

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background

According to WHO in 2022, oral diseases are projected to impact 3.5 billion people worldwide, with three out of four cases occurring in middle-income countries (WHO, 2022). The global prevalence of oral diseases continues to rise due to lifestyle changes and urbanization (Redaksi Sehat Negeriku, 2024). The 2023 Indonesian Health Survey/ *Survei Kesehatan Indonesia* reported a prevalence of dental health issues in Indonesia at 43.6%. However, only 56.9% of those affected received dental care services. Additionally, 91,9% of the population in Indonesia has never sought treatment from a dentist (Kementerian Kesehatan, 2023). These findings highlight a significant lack of awareness among Indonesians regarding the importance of regular dental check-ups, as many individuals only seek dental care when they experience pain (Redaksi Sehat Negeriku, 2024).

The utilization of dental services is influenced by various factors, including socio-demographic elements such as age, gender, education level, awareness of National Health Insurance, and motivation (Rahmi et al., 2024). Furthermore, research indicates that patient satisfaction and perceived service value plays a crucial role in shaping patients' intentions to return to dental clinics. Satisfied patients are more likely to adhere to treatment plans, ensuring continuity of care, which ultimately increases the likelihood of future visits (Park et al., 2021; Trisnawati et al., 2022).

Several studies have examined key aspects influencing patient satisfaction in dental care. A qualitative by Luo et al. identified six factors: attitude, cost, convenience, pain management, quality, and the perceived need for oral disease prevention (Luo et al., 2018). Similarly, a study by Larsen et al. emphasized that patient satisfaction is influenced by interpersonal, patient-related, dentist-related, and situational factors, as well

as the outcomes they produce (Larsen et al., 2022). A systematic review by Al Ghanem et al. added demographics, accessibility, quality of care, communication, waiting time, and cost as significant determinants (Al Ghanem et al., 2023). In Indonesia, a study from Bone highlighted the importance of administrative staff, clear explanations of procedures, and attentive dental assistants in shaping patient satisfaction, with empathy prioritized over professionalism by Indonesian patients (Akbar et al., 2023).

In further exploration of factors affecting patient satisfaction, a study by Aldossary et al. conducted in Saudi Arabia found that dentist performance had the strongest correlation with patient satisfaction (Aldossary et al., 2023). Another study on sociodemographic influences found that participants with education level below college were more satisfied with dental services compared to those with a college education (Wencheslaus et al., 2024), while other research suggested that more educated patients tend to be less satisfied (Al Ghanem et al., 2023).

Despite extensive research on patient satisfaction in dental care, Previous studies have identified several limitations in assessing patient satisfaction and have provided recommendations for further research. Most prior research has relied on quantitative, cross-sectional designs, limiting the ability to draw causal conclusions and explore in-depth patient perspectives (Turra et al., 2021). Additionally, many of these studies were conducted in teaching hospitals, which differ from private clinics in terms of patient demographics, admission process, treatment duration, visit time, and cost (Luo et al., 2018).

Lixandru et al. suggest that patient satisfaction should be evaluated before, during, and after treatment to assess the evolution of influencing factors. They emphasize that patient satisfaction may be more closely related to comfort during dental visits than to the complexity or difficulty of procedures (Lixandru et al., 2024). Similarly, Szabo et al. recommend using open-ended questions to explore the factors contributing to patient satisfaction and loyalty, which could offer deeper insights into the relationships between various influencing factors (Szabó et al., 2023).

Building on this, Aldossary et al. further recommend exploring potential predictors of patient satisfaction, including the quality of care and other relevant satisfaction indicators (Aldossary et al., 2023).

Given the limitations of previous research, particularly the scarcity of qualitative studies in private dental clinics in Indonesia, this study seeks to address the gap by qualitatively assessing patient satisfaction in clinic T. Understanding patient experiences in a private clinic setting can offer unique insights into how care can be improved. This research seeks to offer a thorough understanding of patient satisfaction at Clinic T, contributing to the existing knowledge and providing practical recommendations for enhancing dental care services.

## **1.2. Research Problem**

Clinic “T” is a dental clinic established in 2019. Established with the goal of providing high-quality dental care, it has a dedicated team of professionals and a variety of services aimed at meeting patient needs. Clinic “T” has established partnerships with several organizations, including insurance companies, oral product providers, and dentists proficient in sign language. These collaborations are intended to facilitate patient care, improving both payment processes and services for patients with disabilities. Despite this, there may be variations in patient satisfaction based on individual experiences and service interactions.

Recent analysis of Google reviews and patient feedback suggests that there are areas of concern and satisfaction among patients. Google reviews indicate a high level of patient satisfaction at Clinic T, with an average rating of 4.8 (Figure 1.1). However, there is a significant variation in the reviews. While many patients gave 5 stars rating due to their high levels of satisfaction with the clinic’s professional staff and welcoming environment especially for children, there were also a few 1-star reviews with unsatisfactory comments such as:

*“The worst experience ever, a hard lesson in choosing the right doctor before deciding on treatment. Two teeth were drilled, leading to nerve damage, and I’m still suffering because of this”*

*“Paid 400k for scaling but only for lower teeth! Why is it necessary to do separate scaling for upper and lower teeth? Clearly, the doctor just wanted money! Unethical! Scaling is simple; anywhere in the world, if you pay for scaling, you pay for all your teeth! Ridiculous!”*

Although the average score from Google reviews is high, there are only 76 reviews, which is a small sample compared to the actual number of patients. Therefore, it is crucial to address the existing dissatisfaction and conduct this study to evaluate the dynamics of patient satisfaction at Clinic “T” while exploring the factors that affect the patient satisfaction.

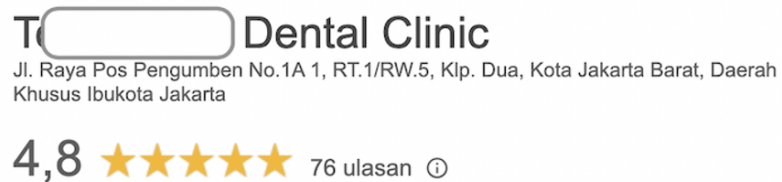


Figure 1.1 Google Review of Clinic "T"

### 1.2.1. Research Questions

1. What factors influence patient satisfaction at Clinic T?
2. How do these factors implement and contribute to patient satisfaction at Clinic T?

### 1.3. Research Purposes

The purpose of this research is to identify and analyze the factors that contribute to patient satisfaction at Clinic T and to examine how these factors impact overall patient satisfaction within the clinic.