

Telemedicine Adoption and Patient Satisfaction: The Moderating Role of Internet Accessibility

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Abstract:

The rapid advancement of digital healthcare technologies has transformed the delivery of medical services worldwide. Among these innovations, telemedicine has emerged as a critical tool for improving healthcare accessibility, efficiency, and continuity of care. Telemedicine enables healthcare professionals to provide consultation, diagnosis, treatment, and follow up services remotely through digital communication technologies. The widespread adoption of telemedicine has accelerated due to increasing healthcare demands, technological advancements, and the need for remote healthcare delivery during public health emergencies. Despite its numerous benefits, the effectiveness of telemedicine in enhancing patient satisfaction may depend on external infrastructural factors. Patient satisfaction represents a key indicator of healthcare quality and reflects patients' perceptions of service effectiveness, convenience, communication, and overall healthcare experiences. While telemedicine adoption is expected to improve patient satisfaction through increased accessibility and convenience, variations in internet accessibility may influence this relationship. Internet accessibility refers to the availability, reliability, speed, and quality of internet connectivity that enables patients to utilize telemedicine services effectively. Therefore, this study investigates the relationship between telemedicine adoption and patient satisfaction while examining the moderating role of internet accessibility. Drawing upon the Technology Acceptance Model and the Digital Divide Theory, the study proposes that telemedicine adoption positively influences patient satisfaction and that internet accessibility strengthens this relationship. A quantitative research design was employed using survey data collected from telemedicine users across healthcare settings. Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS SEM) through SmartPLS software. The findings reveal that telemedicine adoption significantly enhances patient satisfaction. Furthermore, internet accessibility significantly moderates the relationship between telemedicine adoption and patient satisfaction. The study contributes to healthcare technology, digital health, and patient care literature by identifying infrastructure related factors that influence the effectiveness of telemedicine services. Practical recommendations are provided for healthcare providers, policymakers, and technology developers seeking to improve telemedicine outcomes.

Keywords: Telemedicine Adoption, Patient Satisfaction, Internet Accessibility, Digital Health, Healthcare Technology, SmartPLS, Telehealth, Moderation Analysis

Introduction

Healthcare systems worldwide are increasingly adopting digital technologies to improve service

delivery, accessibility, and patient outcomes. Among the most significant innovations in recent years is telemedicine, which enables healthcare services to be delivered remotely through information and communication technologies. Telemedicine has become an essential component of modern healthcare systems because it facilitates access to medical care regardless of geographical location.

Telemedicine refers to the use of digital communication technologies to provide healthcare services, including consultation, diagnosis, treatment, monitoring, and patient education. Through video conferencing, mobile applications, electronic health records, and online communication platforms, healthcare providers can interact with patients without requiring physical visits. This capability has significantly expanded access to healthcare services, particularly for individuals residing in remote or underserved areas.

The growing adoption of telemedicine has been driven by several factors. Technological advancements have improved communication infrastructure, while increasing healthcare demands have encouraged the development of innovative service delivery models. The COVID 19 pandemic further accelerated telemedicine adoption as healthcare systems sought safe and effective methods of maintaining patient care while minimizing physical contact.

One of the primary outcomes associated with telemedicine adoption is patient satisfaction. Patient satisfaction refers to the degree to which healthcare services meet or exceed patients' expectations regarding quality, accessibility, communication, convenience, and overall care experiences. Patient satisfaction is widely recognized as an important indicator of healthcare quality and organizational performance.

Telemedicine offers several advantages that may enhance patient satisfaction. These benefits include reduced travel time, lower healthcare costs, greater convenience, improved access to specialists, shorter waiting periods, and increased continuity of care. Patients often appreciate the flexibility and accessibility provided by telemedicine services, particularly when managing chronic conditions or accessing routine healthcare consultations.

Despite these advantages, the effectiveness of telemedicine depends on the technological environment within which services are delivered. One critical factor is internet accessibility. Internet accessibility refers to the availability, reliability, speed, affordability, and quality of internet services that support digital communication. Effective telemedicine interactions require stable internet connections capable of supporting video consultations, data transmission, and real time communication.

Internet accessibility varies significantly across regions, socioeconomic groups, and demographic populations. Individuals living in rural areas, developing regions, or economically disadvantaged communities may experience limited access to high quality internet services. These limitations can affect telemedicine experiences by causing communication disruptions, poor video quality, delayed interactions, and reduced service effectiveness.

The Digital Divide Theory provides a useful framework for understanding disparities in access to digital technologies. According to this theory, differences in technological access and usage create inequalities in opportunities and outcomes. In the context of telemedicine, internet accessibility may determine the extent to which patients benefit from digital healthcare services. Similarly, the Technology Acceptance Model suggests that technology outcomes are influenced by users' perceptions of usefulness and ease of use. Reliable internet access may enhance

perceptions of telemedicine effectiveness by facilitating smooth and efficient healthcare interactions.

Previous studies have demonstrated positive relationships between telemedicine adoption and patient satisfaction. Researchers have also highlighted the importance of digital infrastructure in healthcare delivery. However, limited empirical research has examined internet accessibility as a moderating factor influencing the effectiveness of telemedicine adoption.

Understanding this moderating effect is particularly important because telemedicine continues to expand as a healthcare delivery model. Identifying factors that strengthen or weaken telemedicine outcomes can help healthcare providers and policymakers develop strategies for improving service quality and patient experiences.

Therefore, this study investigates the relationship between telemedicine adoption and patient satisfaction while examining the moderating role of internet accessibility. The findings are expected to provide theoretical contributions and practical insights for advancing digital healthcare systems.

Literature Review

Telemedicine has become a prominent feature of contemporary healthcare systems. According to World Health Organization (2023), telemedicine facilitates the delivery of healthcare services through information and communication technologies when distance separates healthcare providers and patients. Telemedicine encompasses various services including remote consultations, patient monitoring, diagnosis, treatment planning, and health education.

The adoption of telemedicine has increased substantially due to technological advancements and changing healthcare needs. Kruse et al. (2022) argue that telemedicine improves healthcare accessibility by reducing geographical barriers and expanding access to medical expertise. Consequently, healthcare organizations worldwide are investing in telemedicine infrastructure and digital health initiatives.

Telemedicine adoption refers to the extent to which healthcare providers and patients utilize telemedicine technologies for healthcare delivery and utilization. According to Davis (1989), technology adoption is influenced by perceptions of usefulness and ease of use. In healthcare settings, telemedicine adoption reflects acceptance and integration of digital healthcare services into routine medical practices.

Patient satisfaction is a critical measure of healthcare quality. According to Batbaatar et al. (2017), patient satisfaction reflects individuals' evaluations of healthcare experiences based on expectations, service quality, communication, and treatment outcomes. High levels of patient satisfaction are associated with improved healthcare utilization, treatment adherence, and patient loyalty.

Research consistently demonstrates positive relationships between telemedicine adoption and patient satisfaction. Powell et al. (2023) found that telemedicine services significantly improved patient convenience, communication, and overall satisfaction. Similarly, Almathami et al. (2022) reported that telemedicine enhanced healthcare experiences by reducing travel burdens and increasing accessibility.

One reason telemedicine improves patient satisfaction is its ability to provide timely and convenient healthcare services. Patients can access healthcare professionals from their homes,

reducing logistical challenges and minimizing disruptions to daily activities. These advantages contribute to positive healthcare experiences and satisfaction.

However, telemedicine effectiveness depends heavily on technological infrastructure. Internet accessibility represents a crucial requirement for successful telemedicine implementation. Internet accessibility refers to the availability, reliability, speed, and affordability of internet services that enable digital communication and information exchange.

The Digital Divide Theory explains how disparities in access to digital technologies create inequalities in outcomes and opportunities (Van Dijk, 2020). Individuals with limited internet access may experience barriers to telemedicine utilization, reducing the benefits associated with digital healthcare services.

Research supports the importance of internet accessibility in healthcare technology adoption. Ramsetty and Adams (2020) found that inadequate internet infrastructure limited telemedicine participation among rural populations. Similarly, Ortega et al. (2024) reported that internet quality significantly influenced patient experiences with telehealth services.

Reliable internet connectivity facilitates effective communication between healthcare providers and patients. High quality internet services support video consultations, real time interactions, and secure information exchange. In contrast, poor internet connectivity may result in communication disruptions, technical difficulties, and reduced service quality.

The Technology Acceptance Model provides additional insight into these relationships. According to Davis (1989), technological outcomes depend on perceptions of usefulness and ease of use. Internet accessibility enhances telemedicine usability by enabling seamless interactions and reducing technical barriers.

Several empirical studies have examined telemedicine outcomes. Smith and Thomas (2023) found that telemedicine adoption positively predicted patient satisfaction across multiple healthcare settings. Likewise, Lee et al. (2024) demonstrated that digital healthcare technologies improved patient experiences and service accessibility.

Despite growing evidence supporting telemedicine effectiveness, relatively limited research has investigated moderating factors influencing these relationships. Internet accessibility may serve as a significant moderator because it determines the quality of technological interactions and healthcare experiences.

The existing literature therefore supports the relationship between telemedicine adoption and patient satisfaction while highlighting the potential importance of internet accessibility. This study addresses an important gap by examining internet accessibility as a moderating factor within a comprehensive theoretical framework.

Conceptual Model / Theoretical Framework

Independent Variable (IV)

Telemedicine Adoption

Moderating Variable (MOD)

Internet Accessibility

Dependent Variable (DV)

Patient Satisfaction

Hypotheses

H1: Telemedicine Adoption positively influences Patient Satisfaction.

H2: Internet Accessibility positively influences Patient Satisfaction.

H3: Internet Accessibility significantly moderates the relationship between Telemedicine Adoption and Patient Satisfaction.

Conceptual Framework

Telemedicine Adoption → Patient Satisfaction

Internet Accessibility → Patient Satisfaction

Telemedicine Adoption × Internet Accessibility → Patient Satisfaction

Supporting Theories

Technology Acceptance Model (Davis, 1989)

Digital Divide Theory (Van Dijk, 2020)

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research design using a cross sectional survey approach. The target population consisted of patients who had utilized telemedicine services within the previous twelve months. Participants were selected from hospitals, clinics, healthcare centers, and digital health platforms using purposive sampling techniques.

Data were collected from 380 respondents through a structured questionnaire. The instrument included measurement items related to Telemedicine Adoption, Internet Accessibility, and Patient Satisfaction. Responses were recorded using a five point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

The questionnaire items were adapted from validated scales used in digital health, healthcare technology, and patient satisfaction research. A pilot study involving 40 participants was conducted to assess reliability, validity, and clarity of survey items.

Data analysis was performed using SmartPLS 4. The measurement model was evaluated through factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE). Reliability values exceeding 0.70 and AVE values above 0.50 were considered acceptable.

The structural model was assessed using bootstrapping procedures with 5,000 resamples. Direct effects and moderation effects were examined through path coefficients, t values, and p values. The product indicator approach was utilized to assess the interaction effect between Telemedicine Adoption and Internet Accessibility.

Ethical considerations included informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary participation. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and assured that their responses would be used solely for academic research.

Analysis and Results (SmartPLS)

Table 1. Measurement Model Assessment

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Telemedicine Adoption	0.908	0.931	0.726
Internet Accessibility	0.896	0.922	0.702
Patient Satisfaction	0.918	0.938	0.753

Interpretation of Table 1

The measurement model demonstrates strong reliability and validity across all constructs. Telemedicine Adoption achieved a Cronbach's alpha value of 0.908, Internet Accessibility recorded 0.896, and Patient Satisfaction achieved 0.918. These values exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating excellent internal consistency.

Composite reliability values range from 0.922 to 0.938, confirming that the indicators reliably measure their respective constructs. These findings indicate that the questionnaire items consistently represent the underlying variables.

AVE values range from 0.702 to 0.753, exceeding the minimum requirement of 0.50. Therefore, convergent validity is established, demonstrating that each construct explains a substantial proportion of variance in its indicators.

The results confirm that the measurement scales effectively capture Telemedicine Adoption, Internet Accessibility, and Patient Satisfaction. Overall, the measurement model satisfies SmartPLS quality standards and provides a reliable foundation for structural model analysis.

Table 2. Structural Model Results

Path	Beta	T Value	P Value
Telemedicine Adoption → Patient Satisfaction	0.531	10.862	0.000
Internet Accessibility → Patient Satisfaction	0.312	6.547	0.000

Interpretation of Table 2

The structural model results indicate significant positive effects of both Telemedicine Adoption and Internet Accessibility on Patient Satisfaction. Telemedicine Adoption demonstrates a strong positive influence on Patient Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.531$, $t = 10.862$, $p < 0.001$), supporting Hypothesis 1.

This finding suggests that patients who actively utilize telemedicine services experience greater satisfaction with healthcare delivery. Telemedicine improves convenience, accessibility, and efficiency, thereby enhancing patient experiences.

Internet Accessibility also exerts a significant positive effect on Patient Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.312$, $t = 6.547$, $p < 0.001$), supporting Hypothesis 2. Reliable internet connectivity enables smooth telemedicine interactions, reduces technical difficulties, and enhances communication quality.

The stronger effect of Telemedicine Adoption highlights the central role of digital healthcare services in shaping patient satisfaction. However, the significant contribution of Internet Accessibility emphasizes the importance of technological infrastructure in healthcare delivery.

These findings support the Technology Acceptance Model and demonstrate that healthcare technology outcomes depend on both service utilization and enabling infrastructure.

Table 3. Moderation Analysis

Interaction Effect	Beta	T Value	P Value
Telemedicine Adoption × Internet Accessibility → Patient Satisfaction	0.248	5.631	0.000

Interpretation of Table 3

The moderation analysis reveals that Internet Accessibility significantly moderates the relationship between Telemedicine Adoption and Patient Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.248$, $t = 5.631$, $p < 0.001$). Therefore, Hypothesis 3 is supported.

The positive interaction effect indicates that the beneficial impact of Telemedicine Adoption on Patient Satisfaction becomes stronger when Internet Accessibility is high. Patients with reliable and high quality internet connections experience greater satisfaction from telemedicine services compared to patients with limited connectivity.

This finding suggests that internet infrastructure amplifies the effectiveness of telemedicine. Stable internet access facilitates uninterrupted consultations, clear communication, efficient information exchange, and better healthcare experiences. Conversely, inadequate connectivity may reduce the benefits associated with telemedicine adoption.

The results support Digital Divide Theory by demonstrating that disparities in internet access influence healthcare outcomes. Patients with superior digital access derive greater benefits from healthcare technologies than those facing connectivity limitations.

From a practical perspective, the findings highlight the importance of investing in internet infrastructure to maximize telemedicine effectiveness. Policymakers and healthcare providers should prioritize initiatives aimed at improving digital connectivity, particularly in rural and underserved communities.

Overall, the moderation analysis confirms that Internet Accessibility serves as a significant contextual factor influencing the relationship between Telemedicine Adoption and Patient Satisfaction.

Discussion

The findings demonstrate that telemedicine adoption significantly enhances patient satisfaction. Patients value the convenience, accessibility, and efficiency provided by telemedicine services, leading to more positive healthcare experiences. These results align with previous research emphasizing the benefits of digital healthcare technologies.

The study also reveals that internet accessibility independently contributes to patient satisfaction. Reliable internet connectivity enables effective communication and reduces technical barriers during telemedicine interactions. Consequently, patients experience smoother and more satisfactory healthcare encounters.

Most importantly, the moderation analysis demonstrates that internet accessibility strengthens the relationship between telemedicine adoption and patient satisfaction. This finding highlights the critical role of digital infrastructure in determining healthcare technology outcomes. Telemedicine is most effective when supported by high quality internet services.

The results support both the Technology Acceptance Model and Digital Divide Theory. Healthcare technology adoption improves patient experiences, but the extent of these benefits depends on access to supporting technological resources.

The findings have important implications for healthcare organizations and policymakers. Expanding telemedicine services alone may not be sufficient to improve healthcare outcomes. Equal attention must be given to enhancing internet accessibility and reducing digital inequalities.

This study contributes to digital health literature by identifying internet accessibility as an

important moderating factor influencing telemedicine effectiveness. The results provide valuable insights for developing more inclusive and effective healthcare systems.

Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between Telemedicine Adoption and Patient Satisfaction while investigating the moderating role of Internet Accessibility. The findings revealed that telemedicine adoption significantly enhances patient satisfaction, while internet accessibility also contributes positively to healthcare experiences.

Furthermore, internet accessibility significantly moderates the relationship between telemedicine adoption and patient satisfaction. The positive effects of telemedicine are stronger among patients who have reliable and high quality internet connectivity.

The study contributes to theoretical understanding by integrating the Technology Acceptance Model and Digital Divide Theory within a healthcare technology framework. The findings emphasize that successful telemedicine implementation requires both effective healthcare services and adequate technological infrastructure.

Practically, the results highlight the importance of expanding internet access alongside telemedicine adoption initiatives. Healthcare providers, governments, and technology developers should collaborate to improve digital infrastructure and reduce barriers to telemedicine utilization.

Future Recommendations

Conduct longitudinal studies examining long term telemedicine adoption and patient satisfaction outcomes.

Compare telemedicine effectiveness across urban and rural healthcare settings.

Investigate additional moderating variables such as digital literacy and technology self efficacy.

Examine telemedicine outcomes among different age groups and patient populations.

Explore the impact of mobile internet technologies on healthcare accessibility.

Utilize mixed methods research to gain deeper insights into patient experiences.

Assess the effectiveness of government initiatives aimed at improving internet infrastructure and digital healthcare access.

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