

# The Influence Of Factors In Dental Practice: Price, Facilities, Dentist Services, Staff Services, And Word Of Mouth With Patient Satisfaction And Patient Loyalty As Mediators At YDC Dental Clinic, East Jakarta

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## ARTICLE INFO



ISSN: 2620-6196  
Vol. 8 Issues 2 (2025)

### Article history:

Received – June 09, 2025

Revised – June 12, 2025

Accepted – June 16, 2025

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### Keywords

Price, Facilities, Dentist Services, Staff Services, Patient Satisfaction, Patient Loyalty, Word of Mouth.

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## ABSTRACT

*Dentist services, and staff services, on word of mouth, with patient satisfaction and patient loyalty as mediators at YDC Dental Clinic. This research involved 181 patients. Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires containing 35 questions using a 1-5 Likert Scale based on a purposive sampling technique. Data were analyzed using the PLS-SEM method. The results of this study indicate that Price, Facilities, Dentist Services, and Staff Services positively and significantly influence Patient Satisfaction. Furthermore, Patient Satisfaction was proven to have a positive and significant effect on both Patient Loyalty and Word of Mouth. Additionally, Patient Loyalty also has a positive and significant influence on Word of Mouth. Although some service dimensions (Facilities and Dentist Services) did not show a direct significant influence on loyalty, the mediating role of Patient Satisfaction is crucial in shaping loyalty and word of mouth across all examined service dimensions. These findings affirm that patient satisfaction is the primary foundation driving loyalty and word-of-mouth promotion within the context of dental healthcare services.*

## INTRODUCTION

Oral and dental health are essential components of overall well-being. In Indonesia, dental problems remain widespread, with the 2018 Basic Health Research (Riskesdas) showing that 57.6% of the population suffers from oral health issues. Additionally, 88.8% mainly children and adolescents are affected by active caries, making it the most prevalent dental condition in the country (Sylvia et al., 2022). These high rates are largely due to limited education and awareness regarding oral hygiene. However, with better access to information and growing public concern for health, people are increasingly attentive to dental care and the quality of services they receive (Akmal et al., 2022).

As primary healthcare providers, dental clinics are expected to offer high-quality services that meet patient expectations. Patient satisfaction plays a crucial role in maintaining service standards and encompasses more than just clinical outcomes it also involves administrative efficiency, staff friendliness, responsiveness, cost of treatment, and clinic facilities (Sylvia et al., 2022). Satisfied patients are more likely to become loyal, returning for future care and recommending the clinic to others (Siripipathanakul & Nyen Vui, 2021; Handayani et al., 2021). Positive word of mouth (WOM), which stems from patient satisfaction, significantly influences potential patients' decisions and is a valuable asset in building a clinic's reputation (Wibowo & Junaedi, 2019; Asia & Tosepus, 2024).

Although patient loyalty at YDC Dental Clinic is generally strong, there is still untapped potential in maximizing positive word of mouth. Not all satisfied patients actively share their experiences with others, limiting the clinic's ability to attract new patients through personal referrals. This study aims to examine the influence of dental practice factors; pricing, facilities, dentist services, and staff services on

word of mouth, with patient satisfaction and patient loyalty as mediating variables at YDC Dental Clinic, East Jakarta.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Word of Mouth*

Word of Mouth (WOM) is the informal exchange of information about a product or service between individuals who are not affiliated with the business. The term was first introduced by Whyte in 1954 as a form of consumer-to-consumer communication (Prastyo et al., 2018; Joesyiana, 2018). WOM is assessed through indicators such as the willingness to recommend, the frequency of sharing information, and encouraging others to use the service (Sandy et al., 2022). In healthcare services, WOM plays a significant role, as patients tend to seek recommendations before choosing a service provider (Milaković et al., 2020). WOM arises from consumers' positive experiences with service quality, which is evaluated based on the alignment between expectations and actual outcomes (Demir et al., 2021). Customer satisfaction—shaped by factors such as medical staff, facilities, and reputation—also drives WOM (Asnawi et al., 2019). Furthermore, loyal patients are more likely to engage in positive WOM as they have developed trust in the service (Fitria & Bernarto, 2022).

### *Treatment Price*

Price plays an essential role in determining the success of a business, as it influences the amount of profit generated from the sale of products, goods, or services (Nugraha, 2020). Price is defined as the amount of money that must be paid to obtain a good or service and reflects the monetary value that consumers are willing to exchange for the benefits derived from the product or service used (Kotler & Armstrong, 2018). Price is a crucial factor that can influence patients in terms of the costs they incur; the higher the treatment price, the greater the patients' expectations (Hosang, 2016).

### *Facilities*

Facilities refer to the equipment and infrastructure available within or around a company that are used to deliver maximum service so that consumers or customers feel comfortable and satisfied. Facilities are considered a major supporting factor in the operation of a product or service (Suyitno, 2018). Every healthcare service utilizes facilities in various forms, types, and functions. The more extensive the healthcare activities, the more complete the supporting tools and facilities are to enhance the quality of service provided (Srijani & Hidayat, 2017). Several studies identify facilities related to dental practice as including administrative infrastructure and clinic amenities. Indicators of facilities associated with dental services include clinic location, availability of comfortable parking, convenient operating hours, as well as clean and comfortable toilets, waiting rooms, and floors (Kim et al., 2012; Akbar et al., 2019).

### *Dentist Services*

Dentists are one of the key human resources who play an important role in improving public health. Dentists are expected to consistently demonstrate good and satisfactory performance in serving patients to support the quality of care provided by healthcare facilities (Hidayah et al., 2022). According to Kim et al. (2012), dental services refer to dental practices that are able to give proper attention to patients, including managing pain and fear, as well as utilizing the latest technology. The dentist's empathy is a crucial aspect of patient satisfaction, encompassing the ability to communicate effectively, show concern, understand patient needs, and treat all patients equally regardless of status. Patients tend to feel confident when healthcare professionals deliver the best services based on their knowledge and expertise, as this creates a sense of assurance (Prasodjo, 2017).

### *Staff Services*

Today's society holds expectations that healthcare facilities should provide good and satisfactory services. High-quality facilities, friendliness, responsiveness, and the competence of staff are essential in delivering satisfactory services to patients. The role of staff is crucial in determining the success of a service-based organization, particularly in the healthcare sector (Amelia & Rodhiyah, 2016).

Staff services reflect the extent to which personnel—such as receptionists, assistants, or administrative staff—demonstrate concern and commitment to the comfort and needs of patients. This is

evident in their willingness to assist patients in a friendly manner, collaborate as a team in the best interest of the patient, and deliver services that are prompt and efficient. In dental practice, responsive and attentive staff can significantly enhance the overall patient experience, making patients feel valued and comfortable, while also contributing to the clinic's positive image (Rocha et al., 2017).

#### *Patient Satisfaction*

Satisfaction can be defined as a sense of contentment, pleasure, and relief experienced by an individual after consuming a product or service and receiving the associated service (Maulana, 2016). Patient satisfaction refers to the patient's evaluation of healthcare services by comparing their expectations with the actual services received at a healthcare facility (Radfan & Hariyanti, 2015). It is considered an outcome of service delivery and one of the key factors influencing improved patient compliance and clinical outcomes (Park et al., 2021). According to Anfal (2020), factors that influence patient satisfaction include: the quality of products or services, quality of service, emotional factors, price, and treatment costs.

#### *Patient Loyalty*

Loyalty can be defined as a commitment to repurchase or reuse a product or service in the future (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Over time, loyalty has been further categorized into several types: Advocator Loyalty refers to the willingness of patients to recommend a clinic's products or services to friends, acquaintances, and other social groups voluntarily; Action Loyalty involves the repeated purchase or use of the same service; Conative Loyalty is the patient's commitment to return to the same service provider when needed; and Affective Loyalty refers to the emotional attachment and willingness of consumers to continue using the same product or service over a long period. Patient satisfaction with a clinic's services can significantly influence their loyalty (Rahmilia, 2015). Loyalty plays a vital role in reducing the number of patients who discontinue services and helps lower the cost of acquiring new patients. Furthermore, loyal patients often engage in positive word-of-mouth communication, which enhances the image of the healthcare service provider (Zhou et al., 2017).

## **RESEARCH METHOD**

The variables examined in this study include price, facilities, dental services, staff services, and patient loyalty as independent variables, while patient satisfaction serves as the mediating variable, and word of mouth is the dependent variable. The type of research conducted is quantitative analysis with a cross-sectional approach. The unit of analysis in this study is individuals, with the target population being patients who have received treatment at YDC Dental Clinic more than three times.

The sampling technique used is purposive sampling. Data were collected using a questionnaire distributed via Google Form. According to Kock & Hadaya (2018), the minimum required sample size using the inverse square root method is 160. In this study, a total of 181 valid responses were obtained.

Questionnaire items related to the variables of price, facilities, dental services, staff services, patient satisfaction, patient loyalty, and word of mouth were measured using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree). Data analysis was conducted using the Partial Least Squares – Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) approach, with the help of the SmartPLS software.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### *Respondent Profile*

This study obtained responses from 181 participants who agreed to fill out the questionnaire and had previously visited YDC Dental Clinic for treatment more than three times, thus qualifying as returning patients. The respondent profile indicates that the majority of participants were female. The largest age group was 26–34 years old. Most respondents held a bachelor's degree as their highest level of education, and the majority reported a monthly income between IDR 6,000,000 and IDR 10,000,000. Detailed demographic information of the respondents is presented in Table 1.

**Tabel 1. Respondent Profile**

Respondent Characteristics	Total	Percentage(%)
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	75	41.4%
Female	106	58.6%
<b>Age</b>		
18-25	46	25.4%
26-34	74	40.9%
35-42	28	15.5%
50-60	21	11.6%
	12	6.6%
<b>Educational Background</b>		
High school or equivalent	43	23.8%
Diploma	7	3.9%
Bachelor's degree	84	46.4%
Others	47	26%
<b>Monthly Income</b>		
> Rp 3.000.000	13	18.2%
Rp 3.000.000 - Rp 5.000.000	33	37.6%
Rp 6.000.000 - Rp 10.000.000	68	37%
< Rp 10.000.000	67	7.2%

Source: Processed data, 2025

#### Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

The evaluation of the outer model is carried out by testing reliability and validity. In reliability testing, there are two aspects to consider: indicator reliability, measured through outer loading, and evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR). Furthermore, construct validity is tested through two important stages, namely convergent validity, which is measured by the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value. (Hair et al., 2019) According to Ghozali (2021), an outer loading value above 0.7 is considered reliable, and convergent validity is considered achieved if the AVE value for each variable is greater than 0.5.

**Table 2. Validity and Reliability Testing**

Item and Constructs	Outer Loading
<b>Treatment Price (CR=0.919, AVE=0.696)</b>	
The dental treatment prices at YDC Dental Clinic are affordable for me	0,868
The dental treatment prices at YDC Dental Clinic meet my expectations	0,851
The dental treatment prices at YDC Dental Clinic are more affordable compared to other dental clinics	0,852
The dental treatment prices at YDC Dental Clinic correspond to the benefits I receive	0,835
The dental treatment prices at YDC Dental Clinic are a reason for me to return for treatment	0,760
<b>Facilities (CR=0.929, AVE=0.766)</b>	
YDC Dental Clinic provides complete facilities	0,903
YDC Dental Clinic uses advanced and modern equipment	0,883
YDC Dental Clinic ensures availability of materials and equipment in sterile and clean condition	0,885
Facilities at YDC Dental Clinic such as waiting room, examination room, and floors are kept clean and comfortable	0,827
<b>Dentist Services (CR=0.951, AVE=0.795)</b>	
The dentists at YDC Dental Clinic clearly explain the treatment to be performed	0,896
The dentists at YDC Dental Clinic involve patients in making decisions about their treatment	0,818

The dentists at YDC Dental Clinic understand and optimally meet patients' expectations and needs	0,910
The dentists at YDC Dental Clinic have competent and professional expertise in their work	0,904
The dentists at YDC Dental Clinic always pay attention to patients, helping to reduce their anxiety	0,927
<b>Staff Services (CR=0.972, AVE=0.875)</b>	
The staff at YDC Dental Clinic are always willing to assist patients	0,921
The staff at YDC Dental Clinic work together to ensure the best interests of patients	0,936
The staff at YDC Dental Clinic always pay attention to each patient	0,950
The staff at YDC Dental Clinic serve patients quickly and responsively	0,917
The staff at YDC Dental Clinic understand patients' needs well	0,952
<b>Patient Satisfaction (CR=0.924, AVE=0.754)</b>	
I feel satisfied with the services provided by YDC Dental Clinic	0,879
The quality of services provided by YDC Dental Clinic meets or exceeds my expectations	0,888
I always choose YDC Dental Clinic whenever I need dental treatment	0,814
I am satisfied with the services from dentists and staff at YDC Dental Clinic	0,890
<b>Patient Loyalty (CR=0.912, AVE=0.775)</b>	
I will continue to choose YDC Dental Clinic for dental treatment in the future	0,896
I want to try other dental treatments at YDC Dental Clinic	0,904
I will continue to choose YDC Dental Clinic for dental treatment even if the cost is higher than other clinics	0,841
<b>Word of Mouth (CR=0.978, AVE=0.898)</b>	
I intend to recommend YDC Dental Clinic immediately after receiving treatment	0,883
I will recommend YDC Dental Clinic to others	0,965
I will share positive things about YDC Dental Clinic with others	0,959
I will encourage my friends and family to receive dental treatment at YDC Dental Clinic	0,972
I will give positive reviews about YDC Dental Clinic on social media	0,956

Notes: CR= Composite Reliability; AVE= Average Variance Extracted

Source: Processed data, 2025

Discriminant validity is conducted to determine whether each construct has adequate discrimination, by comparing the outer loading of each indicator on its intended construct to ensure it is higher than on other constructs (Ghozali & Latan, 2015). Discriminant validity is evaluated using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio. Discriminant validity is considered adequate if the HTMT value between constructs is below 0.90 (Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt, 2015).

**Table 3. Discriminant Validity HTMT**

	Facilities	Price	Patient Satisfaction	Dentist Services	Staff Services	Patient Loyalty	Word of Mouth
Facilities							
Price	0,624						
Patient Satisfaction	0,884	0,725					
Dentist Services	0,759	0,573	0,781				
Staff Services	0,544	0,503	0,655	0,586			
Patient Loyalty	0,582	0,899	0,763	0,572	0,584		
Word of Mouth	0,664	0,643	0,826	0,659	0,520	0,726	

Source: Processed data, 2025

#### Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

To analyze the relationships between variables in a study, a structural model (inner model) is used. In this research, the evaluation focuses on the coefficient of determination (R-square) and collinearity tests. The R-square value is used to assess the explanatory and predictive power of the proposed model before empirical testing. Based on the analysis results, the Patient Satisfaction variable has the highest R-square value of 0.742, indicating that Price, Facilities, Dentist Services, and Staff Services explain 74.2% of the variation in Patient Satisfaction, while the remaining 25.8% is influenced by other factors outside the model. The Patient Loyalty variable has an R-square value of 0.676, meaning that the four variables plus Patient Satisfaction explain 67.6% of the variation in Patient Loyalty. Meanwhile, the Word of Mouth variable has an R-square value of 0.634, indicating that the previous five variables explain 63.4% of the variation in Word of Mouth, with the remaining 36.6% influenced by other variables outside this study.

**Table 4. R-Square**

Variabel	R-Square
Patient Satisfaction	0,742
Patient Loyalty	0,676
Word of Mouth	0,634

Source: Processed data, 2025

Multicollinearity testing was conducted using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) with a standard threshold value below 5. The results shown in Table 5 indicate that the VIF values for each indicator variable are below 5. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is no multicollinearity among the independent variables.

**Table 5. Multicollinearity Testing (VIF)**

	Facilities	Price	Patient Satisfaction	Dentist Services	Staff Services	Patient Loyalty	Word of Mouth
Facilities			2,254			3,089	
Price			1,633			1,805	
Patient Satisfaction						3,883	1,824
Dentist Services			2,277			2,400	
Staff Services			1,563			1,684	
Patient Loyalty							1,824
Word of Mouth							

Source: Processed data, 2025

The additional f-square measurement provides information about the influence of independent variables on dependent variables. According to Ghozali (2019), the interpretation of f-square values is as follows: 0.02 (small), 0.15 (moderate), and 0.35 (large). Based on the table, the Facilities variable has a large effect on Patient Satisfaction with an f-square value of 0.370, but has a weak effect on Patient Loyalty (0.019). The Price variable shows a weak effect on Patient Satisfaction (0.106) and a large effect on Patient Loyalty with an f-square value of 0.611. Patient Satisfaction itself has a weak effect on Patient Loyalty (0.076), but exerts a large effect on Word of Mouth with a value of 0.509. Meanwhile, Dental Services have a weak effect on both Patient Satisfaction and Patient Loyalty (0.054 and 0.000 respectively), as does Staff Services, which also have a weak effect on both variables (0.077 and 0.034). Finally, Patient Loyalty has a large effect on Word of Mouth with an f-square value of 0.116.

**Table 6. F-Square**

	Facilities	Price	Patient Satisfaction	Dentist Services	Staff Services	Patient Loyalty	Word of Mouth
Facilities			0,370			0,019	
Price			0,106			0,611	
Patient Satisfaction						0,076	0,509
Dentist Services			0,054			0,000	
Staff Services			0,077			0,034	
Patient Loyalty							0,116
Word of Mouth							

Source: Processed data, 2025

Q-Squared is used to measure the reliability of the model in predicting the dependent variables through the model's predictive relevance test. A positive  $Q^2$  value indicates that the model has better predictive ability compared to the zero model (a model without latent variables). Based on Table 7, the variables Patient Satisfaction, Patient Loyalty, and Word of Mouth have  $Q^2$  values of 0.550, 0.510, and 0.563, respectively. Since these  $Q^2$  values are greater than 0.50, it can be said that the model has high predictive relevance (large predictive relevancy).

**Table 7. Q-Square**

Variabel	$Q^2$	Result
Patient Satisfaction	0,550	Large Predictive Relevance
Patient Loyalty	0,510	Large Predictive Relevance
Word of Mouth	0,563	Large Predictive Relevance

Source: Processed data, 2025

### Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing was conducted during the structural model evaluation stage using a significance level of 0.05 and a one-tailed test. Based on Table 8, most of the hypotheses in this study showed significant effects, indicated by P-values < 0.05 and supported by T-statistics > 1.645. All independent variables, namely Price, Facilities, Dental Services, and Staff Services, were proven to have a positive and significant effect on Patient Satisfaction (H1–H4). Among these, the most dominant influence on Patient Satisfaction was from the Facilities variable ( $O = 0.464$ ;  $T = 6.269$ ;  $P = 0.000$ ), followed by Price ( $O = 0.211$ ;  $T = 3.942$ ;  $P = 0.000$ ), Dental Services ( $O = 0.178$ ;  $T = 2.084$ ;  $P = 0.019$ ), and Staff Services ( $O = 0.176$ ;  $T = 2.702$ ;  $P = 0.003$ ).

Regarding the effect on Patient Loyalty, only some hypotheses were supported. Price (H5:  $O = 0.597$ ;  $T = 8.279$ ;  $P = 0.000$ ), Staff Services (H8:  $O = 0.137$ ;  $T = 1.967$ ;  $P = 0.025$ ), and Patient Satisfaction (H9:  $O = 0.309$ ;  $T = 2.539$ ;  $P = 0.006$ ) had positive and significant effects. Meanwhile, Facilities (H6:  $O = -0.138$ ;  $T = 1.674$ ;  $P = 0.047$ ) had a negative but marginally significant effect, and Dental Services (H7:  $O = -0.001$ ;  $T = 0.020$ ;  $P = 0.492$ ) showed no significant effect. The greatest influence on Patient Loyalty came from the Price variable.

Furthermore, for Word of Mouth, both Patient Satisfaction (H10:  $O = 0.582$ ;  $T = 7.737$ ;  $P = 0.000$ ) and Patient Loyalty (H11:  $O = 0.278$ ;  $T = 3.232$ ;  $P = 0.001$ ) had positive and significant effects. These findings indicate that Patient Satisfaction is the most dominant construct influencing Word of Mouth.



**Table 8. Hypothesis Testing Result**

Hypothesis	Path	Original Sample	T statistics	P Value	Result
H1	Price → Patient Satisfaction	0,211	3,942	0,000	Significant
H2	Facilities → Patient Satisfaction	0,464	6,269	0,000	Significant
H3	Dental Services → Patient Satisfaction	0,178	2,084	0,019	Significant
H4	Staff Services → Patient Satisfaction	0,176	2,702	0,003	Significant
H5	Price → Patient Loyalty	0,597	8,279	0,000	Significant
H6	Facilities → Patient Loyalty	-0,138	1,674	0,047	Insignificant
H7	Dental Services → Patient Loyalty	-0,001	0,020	0,492	Insignificant
H8	Staff Services → Patient Loyalty	0,137	1,967	0,025	Significant
H9	Patient Satisfaction → Patient Loyalty	0,309	2,539	0,006	Significant
H10	Patient Satisfaction → Word of Mouth	0,582	7,737	0,000	Significant
H11	Patient Loyalty → Word of Mouth	0,278	3,232	0,001	Significant

Source: Processed data, 2025

## Discussion

### *The Effect of Price on Patient Satisfaction*

The results of this study indicate that price has a positive and significant effect on patient satisfaction. With a coefficient value of 0.211 and a t-statistic of 3.942 ( $p < 0.05$ ), these findings suggest that the more affordable the price paid, the higher the level of satisfaction experienced by patients. This indicates that the hypothesis is statistically supported and suggests that patients tend to feel satisfied when the service price is perceived as proportional to the benefits, quality, and experience received during dental treatment at YDC Dental Clinic.

Windreis (2021) demonstrated that price influences patient satisfaction by 65%, and this finding aligns with Rufiansyah et al. (2020), who reported a significant impact of price on consumer satisfaction. Furthermore, Tambunan et al. (2025) stated that price has a positive and significant effect on patient satisfaction (coefficient = 0.1107,  $p < 0.05$ ). Patient satisfaction increases when the price set is affordable and the quality of service corresponds to the price paid. This study is also supported by Hosana (2016) and Fatriansah (2014), who similarly found a positive and significant effect of price on patient satisfaction.

### *The Effect of Facilities on Patient Satisfaction*

The analysis results support the hypothesis that facilities have a positive and significant effect on patient satisfaction, with a coefficient of 0.464 and a t-statistic of 6.269 ( $p < 0.05$ ). Facilities showed the highest coefficient value, indicating that they are the main factor in shaping patient satisfaction at YDC Dental Clinic. This suggests that the better the quality of facilities available at the clinic, the higher the level of satisfaction experienced by patients.

This finding is corroborated by Maulidiah et al. (2023), who demonstrated that facilities positively and significantly affect patient satisfaction; the better the healthcare facility, the higher the patient satisfaction. Suyitno (2018) conducted research on patients at Malang Regional Hospital, revealing that facilities significantly influence changes in patient satisfaction ( $p = 0.0016$ ). Tambunan et al. (2025) also support these findings, showing a positive and significant impact of facilities on patient satisfaction ( $p < 0.005$ ), consistent with the studies by Yolanda (2019) and Widaditomo (2009).



### *The Effect of Dental Services on Patient Satisfaction*

The study findings reveal that dental services have a positive and significant effect on patient satisfaction, with a coefficient of 0.178 and a t-statistic of 2.084 ( $p < 0.05$ ). Although the effect size is smaller than that of facilities or price, the role of dental professionals remains an important factor influencing patient experience during dental healthcare delivery. The competence of dentists is essential to fulfill patient satisfaction. Inadequate dentist capabilities, such as improper management of critical cases, inaccurate diagnoses, and poor two-way communication—especially in shared decision-making—can reduce cooperative behavior from patients and lower satisfaction levels. Effective communication fosters better management and greater patient cooperation, thereby enhancing patient satisfaction (Jalil et al., 2017; Ward, 2018).

This analysis aligns with previous research by Sagay et al. (2023), who found a significant relationship between dentists' attitudes and services and patient satisfaction ( $p = 0.001$ ). Dentist attitude was assessed based on patient responses regarding the manner in which dental care was delivered, the ability to build trust, and the ability to create comfort during treatment. These findings are consistent with those of Widya et al. (2020) and Wardani et al. (2022), who concluded that the quality of dental services influences patient satisfaction levels.

### *The Effect of Staff Services on Patient Satisfaction*

The results of this study indicate that staff services have a positive and significant effect on patient satisfaction, with a coefficient value of 0.176 and a t-statistic of 2.702 ( $p < 0.05$ ). The services provided by clinic staff contribute significantly to improving patient satisfaction. In the context of healthcare service delivery, clinic staff serve as the frontline personnel who interact directly with patients, whether during administrative processes, registration, information provision, or assistance throughout the treatment period. Staff who demonstrate professionalism and empathy can create a sense of comfort and appreciation for patients, which ultimately contributes to an overall increase in patient satisfaction.

Previous research by Amaral et al. (2022) in Brazil found that patient satisfaction is influenced by the attitudes of dental clinic staff. This finding is supported by Boy et al. (2021), who reported that the approach and attention provided by staff to patients undergoing dental treatment significantly affect patient satisfaction with the services received. Similarly, Yetmir et al. (2020) found that the attitude and attention given by healthcare facility staff increase patient satisfaction with the provided services.

### *The Effect of Price on Patient Loyalty*

The study results show that price has a positive and significant effect on patient loyalty, with a coefficient value of 0.597 and a t-statistic of 8.279 ( $p < 0.05$ ). This indicates that price is a critical factor influencing patients' decisions to continue using the services of YDC Dental Clinic in the future. Previous research by Suntariyani et al. (2023) demonstrated that price has a direct positive and significant effect on patient loyalty, contributing 26.32% directly and 7.29% indirectly through patient satisfaction, with a total effect of 33.61%. These findings suggest that perceptions of affordable and fair pricing relative to service quality encourage patients to remain loyal to the same healthcare facility.

This is consistent with studies by Hertina & Koni (2023) and Afthanorhan et al. (2018), which found that medical service prices positively and significantly influence patient loyalty. Thus, this study strengthens the understanding that appropriate and transparent pricing strategies are essential factors in building patient loyalty. Affordable prices combined with quality services can foster a mutually beneficial long-term relationship between service providers and patients.

### *The Effect of Facilities on Patient Loyalty*

The study results indicate that facilities have a negative and significant effect on patient loyalty, with a coefficient value of -0.138 and a t-statistic of 1.674 ( $p < 0.05$ ). Although this relationship is statistically significant because the p-value is below the 0.05 threshold, the negative coefficient indicates that improvements in facilities tend to reduce patient loyalty. This suggests that facilities do not directly encourage patient loyalty but play an important role through patient satisfaction as a mediating variable. This finding is inconsistent with previous studies conducted by Putri et al. (2023), Tamonsang & Apriliyanto (2022), Sharon & Santoso (2017), and Winata & Prabowo (2022), which reported a positive and significant influence of facilities on patient loyalty. However, this study is supported by research from Anbori et al. (2010), which found no relationship between patient loyalty and facilities. This aligns with

studies by Napirah et al. (2016) and Sitio & Ali (2019), which concluded that facilities do not have a significant effect on patient loyalty.

#### *The Effect of Dental Services on Patient Loyalty*

The results show that dental services have a negative and insignificant effect on patient loyalty, with a coefficient of -0.001 and a t-statistic of 0.020 ( $p > 0.05$ ). The p-value far exceeds the significance level of 0.05, indicating no meaningful relationship between dental services and patient loyalty at YDC Dental Clinic. Moreover, the negative coefficient suggests that, statistically, increased dental service quality does not correspond to higher patient loyalty at the clinic.

This result contradicts previous studies such as Szabó et al. (2023), which showed a significant impact of dental services on patient loyalty, especially through communication, trust, and personal engagement aspects. Likewise, Akmal et al. (2022) and Putri et al. (2023) found positive and significant effects of dental services on patient loyalty mediated by patient satisfaction.

#### *The Effect of Staff Services on Patient Loyalty*

This study found that staff services have a positive and significant effect on patient loyalty, with a coefficient of 0.137 and a t-statistic of 1.967 ( $p < 0.05$ ). These findings indicate that better services provided by clinic staff increase the likelihood of patients remaining loyal to YDC Dental Clinic. Clinic staff such as administrative officers, dental assistants, and other non-medical personnel often have the most direct interactions with patients outside clinical procedures. In a holistic service approach, the role of staff is critical in shaping the patient experience (Chen et al., 2021).

This is supported by Chen et al. (2022), who found that patient interactions with clinic staff directly influence overall patient service quality assessments. Positive experiences with staff services also significantly impact patients' intention to revisit. Furthermore, Imamah et al. (2024) stated that staff services positively and significantly affect patient loyalty.

#### *The Effect of Patient Satisfaction on Patient Loyalty*

The results show that patient satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on patient loyalty, with a coefficient of 0.309 and a t-statistic of 2.539 ( $p < 0.05$ ). Patient satisfaction plays a role in shaping long-term attitudes and behaviors, such as willingness to revisit, reluctance to switch providers, and recommending the clinic to others.

Previous studies support this finding; for instance, Utami et al. (2020) found a positive correlation between high patient satisfaction in hospitals and patient loyalty. Similarly, Dalatony et al. (2023) reported a significant correlation ( $p < 0.001$ ) between patient satisfaction with dentists at clinics and patient loyalty. This consistency is reinforced by studies from Sharon and Santosa (2017) and Susanti et al. (2020), which demonstrated a positive and significant effect of patient satisfaction on patient loyalty ( $p < 0.001$ ).

#### *The Effect of Patient Satisfaction on Word of Mouth*

The study results reveal that patient satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on word of mouth (WOM), with a coefficient of 0.582 and a t-statistic of 7.737 ( $p < 0.05$ ). The high coefficient and t-statistic well above the critical value indicate a very strong and statistically significant relationship between patient satisfaction and WOM. This suggests that the more satisfied patients are with services at YDC Dental Clinic, the more likely they are to voluntarily share positive experiences with others, both directly and indirectly.

This finding is supported by Siripipatthanakul (2021), who found that patient satisfaction, as a mediator, significantly affects WOM in a study on the relationship between service quality, patient satisfaction, WOM, and revisit intention at dental clinics in Thailand. Similarly, Kiptaci et al. (2014) and Cham et al. (2016) concluded that patient satisfaction positively and significantly influences WOM. Additionally, Optimasi et al. (2018), studying outpatient satisfaction at RSD dr. Soebandi Jember, revealed that patients satisfied with hospital services tend to spread WOM. The study emphasized WOM as an effective marketing tool and an important focus for healthcare providers given its powerful promotional capacity among individuals..

### *The Effect of Patient Loyalty on Word of Mouth*

The results demonstrate that patient loyalty has a positive and significant effect on word of mouth, with a coefficient of 0.278 and a t-statistic of 3.232 ( $p < 0.05$ ). The positive coefficient indicates a congruent relationship between loyalty and WOM. Customer loyalty is defined as a long-term commitment to continue using services from the same provider, as explained by Esenyel & Emeagwali (2019).

This finding is supported by previous research, such as Handayani et al. (2021), who reported a path analysis result showing that loyalty explains 50.4% of the variance in WOM, indicating that loyalty is a major determinant in generating positive WOM. Additionally, Wibowo & Junaedi (2019) found that patient loyalty plays a crucial mediating role in forming positive WOM in dental clinic services. Their study suggested that service quality and patient satisfaction do not directly influence WOM but exert significant indirect effects when mediated by loyalty.

## **CONCLUSION**

This study examines the influence of price, facilities, dental services, and staff services on word of mouth (WOM) through patient satisfaction and loyalty at YDC Dental Clinic. The analysis results show that all service variables significantly affect patient satisfaction. Price and staff services also have a direct impact on patient loyalty, whereas facilities and dental services influence loyalty only indirectly through satisfaction. Furthermore, patient satisfaction significantly affects both loyalty and WOM, and patient loyalty also enhances WOM. These findings underscore the critical role of patient satisfaction as a key driver in building loyalty and fostering positive WOM. The clinic should prioritize comprehensive service improvements to maintain an optimal patient experience. The empirical model employed effectively predicts the relationships among variables and can serve as a foundation for future research in healthcare service management.

The study highlights that improving patient satisfaction is the most effective strategy for enhancing word of mouth (WOM) at YDC Dental Clinic. Patient satisfaction is significantly influenced by factors such as price, facilities, and staff services, and acts as a key mediator in strengthening both patient loyalty and WOM. Price emerged as the most critical factor requiring immediate attention, while facilities and staff services also play important roles. Loyalty is primarily driven by price and satisfaction, and contributes positively to WOM. Therefore, by focusing on improving pricing strategies, maintaining quality facilities, and ensuring excellent staff service, YDC Dental Clinic can effectively build patient loyalty and encourage positive recommendations through WOM. This study strengthens the understanding of the relationship between service factors (price, facilities, dentist service, and staff service) and patient satisfaction, loyalty, and word of mouth in the dental clinic context. The findings highlight the crucial role of patient satisfaction as the main mediator linking service quality to loyalty and recommendation behavior. Thus, this research contributes to healthcare marketing theory by emphasizing that comprehensive service quality improvements are essential in building patient loyalty and positive word of mouth.

This study analyzed the influence of price, facilities, dentist services, and staff services on word of mouth (WOM), mediated by patient satisfaction and loyalty at YDC Dental Clinic, using the Importance-Performance Map Analysis (IPMA) approach to develop strategic recommendations. However, this study has several limitations. The limited scope of the location, which is confined only to YDC Dental Clinic, causes the results to be not generalizable to other clinics. Future research is recommended to involve multiple clinics across various regions with more diverse patient characteristics to enhance the relevance and generalizability of the findings. Moreover, the data collection process was quite lengthy due to the low quality of questionnaire responses, caused by a lack of respondent motivation. Subsequent research should employ more interactive approaches, such as providing incentives, to improve participation and data quality. Another limitation is the cross-sectional design, which only captures relationships between variables at one point in time. It is recommended to use a longitudinal design to better capture the dynamics of changes in satisfaction, loyalty, and WOM over a longer period comprehensively.

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