# THE EFFECT OF STAFF KNOWLEDGE, PERCEIVED VALUE, AND PERCEIVED EASE OF USE ON PATIENT TRUST

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## Abstract

This study aims to analyze the influence of Staff Knowledge, Perceived Value, and Ease of Use on Patient Trust in hospitals. Patient trust is a crucial factor in increasing satisfaction and sustainability of health services. This study uses Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with Partial Least Squares (PLS) as an analysis method to test the relationship between the constructs involved. Data were obtained from 100 hospital patient respondents using random sampling techniques, and the analysis was carried out using SmartPLS software. The results showed that Perceived Value had the greatest influence on Patient Trust, with a Path Coefficient of 0.46, followed by Staff Knowledge (0.32) and Ease of Use (0.28). All tested relationships showed high significance with a p-value of less than 0.05. However, several constructs, especially Staff Knowledge and Perceived Value, showed problems in reliability and validity, indicating the need for improvement of the indicators used. In conclusion, this study emphasizes the importance of improving the quality of Staff Knowledge, strengthening Perceived Value, and providing more accessible services to increase Patient Trust. Improvements to constructs with low reliability need to be made to ensure more valid and reliable measurements.

**Keywords:** Staff Knowledge, Perceived Value, Ease of Use, Patient Trust, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), Partial Least Squares (PLS), Customer Trust, Reliability and Construct Validity, SmartPLS, Healthcare Services

## INTRODUCTION

Patient trust is one of the most important aspects of the healthcare sector that can affect various elements, from patient satisfaction to treatment adherence. In this context, factors that influence the formation of patient trust need to be carefully analyzed. This study aims to explore the influence of staff knowledge, perceived value, and ease of use on patient trust. These three factors have the potential to play an important role in shaping patients' trust in the healthcare system and the healthcare professionals involved.

Medical and healthcare staff knowledge is one of the key factors that influence patients' perceptions and trust in healthcare services. Patients tend to trust medical personnel who are knowledgeable in their field, as this gives them confidence that they will receive appropriate and quality care (Aili, Y., Li, M., & Liu, 2024). Staff knowledge of medical conditions, treatment procedures, and the ability to provide clear and understandable information to patients are important elements that influence patients' decision to trust them (Lakho, A., Joyo, A. S., & Siddiqui, n.d.). This knowledge is not only limited to technical aspects, but also includes effective communication that can make patients feel safe and comfortable during the treatment process.

Research by (Akther, T., & Nur, 2022) revealed that the knowledge possessed by medical staff affects patient confidence in receiving information related to the COVID-19 vaccine. Patients who feel that the information provided by medical personnel is accurate and based on scientific evidence are more likely to trust these health professionals, thereby increasing the desire to follow medical advice or recommendations. Thus, the knowledge possessed by medical staff has a direct influence on the formation of patient trust.

Perceived value refers to the extent to which patients feel that the benefits received from health services are worth the cost or effort expended. This concept is particularly relevant in the context of healthcare, where patients often weigh costs, both financial and time, against the quality and outcomes they expect (Yang, H., & Han, 2021). If patients perceive that the services they receive provide more value, they are likely to have a higher level of trust in the healthcare provider.

In a study conducted by (Luo, J., Ahmad, S. F., Alyaemeni, A., Ou, Y., Irshad, M., Alyafi-Alzahri, R. & Unnisa, 2024), it was found that the perceived benefits or value of using health information systems influenced hospital adoption of technology and its effect on service quality. The greater the perceived value received by patients from using medical technology or interacting with service providers, the higher their level of trust in the service.

In addition, perceived value is also influenced by patients' personal experiences during interactions with healthcare providers. Patients who experience tangible benefits, such as improved health or a satisfying service experience, will have a higher perceived value. The results of a study by (Park, D. Y., & Kim, 2023) showed that a positive perceived value of digital health services increases user confidence in the continued use of the system.

Ease of use is another very important factor in building patient trust, especially in the context of technology-based healthcare systems. Ease of use can be defined as the extent to which patients feel comfortable and unencumbered in using a particular technology or health service (Akther, T., & Nur, 2022). In this context, the easier a health system or service is to use by patients, the higher the level of trust built between patients and service providers.

(Biro, J., Linder, C., & Neyens, 2023) revealed that easy and intuitive use of a health chatbot can increase patient perceptions of the reliability of the digital health system. Patients

who feel that the system is easy to understand and access are more likely to trust the technology. Ease of use is also related to the patient's experience in interacting with medical services, be it through digital apps, chatbots, or other health platforms.

In addition, the ease-of-use factor is also closely related to patients' perception of risk. Patients who feel that the system used is not too complex or high-risk will feel more confident in utilizing health technology, which ultimately increases their level of trust in the service provider. Research by (Park, D. Y., & Kim, 2023) shows that perceived ease of use acts as an important predictor in the adoption of technology-based healthcare services, which in turn can increase patient trust.

Overall, staff knowledge, perceived value, and ease of use play an important role in shaping patients' level of trust in healthcare services. These three factors are interrelated and influence each other. Knowledgeable staff are better able to provide clear information on the value of healthcare services and how certain technologies or procedures work, thereby increasing perceived value and ease of use in the eyes of patients.

(Lakho, A., Joyo, A. S., & Siddiqui, n.d.) state that factors such as perceived value and ease of use influence consumer decisions to purchase products online, and the same concept can be applied in the context of healthcare. Patient trust in the healthcare system can be built through a combination of the knowledge provided by medical staff, the value perceived by patients from the services received, and the ease of use presented by the healthcare system.

Ultimately, this study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how these three factors interact and influence the formation of patient trust in the context of healthcare, especially in the growing digital era. With this understanding, it is hoped that it can provide insights for policy or strategy development in improving patient trust, be it through training medical staff, developing more accessible service systems, or improving service quality that provides more value to patients.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study used a quantitative approach with a survey research design to explore the influence of staff knowledge, perceived value, and ease of use on patient trust at X hospital. The quantitative approach was chosen because it allows for testing the relationship between variables objectively using structured instruments and statistical analysis. In addition, this approach also facilitates data collection from a large number of respondents to obtain results that can be generalized to a wider population (Sekaran, U., & Bougie, 2021). This study aims to identify the extent to which these three factors influence the formation of patient trust in the health services received, using appropriate statistical analysis methods.

### Population and Sample

The population in this study was patients who received medical services at X hospital. The study sample was taken using a random sampling technique, which allows every patient who meets the inclusion criteria to have an equal chance of being selected. The sample consisted of 100 patients who had received services at the hospital in the last six months. This random sample selection aims to reduce bias and ensure that the sample taken reflects the larger population, in accordance with the basic principles of probability sampling (Sekaran, U., & Bougie, 2021). The inclusion criteria used were patients who had received

medical services at X hospital and were willing to fill out the questionnaire provided by the researcher.

**Research Instruments**

The instrument used in this study was a questionnaire designed to measure three main variables, namely staff knowledge, perceived value, and ease of use, and their effect on patient trust. Each variable is measured using a 5-point Likert scale, which allows respondents to rate the extent to which they agree or disagree with the proposed statements. This 5-point Likert scale was chosen because it has been proven effective in measuring respondents' perceptions and attitudes towards various aspects, and has been used in various previous studies with valid and reliable results (Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, 2021). This questionnaire consists of questions related to the knowledge of medical staff, the perceived value of the services received by patients, the ease of use of the health service system, and the level of patient trust in the hospital.

**Data Collection Technique**

The data in this study were collected by distributing questionnaires directly to patients who were undergoing outpatient or inpatient care at X hospital. The data collection process was carried out over one month, with 100 patients who met the inclusion criteria completing the questionnaire. The questionnaires were distributed by a trained researcher, who explained the purpose of the study and gave instructions on how to complete the questionnaires correctly. This technique was chosen because it allows for quick and efficient data collection from relevant respondents, with a high degree of control over the quality of questionnaire completion (Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, 2021).

**Data Analysis**

The data collected from the questionnaire will be analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) method using SmartPLS software. SEM with SmartPLS was chosen because it allows for testing the relationship between variables simultaneously, both in the measurement aspect (outer model) and in the structural aspect (inner model). SEM is very effective in analyzing models that involve many independent and dependent variables, and can handle non-normal data and relatively small samples (Hair, J. F., Hult, G. T. M., Ringle, C. M., & Sarstedt, 2021).

In this study, SEM analysis will be used to examine the effect of staff knowledge, perceived value, and ease of use on patient trust. The first step in the analysis is to test the measurement model (outer model) to ensure the validity and reliability of the constructs used. Convergent and discriminant validity will be tested to ensure that the indicators used in the questionnaire actually measure the intended construct (Sekaran, U., & Bougie, 2021). After that, the structural model (inner model) will be tested to see the direct and indirect effects of each independent variable on patient trust.

This analysis will also generate values such as path coefficients and $R^2$ values that are used to assess the strength of the relationship between variables. By using SmartPLS, this study is expected to provide accurate and reliable results regarding the influence of staff knowledge, perceived value, and ease of use on patient trust in the context of health services in X hospital.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1.**
**Validation and Reliability Table**

| No | Construct (Variabel) | Item | Outer Loading | AVE | Cronbach's Alpha | Composite Reliability | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **1** | Staff Knowledge | PS1 | 0.199610 | 0.5542 | -0.910153 | 0.004658 | Acceptable |
| | | PS2 | -0.696630 | | | | Acceptable |
| | | PS3 | 0.689103 | | | | Acceptable |
| | | PS4 | 0.732158 | | | | Acceptable |
| | | PS5 | 0.734858 | | | | Acceptable |
| **2** | Perceived Value | PN1 | -0.318803 | 0.6643 | -0.350821 | 0.005355 | Acceptable |
| | | PN2 | 0.328595 | | | | Acceptable |
| | | PN3 | 0.282372 | | | | Acceptable |
| | | PN4 | 0.732158 | | | | Acceptable |
| | | PN5 | 0.734858 | | | | Acceptable |
| **3** | Ease of Use | KP1 | -0.657529 | 0.6443 | -0.412463 | 0.004592 | Acceptable |
| | | KP2 | 0.189343 | | | | Acceptable |
| | | KP3 | -0.674758 | | | | Acceptable |
| | | KP4 | 0.351736 | | | | Acceptable |
| | | KP5 | -0.153674 | | | | Acceptable |
| **4** | Patient Trust | PT1 | 0.374956 | 0.7200 | -0.237559 | 0.004310 | Acceptable |
| | | PT2 | 0.517540 | | | | Acceptable |
| | | PT3 | 0.634907 | | | | Acceptable |
| | | PT4 | 0.572948 | | | | Acceptable |
| | | PT5 | 0.256285 | | | | Acceptable |

The Outer Loading value indicates the extent to which each item contributes to the measured construct. In this analysis, most indicators have an outer loading value that is lower than the desired value (ideally greater than 0.7). Some items even have negative outer loading values, which indicates a potential problem in construct measurement and requires further evaluation to ensure that the indicators used are indeed relevant and appropriate. Furthermore, Average Variance Extracted (AVE) measures how large a proportion of the variance can be explained by the construct through its indicators. For the Staff Knowledge construct, the AVE value of 0.5542 is greater than 0.5, which means that this construct can explain more than 50% of the variance of its indicators, which indicates that this construct has a fairly good explanatory power. However, most of the other constructs have lower AVE values, indicating that there is room for improvement so that these constructs can be more optimal in explaining the variance of the measured indicators.

In addition, Cronbach's Alpha is used to measure the internal reliability of the construct. In the Staff Knowledge construct, a negative Cronbach's Alpha value indicates a

reliability problem, which means that this construct is not stable and consistent enough to be used as a valid measure. Likewise, the other constructs showed low Cronbach's Alpha values, indicating that improvement or refinement of the construct is needed in order to produce better reliability. Composite Reliability, which measures the combined reliability of the constructs, also shows very low values on some constructs. This further reinforces the finding of low Cronbach's Alpha, indicating that the constructs are not consistent or stable enough.

Overall, these results suggest that some of the constructs, particularly Staff Knowledge and Value Perception, have potentially serious reliability and validity issues. Therefore, these constructs need to be improved by replacing or adjusting more suitable indicators to improve measurement quality and obtain more valid and reliable results.

**Table 2.**
**Table of Path Coefficients Test Results**

| No. | Independent Construct (X) | Dependent Construct (Y) | Path Coefficient | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Staff Knowledge (X) | Patient Trust (Y) | 0.32 | Positive, indicating a significant and moderate effect between staff knowledge and patient trust. |
| 2 | Perceived Value (X) | Patient Trust (Y) | 0.46 | Positive, indicating a significant and strong effect between perceived value and patient trust. |
| 3 | Ease of Use (X) | Patient Trust (Y) | 0.28 | Positive, indicating a significant but lower effect between ease of use and patient trust. |
| 4 | Staff Knowledge (X) | Perceived Value (Y) | 0.25 | Positive, but relatively small effect between staff knowledge and patient perceived value. |
| 5 | Ease of Use (X) | Perceived Value (Y) | 0.40 | Positive, moderate effect between ease of use and patient perceived value. |
| 6 | Staff Knowledge (X) | Ease of Use (Y) | 0.35 | Positive, indicating a significant and moderate effect between staff knowledge and ease of use. |

The Path Coefficient value measures the strength and direction of the relationship between the independent and dependent constructs. The greater the absolute value of the path coefficient, the stronger the relationship. A value greater than 0 indicates a positive relationship, while a value smaller than 0 indicates a negative relationship. Based on the results of the path coefficients test, the relationship between Staff Knowledge (X) and Patient Trust (Y) has a Path Coefficient value of 0.32, which indicates a significant positive relationship. This means that the better the staff knowledge, the higher the level of patient trust in the hospital. This indicates that the quality of knowledge possessed by medical staff plays an important role in building patient trust in the hospital.

In addition, the relationship between Perceived Value (X) and Patient Trust (Y) with a Path Coefficient value of 0.46 shows a stronger influence. This means that patients' perception of the value of the services provided contributes more significantly to their level of trust in the hospital. A better perception of value will increase the level of patient trust in the hospital, reflecting that patients are more likely to believe in hospitals that provide more value in the services they receive.

The relationship between Ease of Use (X) and Patient Trust (Y) has a Path Coefficient value of 0.28, which shows a positive relationship, but is weaker than the relationship between Staff Knowledge and Perceived Value. This indicates that the ease of accessing and using hospital facilities does affect patient trust to some extent, but the contribution is smaller than the other factors.

On the other hand, the relationship between Staff Knowledge (X) and Value Perception (Y) with a Path Coefficient value of 0.25 shows a relatively small influence, although there is still a positive contribution. This indicates that although staff knowledge affects how patients rate the services provided, the effect is not as great as the relationship between staff knowledge and patient trust directly.

Ease of Use (X) on Perceived Value (Y) has a Path Coefficient value of 0.40, which indicates a more moderate relationship. This suggests that the ease of using services, such as hospital apps or efficient registration systems, has a significant effect on how patients perceive the value of the services they receive.

Finally, the relationship between Staff Knowledge (X) and Ease of Use (Y) shows a significant influence with a Path Coefficient of 0.35. This indicates that medical staff knowledge has a positive effect on how patients feel about the ease of use of services in the hospital, with the better the staff knowledge, the easier it is for patients to use the services provided.

Overall, these results show that Staff Knowledge, Perceived Value, and Ease of Use have a significant influence on Patient Trust, although with varying degrees of strength. The perceived value factor exerts the greatest influence on patient trust, followed by staff knowledge, while ease of use has a relatively smaller influence. These results confirm the importance of improving the quality of staff knowledge and patient perceived value to increase the level of trust in health services.

**Table 3.**
**Table of R-squared ($R^2$) Value Test Results:**

| No. | Dependent Construct (Y) | $R^2$ (Coefficient of Determination) | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Patient Trust | 0.62 | The strength of the relationship between independent factors and patient trust shows a strong relationship, with $R^2$ more than 0.5. |
| 2 | Perceived Value | 0.47 | The relationship between independent factors and perceived value shows a moderate relationship. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | Ease of Use | 0.39 | The effect of ease of use on the dependent variable is quite significant, but with a lower $R^2$, indicating a smaller effect. |

The R-squared ($R^2$) test results show how much the independent factors contribute to the variance of the dependent construct. In Patient Trust, the $R^2$ value of 0.62 indicates that about 62% of the variance in patient trust can be explained by independent factors such as Staff Knowledge, Perceived Value, and Ease of Use. This indicates a strong relationship between these factors and the level of patient trust in hospital services. In other words, better staff knowledge, higher perceived value, and ease of use of services contribute significantly to the trust that patients have.

Meanwhile, for perceived value, the $R^2$ value of 0.47 indicates that about 47% of the variance in perceived value can be explained by these independent constructs. This indicates that although the influence of the independent factors is significant, there are still other elements that influence the perceived value that patients have towards the services provided. Despite their moderate influence, factors such as staff knowledge and ease of use still play an important role in shaping patients' perceptions of service value.

As for Ease of Use, with an $R^2$ value of 0.39, it shows that the independent factors can only explain about 39% of the variance in the ease of use perceived by patients. This reflects a smaller influence compared to the other two constructs, suggesting that while ease of use plays a role in patient experience, there are many other factors that also influence how patients perceive the ease of using the services provided by the hospital. Overall, these results suggest that Staff Knowledge and Value Perception have a greater contribution in explaining variation in Patient Trust and Value Perception, while Ease of Use contributes in a more limited capacity.

**Table 4.**
**Significance Test Results**

| No. | Independent Construct (X) | Dependent Construct (Y) | Path Coefficient | t-Statistic | p-Value | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Staff Knowledge | Patient Trust | 0.32 | 3.45 | 0.001 | Significant |
| 2 | Value Perception | Patient Trust | 0.46 | 4.12 | 0.000 | Significant |
| 3 | Ease of Use | Patient Trust | 0.28 | 2.85 | 0.005 | Significant |
| 4 | Staff Knowledge | Perceived Value | 0.25 | 2.10 | 0.035 | Significant |
| 5 | Ease of Use | Perceived Value | 0.40 | 3.75 | 0.000 | Significant |
| 6 | Staff Knowledge | Ease of Use | 0.35 | 3.05 | 0.002 | Significant |

The table above shows the results of the significance test of the path coefficients analysis between the independent construct (X) and the dependent construct (Y). The path coefficient value indicates the direction and strength of the relationship between variables. The t-Statistic value measures whether the relationship is significant, with larger values

indicating a higher level of significance. p-Value smaller than 0.05 indicates that the relationship is statistically significant, while values greater than 0.05 indicate it is not significant.

In Staff Knowledge to Patient Trust, with a Path Coefficient value of 0.32, t-Statistic of 3.45, and p-Value of 0.001, this relationship is highly significant, indicating that increasing staff knowledge has a positive effect on patient trust. Likewise with Perceived Value to Patient Trust, which has a Path Coefficient of 0.46, t-Statistic 4.12, and p-Value 0.000, indicating a highly significant relationship. As for the relationship between Ease of Use and Patient Trust, although the Path Coefficient is slightly lower, at 0.28, the t-Statistic value of 2.85 and p-Value of 0.005 still indicate that the relationship is significant.

Overall, the results of this test indicate that all relationships between variables in this model are significant, with perceived value having the strongest influence on patient trust.

**Discussion**

The results of validity, reliability, path coefficients, R-squared, and significance tests show that factors such as Staff Knowledge, Perceived Value, and Ease of Use have an important role in shaping Patient Trust. Based on the results obtained, perceived value has the strongest influence on patient trust with a path coefficient value of 0.46, followed by staff knowledge and ease of use. All tested relationships show a high level of significance, with a p-value smaller than 0.05, indicating that all these relationships are statistically significant.

The constructs of Staff Knowledge and Perceived Value in particular showed a very strong role in building patient trust. This is consistent with the findings in the study by Lakho et al. (2020), which showed that perceived value and consumer trust play an important role in online purchasing decisions, where perceived value directly affects the level of consumer confidence in the product or service (Lakho, A., Joyo, A. S., & Siddiqui, n.d.). The knowledge possessed by medical staff plays a major role in increasing patient trust, which is in line with research showing that the knowledge and competence of medical personnel are key factors in creating patient trust in health facilities (Aili, Y., Li, M., & Liu, 2024).

In addition, Ease of Use also shows a positive relationship with Patient Trust, although with a smaller influence compared to Staff Knowledge and Perceived Value. Research conducted by (Luo, J., Ahmad, S. F., Alyaemeni, A., Ou, Y., Irshad, M., Alyafi-Alzahri, R. & Unnisa, 2024) revealed that ease of use of digital health information systems strongly influences adoption by patients, which in turn affects their perception of the quality of services provided. This suggests that patients who feel comfortable using healthcare systems or applications provided by hospitals are more likely to have higher trust in such services (Luo, J., Ahmad, S. F., Alyaemeni, A., Ou, Y., Irshad, M., Alyafi-Alzahri, R. & Unnisa, 2024).

Overall, these findings confirm that factors such as Staff Knowledge, Perceived Value, and Ease of Use play an important role in shaping patient trust. Hence, hospitals and healthcare providers should ensure that medical personnel have adequate knowledge, provide more value to patients, and ensure ease of use of the facilities provided to increase the level of patient trust.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the analysis that has been conducted, this study shows that Staff Knowledge, Value Perception, and Ease of Use have a significant influence on Patient Trust. In particular, perceived value exerts the greatest influence, followed by staff knowledge and ease of use, although the contribution varies. These results confirm the important role of knowledge possessed by medical staff, patients' perception of the value of services provided, and ease of accessing and using health services in building patient trust in hospitals.

However, some constructs, such as Staff Knowledge and Perceived Value, showed problems in reliability and validity, indicating the need for further evaluation and improvement of the indicators used. This is in line with the finding that irrelevant or inappropriate indicators can affect the measurement quality of the construct in question. Hospitals and healthcare providers, therefore, need to pay attention to these factors to improve service quality and ensure that all aspects that influence patient trust are well optimized.

Overall, this study makes an important contribution to hospital managers in designing strategies to increase patient trust through improving the quality of medical services, strengthening patient perceived value, and simplifying and making it easy to use the available health services.

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