand image and behavioral intentions, most research has focused on large-scale healthcare institutions, such as hospitals, and has frequently positioned trust as the primary mediating construct. Empirical investigations that explicitly examine brand image as a mediator in the relationship between social media content, WOM, and revisit intention within private dental practices remain scarce (Hanum et al., 2020; Putri & Munas, 2023). This limitation underscores the need for a more context-specific and theoretically integrated model that reflects the distinctive competitive dynamics of private dental practices.

## **2. Literature Review**

### **Theory of Planned Behavior and Customer-Based Brand Equity**

This study is grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), proposed by Ajzen (1991), which asserts that behavioral intention is determined by three core components: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control. In the healthcare context, particularly in private dental practices, patients' revisit intention emerges from their cognitive evaluation of prior service experiences, normative influences from significant others, and their perceptions of the provider's competence and credibility (Aziz et al., 2020). Therefore, revisit intention reflects not only experiential assessments but also socially and psychologically constructed judgments.

Complementing TPB, this study also adopts the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) framework introduced by Keller (1993), which emphasizes that brand strength resides in consumers' perceptions, associations, and stored brand knowledge. From this perspective, brand image functions as a strategic intangible asset that shapes consumer responses beyond functional service attributes. A favorable brand image enhances trust, reduces perceived risk, and increases the likelihood of favorable behavioral outcomes, including loyalty and repurchase intention. In private dental practice settings, where services are intangible and involve higher perceived risk, brand image becomes particularly important in reinforcing patients' confidence in their healthcare decisions.

Drawing upon these complementary theoretical perspectives, this study conceptualizes social media content and word of mouth as communication stimuli that influence patients' cognitive and affective evaluations, thereby shaping brand image and ultimately driving revisit intention. By integrating TPB and CBBE, this research provides a more comprehensive and context sensitive explanation of how communication strategies translate into behavioral intentions within private dental practice environments.

### **Social Media Content and Revisit Intention**

Social media content serves as a strategic digital communication tool for service providers to share information, convey value, and build interactive relationships with consumers. In private dental practices, informative and credible content can enhance perceived professionalism, service transparency, and patient trust (Ibrahim et al., 2021). Empirical studies indicate that such content influences behavioral intentions, including revisit intention, by shaping patients' cognitive and affective evaluations (Ibrahim et al., 2021; Wilopo & Nuralam, 2025). Although the effect may vary in healthcare due to patients' careful assessment of service quality and credibility (Poluan et al., 2022; Bawono & Subagio, 2025), social media content remains a relevant stimulus for fostering positive perceptions and revisit intentions.

**H1:** *The stronger the social media content, the higher the patient revisit intention.*

### **Word of Mouth and Revisit Intention**

Word of mouth (WOM) is a highly credible form of informal communication in healthcare, where decisions often involve risk and uncertainty (Cham et al., 2020). According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, WOM represents subjective norms that shape behavioral intentions through socially endorsed recommendations (Ajzen, 1991). By conveying firsthand experiences from trusted sources, WOM reduces information asymmetry and effectively strengthens patients' willingness to revisit a provider. Empirical evidence consistently demonstrates that positive WOM enhances revisit intention in healthcare (Abutar & Wuisan, 2024; Saragih & Said, 2024; Irdan et al., 2024) as well as in other service industries such as tourism (Paramita et al., 2025).

**H2:** *The stronger the word of mouth, the higher the patients' revisit intention.*

### **Brand Image dan Revisit Intention**

Brand image refers to consumers' overall perceptions of a brand, which influence attitudes and behavioral intentions, including loyalty and revisit intention (Lin & Yin, 2022). From the perspective of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), attitude toward behavior is formed based on individuals' beliefs about the consequences of performing a particular action and their evaluation of those consequences (Ajzen, 1991). Accordingly, a positive brand image can strengthen patients' beliefs that revisiting a dental practice will yield beneficial outcomes, thereby fostering stronger revisit intention.

Empirical studies support this relationship. Brand image has been shown to exert a significant effect on revisit intention in the healthcare sector (Kurniawati et al., 2025; Irdan et al., 2024; Suparno & Aksari, 2023), with similar findings also confirmed in the tourism industry (Rodrigues et al., 2024). Based on this reasoning, the following hypothesis is proposed:

**H3:** *The stronger the brand image, the higher the patients' revisit intention.*

### **Social Media Content and Brand Image**

Social media content serves as a strategic marketing communication instrument that conveys relevant and credible information capable of building trust and shaping brand perceptions (Cham et al., 2020). In healthcare services, where perceived risk and information asymmetry are prevalent, consistent and informative digital content can reduce uncertainty and enhance professional credibility. From the perspective of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), positive perceptions contribute to the formation of favorable attitudes toward a brand. Within the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) framework, marketing communication functions as a primary driver in developing strong and favorable brand associations (Keller, 1993). Empirical evidence supports this

linkage, demonstrating that social media activities exert a positive and significant influence on brand image (Cham et al., 2020; Harvina et al., 2022; Hariyanti et al., 2023).

**H4:** *The stronger the social media content, the higher the brand image.*

### **Word of Mouth and Brand Image**

Word of mouth (WOM) represents interpersonal communication among consumers that conveys experiences, evaluations, and recommendations regarding a service, and is generally perceived as more credible than firm-generated marketing messages (Huete-Alcocer, 2017). In service contexts characterized by intangibility and perceived risk, such as healthcare, WOM plays a critical role in reducing uncertainty and shaping consumers' perceptions. From the perspective of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), WOM functions as a social influence that shapes subjective norms and affects individuals' evaluations of a brand. Consistent with the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) framework, social interactions, including WOM, contribute to the development of strong, favorable, and meaningful brand associations (Keller, 1993). Accordingly, positive WOM is expected to enhance brand image by reinforcing trust and credibility in consumers' minds.

Empirical findings substantiate this theoretical linkage, indicating that WOM exerts a positive and significant effect on brand image (Putri & Munas, 2023; Hanum et al., 2020; Cham et al., 2020; Aditi et al., 2023).

**H5:** *The stronger the word of mouth, the stronger the brand image.*

### **Brand Image as a Mediating Variable**

Social media content, as a form of digital marketing communication, shapes consumers' experiences and perceptions of a brand (Wilopo & Nuralam, 2025; Hanum et al., 2020). A favorable brand image subsequently enhances revisit intention by strengthening trust, reducing perceived risk, and fostering positive evaluations of the service provider (Rodrigues et al., 2024). From the perspectives of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) framework, marketing communication influences behavioral intention indirectly through the formation of attitudes and brand associations. Therefore, brand image can be conceptualized as a psychological mechanism that translates social media stimuli into behavioral outcomes.

Similarly, word of mouth (WOM), which is widely perceived as more credible than firm-generated marketing messages (Huete-Alcocer, 2017), reinforces brand-related evaluations and associations. Positive WOM strengthens brand image, which in turn increases the likelihood of revisit intention (Rodrigues et al., 2024). Accordingly, brand image is expected to mediate the relationship between WOM and revisit intention.

**H6:** *Brand image mediates the relationship between social media content and patients' revisit intention.*

**H7:** *Brand image mediates the relationship between word of mouth and patients' revisit intention.*

## **3. Methods**

This quantitative study with a causal-explanatory design investigates the influence of social media content and word of mouth on patient revisit intention, including the mediating role of brand image. Conducted in Bali Province on private dental practices, it analyzed 131 respondents, exceeding the minimum of 120 recommended by Hair et al. (2021) and thereby ensuring reliable and generalizable results. The study also outlines the indicators used to measure each latent

ariablen the conceptual model, with Table 1 summarizing the items for Revisit Intention, Social Media Content, Word of Mouth, and Brand Image along with their respective reference sources.

**Table 1. Indicator of Latent Variable**

<b>Variable &amp; Reference</b>	<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Item</b>
Revisit Intention (Abbasi et al., 2021)	Intention	2
	Preference	3
	Propensity	2
<b>Total Item:</b>		<b>7</b>
Social Media Content (Ibrahim et al., 2021; Kim & Ko, 2012)	Interaction	2
	Trendiness	2
	Customization	2
<b>Total Item:</b>		<b>6</b>
Word of Mouth (Hanum et al., 2020; Babin et al., 2005; Yayla, 2007)	Positive Story	3
	Recommendation	2
	Invitation	2
<b>Total Item:</b>		<b>7</b>
Brand Image (Lin & Yin, 2022)	Recognition	3
	Credibility	3
	Reputation	2
<b>Total Item:</b>		<b>8</b>

Table 1 shows a total of 28 indicator items, encompassing the cognitive, affective, and behavioral dimensions of patients, as well as their perceptions of digital and interpersonal marketing communications. These indicators were employed in the quantitative analysis to assess both direct effects and mediating relationships among the study variables.

This study targeted residents of Bali Province who had been exposed to information about private dental practices through social media or interpersonal word of mouth. Due to the absence of reliable data on the total number of exposed individuals, the population was classified as non-finite (unknown). A purposive sampling technique was employed based on the following eligibility criteria: (1) having visited a private dental practice at least once within the past six months; (2) having engaged with digital content on platforms such as Instagram, TikTok, or Facebook; (3) having received direct recommendations; (4) being at least 17 years of age; and (5) providing informed and voluntary consent to participate. Following the recommendation of Hair et al. (2021), which suggests a minimum sample size of 5–10 times the number of indicators, a minimum threshold of 120 respondents was established to ensure adequate statistical power.

Primary data were collected through an online questionnaire distributed via Google Forms to facilitate broad geographical coverage across Bali. The measurement instrument was developed based on the conceptual framework, and all constructs were operationalized using a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) to capture respondents' perceptions and attitudes. The research model comprised four constructs: Social Media Content, Word of Mouth, Brand Image, and Revisit Intention.

Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 4.0, selected for its suitability in prediction-oriented research and its robustness with relatively small sample sizes. The analysis followed the two-stage approach proposed by Hair et al. (2021), encompassing assessment of the measurement (outer) model and the structural (inner) model. The measurement model evaluation included indicator reliability (outer loadings  $\geq 0.70$ ), convergent validity (Average Variance Extracted  $\geq 0.50$ ), and internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability  $\geq 0.70$ ). Subsequently, the structural model was

assessed through path coefficient analysis for hypothesis testing. A bootstrapping procedure was further employed to examine indirect effects and to determine the mediating role of Brand Image in the relationship between the exogenous variables and Revisit Intention.

#### 4. Results and Discussion

Respondent characteristics are presented descriptively, with the detailed distribution shown in Table 2.

**Table 2. Respondent Characteristic**

Characteristic	Classification	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	83	63,4%
	Male	48	36,6%
Age	17-28 years old	109	83,2%
	29-44 years old	17	13%
	>44 years old	5	3,8%
Information Sources	Social Media Content	60	45,8%
	Family/Relatives/Friends	71	54,2%
Location of Practice	Denpasar	56	42,7%
	Badung	41	31,3%
	Gianyar	14	10,7%
	Tabanan	8	6,1%
	Bangli	1	0,8%
	Klungkung	1	0,8%
	Karangasem	1	0,8%
	Buleleng	6	4,6%
Jembrana	3	2,3%	

From Table 2, it can be seen that the study measured each latent variable using multiple indicators, with items for Revisit Intention, Social Media Content, Word of Mouth, and Brand Image detailed along with their respective reference sources. The participants' demographic profile shows that the majority are female (63.4%), with most respondents falling within the 17–28-year age range (83.2%). In terms of information sources, slightly more than half reported receiving information about private dental practices through interpersonal channels, such as family, relatives, and friends (54.2%), while the remaining 45.8% cited social media content as their primary source.

Geographically, respondents were predominantly from Denpasar City (42.7%) and Badung Regency (31.3%), followed by Gianyar (10.7%) and Tabanan (6.1%). Smaller proportions were from Buleleng (4.6%) and Jembrana (2.3%), with Bangli, Klungkung, and Karangasem Regencies each representing 0.8% of the sample. This distribution reflects a strong representation of urban and suburban areas within Bali Province, particularly in the Sarbagita region, which comprises Denpasar, Badung, Gianyar, and Tabanan.

#### Outer Model

The outer model was assessed to evaluate the validity and reliability of the constructs. Convergent validity was examined through outer loadings and Average Variance Extracted (AVE), while reliability was assessed using Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha. Discriminant validity was evaluated through cross-loadings and the Heterotrait–Monotrait (HTMT) ratio. Initial

results indicated that all indicators for each construct had outer loadings above 0.70, with some falling in the 0.40–0.70 range, which is still considered acceptable according to Hair et al. (2021). However, the HTMT assessment revealed that several construct pairs exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.90, suggesting potential overlap among constructs. This finding highlights the need for further examination of the indicators contributing to this issue to ensure the distinctiveness of the constructs.

Figure 3 illustrates the final measurement model following the removal of indicators BI1.3 and BI3.2 from the Brand Image construct. These items were eliminated due to potential conceptual overlap with the Word of Mouth construct. Although their outer loadings remained within acceptable limits, their removal enhanced discriminant validity. Subsequently, all HTMT values fell below the 0.90 threshold, confirming that the measurement model meets the criteria for discriminant validity.

**Convergent Validity Test**

Convergent validity was assessed for all construct indicators. Following Hair et al. (2021), an indicator is considered valid if its factor loading exceeds 0.70; however, loadings between 0.50 and 0.70 are still acceptable, particularly when the construct demonstrates adequate overall reliability and validity. Additionally, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all constructs surpassed the minimum threshold of 0.50, confirming satisfactory convergent validity.

**Table 3. Convergent Validity**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Item's code</b>	<b>Outer Loading</b>	<b>AVE</b>
<b>Revisit Intention (Y)</b>	RI 1.1	0,787	0.644
	RI 1.2	0,785	
	RI 2.1	0,825	
	RI 2.2	0,779	
	RI 2.3	0,858	
	RI 3.1	0,799	
	RI 3.2	0,781	
<b>Social media Content (X1)</b>	KMS 1.1	0,808	0.613
	KMS 1.2	0,758	
	KMS 2.1	0,846	
	KMS 2.2	0,676	
	KMS 3.1	0,730	
	KMS 3.2	0,862	
<b>Word of Mouth (X2)</b>	WOM 1.1	0,721	0.569
	WOM 1.2	0,718	
	WOM 1.3	0,828	
	WOM 2.1	0,788	
	WOM 2.2	0,817	
	WOM 3.1	0,614	
	WOM 3.2	0,771	
<b>Brand Image (M)</b>	BI 1.1	0,800	0.579
	BI 1.2	0,653	
	BI 2.1	0,784	

Variable	Item's code	Outer Loading	AVE
	BI 2.2	0,798	
	BI 2.3	0,702	
	BI 3.1	0,814	

The evaluation of the measurement model, as detailed in Table 2, demonstrates robust psychometric properties across all constructs. Within the Revisit Intention construct, the indicators with the highest factor loadings are RI 2.3 (0.858) and RI 2.1 (0.825), both representing the *preference to revisit* dimension, followed by RI 3.1 (0.799). Conversely, RI 1.2 (0.785) and RI 3.2 (0.781) exhibit relatively lower loadings. This pattern suggests that the intention to return is primarily driven by elective preference and psychological commitment rather than general behavioral intent.

For the Social Media Content construct, the most influential indicators are KMS 3.2 (0.862) and KMS 2.1 (0.846), followed by KMS 1.1 (0.808). These findings confirm that content personalization and perceived relevance are the dominant drivers in shaping patient perceptions. In contrast, KMS 2.2 (0.676) and KMS 3.1 (0.730) show lower loadings, indicating that following digital trends is less critical than the informativeness and utility of the content.

Regarding Word of Mouth (WOM), the most dominant indicators are WOM 1.3 (0.828) and WOM 2.2 (0.817), followed by WOM 2.1 (0.788), highlighting the significant role of positive storytelling and personal advocacy. Conversely, WOM 3.1 (0.614) and WOM 1.2 (0.718) provide lower contributions, implying that authentic experiential narratives are more effective than direct invitations in influencing patient loyalty.

Similarly, for the Brand Image construct, the strongest indicators are BI 3.1 (0.814), BI 2.2 (0.798), and BI 2.1 (0.784), underscoring that reputation and credibility are the primary pillars of private dental practice image formation. Indicators BI 1.2 (0.653) and BI 2.3 (0.702) are relatively lower, suggesting that brand recognition alone is insufficient without a foundation of positive perceived reputation.

Furthermore, Table 2 illustrates that all constructs satisfy the criteria for convergent validity, with Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values exceeding the 0.50 threshold: Revisit Intention (0.644), Social Media Content (0.613), Word of Mouth (0.569), and Brand Image (0.579). This signifies that each construct accounts for more than 50% of its indicators' variance (Hair et al., 2021). While certain indicators (e.g., WOM 3.1 and BI 1.2) exhibit loading values below 0.70, they were retained due to their strong theoretical relevance in representing their respective dimensions. Since the overall AVE and reliability coefficients remain high, the inclusion of these indicators does not compromise the model's integrity. Consequently, the measurement model fulfills the requirements for validity and reliability, justifying the subsequent analysis of the structural model (inner model).

### Reliability Test

As presented in Table 3, construct reliability was assessed by examining internal consistency through Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability ( $\rho_A$  and  $\rho_C$ ). A construct is considered reliable when both Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values meet or exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2021).

**Table 4. Reliability Test**

Variable	CA	ρA	ρC
BI (M)	0.853	0.856	0.891
KMS (X1)	0.872	0.879	0.904
RI (Y)	0.908	0.911	0.927
WOM (X2)	0.872	0.880	0.902

Based on Table 4, all constructs meet the established reliability criteria, with Cronbach’s Alpha ranging from 0.853 to 0.908 and Composite Reliability (ρC) ranging from 0.891 to 0.927. These results confirm that all indicators demonstrate strong internal consistency, indicating that the measurement model is reliable and suitable for subsequent validity testing and structural analysis.

**Discriminant Validity Test**

Discriminant validity was assessed to ensure that each construct in the model is both conceptually distinct and empirically differentiable. Following the recommendations of Hair et al. (2021), the evaluation employed the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio as well as cross-loadings. The results are presented in Table 4, confirming that all constructs meet the criteria for discriminant validity.

**Table 5. Discriminant Validity Test – HTMT**

	M	X1	Y	X2
BI (M)				
KMS (X1)	0.749			
RI (Y)	0.805	0.612		
WOM (X2)	0.889	0.714	0.801	

Based on Table 5, all HTMT values for construct pairs are below the 0.90 threshold. This indicates that each latent variable is sufficiently distinct and that no conceptual overlap exists between constructs. Consequently, the model meets the criteria for discriminant validity according to the HTMT approach.

**Table 6. Discriminant Validity Test - Cross Loadings**

Indicators	M	X1	Y	X2
BI 2.1	0.784	0.512	0.508	0.567
BI 1.1	0.800	0.486	0.521	0.628
BI 1.2	0.653	0.344	0.606	0.530
BI 2.2	0.798	0.552	0.493	0.684
BI 2.3	0.702	0.564	0.469	0.511
BI 3.1	0.814	0.490	0.655	0.617
KMS 1.1	0.589	0.808	0.399	0.570
KMS 1.2	0.524	0.758	0.355	0.504
KMS 2.1	0.515	0.846	0.471	0.509
KMS 2.2	0.372	0.676	0.423	0.362
KMS 3.1	0.496	0.730	0.385	0.489
KMS 3.2	0.519	0.862	0.522	0.512
RI 1.1	0.472	0.430	0.787	0.527
RI 1.2	0.551	0.408	0.785	0.525
RI 2.1	0.691	0.430	0.825	0.625
RI 2.2	0.567	0.541	0.779	0.570

RI 2.3	0.603	0.490	0.858	0.625
RI 3.1	0.601	0.384	0.799	0.601
RI 3.2	0.497	0.375	0.781	0.533
WOM 3.1	0.345	0.301	0.449	0.614
WOM 1.1	0.527	0.393	0.574	0.721
WOM 1.2	0.625	0.606	0.494	0.718
WOM 1.3	0.683	0.530	0.509	0.828
WOM 2.1	0.581	0.388	0.596	0.788
WOM 2.2	0.628	0.533	0.524	0.817
WOM 3.2	0.654	0.536	0.623	0.771

Based on Table 6, the cross-loading analysis revealed that all indicators loaded highest on their respective constructs compared to other constructs. Although some inter-construct correlations were moderately high, the loadings on the intended constructs remained dominant, confirming that each indicator empirically represents its designated construct.

Overall, the results of both the HTMT and cross-loading assessments indicate that the measurement model satisfies the criteria for discriminant validity. Consequently, all constructs in this study are adequately distinct and suitable for inclusion in the structural model analysis.

### Inner Model

The inner model was evaluated to examine the relationships between exogenous and endogenous latent variables in the research model. The analysis included multicollinearity testing (VIF), goodness-of-fit measures ( $R^2$  and  $Q^2$ ), and effect size ( $f^2$ ) to assess the contribution and strength of the variables' effects (Hair et al., 2021).

### Multicollinearity Test (VIF)

Multicollinearity was assessed using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF), with the model considered free of multicollinearity if VIF values were below 5. Table 6 presents the VIF values for each path in the research model.

**Table 7. Multicollinearity Test**

Relationships Among Variables	VIF
BI (M) → RI (Y)	2.818
KMS (X1) → BI (M)	1.661
KMS (X1) → RI (Y)	1.847
WOM (X2) → BI (M)	1.661
WOM (X2) → RI (Y)	2.731

Based on Table 7, the highest VIF values were observed for the paths from Brand Image to Revisit Intention (2.818) and from Word of Mouth to Revisit Intention (2.731). Despite being the highest, these values are well below the threshold of 5, indicating that the model is free from multicollinearity. This confirms that each exogenous variable contributes uniquely to explaining the endogenous variable, allowing hypothesis testing to proceed reliably.

### Goodness of Fit ( $R^2$ and $Q^2$ )

Table 7 presents the results for the Coefficient of Determination ( $R^2$ ) and Predictive Relevance ( $Q^2$ ) of the endogenous constructs. The  $R^2$  value quantifies the variance in each endogenous construct explained by its respective exogenous predictors, while  $Q^2$  evaluates the structural

model's capability to predict observed values. The substantial values obtained for both metrics demonstrate that the model possess robust predictive power and establishes a solid empirical foundation for subsequent hypothesis testing.

**Table 8. R<sup>2</sup> and Q<sup>2</sup>**

Endogenous Variables	R <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	Q <sup>2</sup>
BI (M)	0.645	0.640	0.361
RI (Y)	0.578	0.569	0.362

As shown in Table 8, Brand Image yielded an R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.645, indicating that 64.5% of its variance is explained by Social Media Content (KMS) and WOM. This reflects substantial explanatory power within the structural model. Revisit Intention produced an R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.578, meaning that 57.8% of its variance is explained by Brand Image, Social Media Content, and Word of Mouth, indicating a moderate to substantial level of explanatory strength.

In addition, the Q<sup>2</sup> values for Brand Image (0.361) and Revisit Intention (0.362) are both greater than zero, confirming the model's predictive relevance in line with the criteria proposed by Hair et al. (2021). Overall, these results demonstrate that the structural model possesses satisfactory explanatory power and predictive capability, thereby providing a robust empirical foundation for subsequent hypothesis testing.

**Effect Size Analysis (f<sup>2</sup>)**

The effect size (f<sup>2</sup>) measures the relative contribution of each exogenous variable to the model's R<sup>2</sup>. Following Hair et al. (2021), the effects are classified as: f<sup>2</sup> ≥ 0.35 = large, 0.15 ≤ f<sup>2</sup> < 0.35 = medium, 0.02 ≤ f<sup>2</sup> < 0.15 = small, and f<sup>2</sup> < 0.02 = negligible. This evaluation helps identify the dominant paths within the structural model.

**Table 9. f<sup>2</sup> Results**

Variable Relationships	f <sup>2</sup>	Interpretation
BI (M)→RI (Y)	0.120	Weak
KMS (X1)→BI (M)	0.112	Weak
KMS (X1)→RI (Y)	0.004	Very Weak
WOM (X2)→BI (M)	0.644	Large
WOM (X2)→RI (Y)	0.130	Weak

As presented in Table 9, WOM is the most influential driver of Brand Image, exerting a substantial effect (f<sup>2</sup> = 0.644). In contrast, the remaining paths exhibit relatively small effects. Notably, Social Media Content demonstrates a negligible direct effect on Revisit Intention (f<sup>2</sup> = 0.004), suggesting that its impact occurs primarily through the mediation of Brand Image. These results underscore the hierarchical significance of interpersonal communication and brand perception within the structural model, confirming that WOM plays a dominant role while social media contributes indirectly by shaping Brand Image.

The findings reinforce the integration of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE). Word of Mouth, reflecting subjective norms in TPB, exerts the strongest influence on patients' revisit intention, underscoring its credibility and persuasive power in healthcare contexts. In contrast, Social Media Content affects revisit intention indirectly by shaping Brand Image, which serves both as an attitudinal construct in TPB and a central mechanism in CBBE. This hierarchy highlights that interpersonal communication remains the most trusted driver, while digital communication plays a complementary role in strengthening brand equity.

From a managerial perspective, private dental practices should encourage satisfied patients to share positive experiences to amplify WOM, while strategically using social media to build credibility and reinforce Brand Image. Integrating interpersonal WOM with consistent, informative, and personalized digital content will enhance patient loyalty and sustain revisit intention.

**Hypothesis Test Results**

The following are the results of the hypothesis testing, as detailed in Table 10.

**Table 10. Path Coefficients**

Path	(O)	(M)	(STDEV)	T Statistics	P Values
X1→RI	0.155	0.162	0.085	1.818	0.069
X2→Y	0.619	0.621	0.081	7.609	0.000
M→Y	0.377	0.362	0.121	3.123	0.002
X1→M	0.257	0.266	0.102	2.511	0.012
X2→M	0.616	0.609	0.095	6.510	0.000
X1→M→Y	0.097	0.096	0.049	1.985	0.047
X2→M→Y	0.232	0.219	0.078	2.962	0.003

Hypothesis testing was conducted based on the results presented in Table 9. The analysis revealed that the direct effect of Social Media Content on Revisit Intention was positive yet failed to reach statistical significance (coefficient = 0.155; t = 1.818; p = 0.069). This finding suggests that exposure to digital content alone is insufficient to directly drive patients' revisit intention. This outcome corroborates the findings of Bawono and Subagio (2025) as well as Poluan et al. (2022), who reported that social media or content marketing does not always exert a significant effect on repeat behavioral intention in the context of high-risk services.

In contrast, Word of Mouth demonstrated a strong and highly significant positive effect on Revisit Intention (coefficient = 0.619; t = 7.609; p = 0.000). This finding underscores the pivotal role of interpersonal recommendations in shaping revisit decisions. Information derived from real experiences tends to be perceived as more credible, effectively mitigating perceived risk and bolstering patient trust. This result aligns with the Theory of Planned Behavior and is reinforced by the work of Abutar and Wuisan (2024), Saragih and Said (2024), and Irdan et al. (2024).

Furthermore, Brand Image was found to exert a significant positive influence on Revisit Intention (coefficient = 0.377; t = 3.123; p = 0.002). This indicates that favorable perceptions of the practice enhance patients' willingness to return, a finding consistent with the research of Kurniawati et al. (2025), Irdan et al. (2024), and Suparno and Aksari (2023).

Regarding the antecedents of brand perception, Social Media Content was found to positively influence Brand Image (coefficient = 0.257; t = 2.511; p = 0.012), a result supported by Cham et al. (2020) and Hariyanti et al. (2023). However, Word of Mouth exerted a considerably stronger effect on Brand Image (coefficient = 0.616; t = 6.510; p = 0.000), which is consistent with the study by Hanum et al. (2020). This finding reaffirms the predominant role of interpersonal communication in shaping brand perception.

Mediation analysis revealed that Social Media Content affects Revisit Intention indirectly through Brand Image (coefficient = 0.097; t = 1.985; p = 0.047; VAF = 38.5%). Similarly, Word of Mouth operates indirectly on Revisit Intention via Brand Image (coefficient = 0.232; t = 2.962; p = 0.003; VAF = 27.3%). Based on the criteria established by Nitzl et al. (2016), these VAF values indicate

partial mediation in both cases, suggesting that Brand Image serves as a significant mechanism through which both antecedents influence revisit intention.

In summary, these findings demonstrate that Word of Mouth exerts a dominant influence on Revisit Intention, both directly and indirectly. Conversely, Social Media Content contributes to revisit intention primarily through its impact on Brand Image. This study provides empirical support for the application of Customer-Based Brand Equity and the Theory of Planned Behavior in understanding patient behavior within the context of high-risk dental practices.

## **Discussion**

The results of this study demonstrate that Word of Mouth plays a dominant role in influencing patients' revisit intention toward dental practices. Interpersonal recommendations originating from family members, friends, or previous patients tend to be perceived as more trustworthy and convincing than promotional messages delivered through digital platforms. In the context of healthcare services, particularly dental care, patients generally face higher levels of perceived risk because treatment outcomes are closely related to health, comfort, and financial considerations. Consequently, prospective patients rely heavily on the experiences and opinions of others before making decisions to return for treatment. This finding is in line with the Theory of Planned Behavior proposed by Ajzen (1991), which emphasizes that subjective norms and social influence significantly shape behavioral intention. The result also supports previous studies by Abutar and Wuisan (2024), Saragih and Said (2024), as well as Irdan et al. (2024), who concluded that positive word of mouth significantly encourages revisit intention because it strengthens trust, reduces uncertainty, and shapes favorable attitudes toward service providers. The importance of interpersonal communication in healthcare contexts is also reinforced by Huete-Alcocer (2017), who explained that consumers tend to rely more strongly on electronic and traditional word of mouth when evaluating intangible and high-risk services. Similarly, Wibowo and Junaedi (2019) emphasized that positive patient experiences can stimulate favorable word of mouth, which subsequently strengthens loyalty and long-term behavioral intention toward dental clinics.

In contrast, Social Media Content was found to have a positive but insignificant direct effect on revisit intention. This finding indicates that although social media platforms are widely used as marketing channels, exposure to promotional content alone may not be sufficient to directly encourage patients to revisit dental practices. Dental services are categorized as high-involvement and high-risk services, meaning that patients generally require stronger assurance beyond attractive digital content before deciding to return. Information delivered through social media may increase awareness and interest; however, revisit decisions are more likely to depend on perceived credibility, trust, and prior service experiences. This finding supports the arguments of Bawono and Subagio (2025) as well as Poluan et al. (2022), who reported that social media marketing does not always directly translate into repeat behavioral intention. In the healthcare sector, patients often seek reassurance through personal experiences and recommendations rather than relying solely on online promotional content. This condition is particularly relevant in dental practices, where treatment decisions are closely associated with anxiety, perceived treatment quality, and trust in professional competence. The findings also align with the observations of Taneja et al. (2022), who argued that social media influences treatment awareness and information search behavior, yet actual treatment decisions are still shaped by deeper psychological and relational factors. Moreover, Wilopo and Nuralam (2025) highlighted that social media marketing often affects revisit intention

indirectly through mediating variables such as trust, image, or satisfaction rather than through a direct mechanism.

The findings further reveal that Brand Image significantly influences revisit intention. This result suggests that favorable perceptions regarding professionalism, credibility, service quality, and overall reputation of the dental practice contribute substantially to patients' willingness to return for future treatment. A strong brand image reduces uncertainty and creates emotional assurance, particularly in healthcare settings where patients prioritize safety and trustworthiness. This finding is consistent with the Customer-Based Brand Equity theory introduced by Keller (1993), which explains that positive brand associations strengthen customer loyalty and behavioral intention. When patients perceive a dental practice as reliable, modern, professional, and capable of delivering satisfactory treatment outcomes, they are more likely to revisit the clinic in the future. The result is also supported by studies conducted by Kurniawati et al. (2025), Suparno and Aksari (2023), as well as Rodrigues et al. (2024), all of whom demonstrated that brand image plays an important role in strengthening revisit intention across service industries. In healthcare services specifically, brand image reflects not only marketing communication but also patients' accumulated perceptions regarding treatment quality, professionalism, and emotional comfort. This explanation is further supported by Lin and Yin (2022), who found that brand image and perceived value significantly influence patient loyalty in private dental clinics.

Regarding the antecedents of brand image, the results indicate that Social Media Content positively contributes to the formation of brand image. This finding demonstrates that social media serves as an important communication channel for building awareness, visibility, and favorable perceptions toward dental practices. Informative and visually appealing content may strengthen patients' perceptions regarding professionalism, service quality, technological advancement, and credibility of healthcare providers. Social media platforms enable dental practices to educate patients, showcase treatment results, and create interactive communication, thereby contributing to stronger brand associations. This finding supports the work of Cham et al. (2020), who argued that digital communication activities can strengthen hospital and healthcare brand image. Similar conclusions were reported by Hariyanti et al. (2023) as well as Harvina et al. (2022), who demonstrated that social media marketing positively influences brand image and consumer perceptions. Furthermore, Aditi et al. (2023) emphasized that social media communication can improve public perception and stimulate favorable attitudes toward brands when the content is perceived as relevant, informative, and engaging.

However, Word of Mouth was found to exert a substantially stronger influence on Brand Image than Social Media Content. This result indicates that brand perceptions in healthcare services are more strongly shaped by interpersonal experiences and recommendations than by promotional communication. Patients tend to perceive information originating from real experiences as more authentic and credible because it reflects direct service encounters rather than organizational self-promotion. Positive recommendations from previous patients therefore contribute significantly to the establishment of a trustworthy and reputable brand image. This finding supports the study conducted by Hanum et al. (2020), who concluded that word of mouth strongly shapes brand image because consumers value experiential information when evaluating service providers. The findings are also consistent with the arguments of Putri and Munas (2023), who demonstrated that word of mouth contributes significantly to the formation of brand image in service and consumer contexts. In healthcare environments, where uncertainty and perceived risk are relatively high, interpersonal communication becomes particularly influential because patients prioritize reassurance from trusted social networks before forming perceptions about service quality and credibility.

The mediation analysis further demonstrates that Brand Image functions as a significant mediating mechanism in the relationship between Social Media Content and Revisit Intention. This finding indicates that social media marketing activities are more effective when they successfully strengthen positive brand perceptions rather than directly attempting to encourage revisit behavior. In other words, social media content contributes indirectly to revisit intention by enhancing perceptions of professionalism, trustworthiness, and service excellence. This result confirms that digital communication alone may not immediately drive behavioral intention in healthcare settings unless it first establishes a strong and favorable brand image. The finding is consistent with the studies of Ibrahim et al. (2021), who explained that social media marketing influences revisit intention indirectly through relational variables such as brand trust and loyalty. Similar evidence was reported by Suparno and Aksari (2023), who found that brand image mediates the relationship between electronic word of mouth and revisit intention. The mediation mechanism identified in this study therefore confirms the strategic importance of developing strong brand perceptions as an intermediary process between marketing communication and patient behavioral intention.

Similarly, Brand Image was also found to mediate the relationship between Word of Mouth and Revisit Intention. This result suggests that positive interpersonal recommendations not only directly encourage patients to revisit dental practices but also strengthen favorable perceptions regarding the clinic's reputation and credibility, which subsequently reinforce revisit intention. Patients who repeatedly receive positive information from trusted individuals are more likely to develop strong brand associations and emotional confidence toward the dental practice. This finding supports the explanation of Customer-Based Brand Equity theory proposed by Keller (1993), which posits that strong and favorable brand associations enhance customer loyalty and behavioral outcomes. The result is also consistent with studies by Kurniawati et al. (2025) as well as Rodrigues et al. (2024), who demonstrated that brand image serves as an important pathway through which external communication influences revisit behavior. The mediation effect identified in this study therefore confirms that the impact of word of mouth extends beyond direct persuasion because it also shapes cognitive and emotional perceptions toward the healthcare provider.

Overall, the findings of this study confirm that revisit intention in dental practices is strongly influenced by relational and perceptual factors rather than promotional exposure alone. Word of Mouth emerged as the most influential determinant because patients rely heavily on trusted interpersonal communication when evaluating healthcare services characterized by high perceived risk and uncertainty. Meanwhile, Social Media Content contributes more effectively through its ability to strengthen Brand Image rather than through direct persuasion. These findings provide empirical support for the integration of the Theory of Planned Behavior proposed by Ajzen (1991) and Customer-Based Brand Equity theory developed by Keller (1993) in explaining patient behavior within healthcare services. The results also highlight the strategic importance for dental practices to prioritize patient experience, trust-building, and reputation management in addition to maintaining active digital communication strategies.

## **5. Conclusion**

This study establishes Word of Mouth (WOM) as the most influential determinant of patient revisit intention, exerting both direct and indirect effects within the structural model. In contrast, Social Media Content does not exhibit a significant direct impact but contributes indirectly by enhancing Brand Image. These findings reinforce the applicability of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE), demonstrating that communication strategies

shape behavioral intentions through normative influence and perceptual brand evaluation mechanisms. Managerially, the results suggest that private dental practices should prioritize initiatives that stimulate positive WOM, particularly by encouraging satisfied patients to share their experiences. Social media, while not directly driving revisit intention, should be strategically utilized to strengthen credibility, maintain brand consistency, and amplify interpersonal recommendations. By positioning Brand Image as a pivotal mediating construct, this study advances prior research that has predominantly centered on trust as the principal explanatory variable. Furthermore, it extends the integration of TPB and CBBE into the context of small-scale healthcare services in Bali, offering empirically grounded insights into patient loyalty formation and sustainable competitive positioning.

This study is limited to private dental practices in Bali Province, which may constrain the generalizability of the findings. The use of purposive sampling further limits representativeness, as the results may not fully reflect the broader population of dental patients. Additionally, the research focuses solely on WOM, Social Media Content, and Brand Image, excluding other potentially influential factors such as trust, perceived service quality, or patient satisfaction.

Future research could expand the scope to include larger healthcare institutions or conduct cross-regional comparisons to test the robustness of the proposed model. Researchers may also incorporate additional mediating variables, such as trust or perceived service quality, to gain deeper insights into revisit behavior. Employing longitudinal designs would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how WOM and social media strategies influence revisit intention over time.

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