

Patient Satisfaction with Dental and Oral Health Services: A Cross-Sectional Study at Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital

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ABSTRACT

Background: Patient satisfaction refers to the degree of positive feelings experienced by patients as a result of the healthcare services received, particularly when these services meet or exceed their expectations. Assessing patient satisfaction is essential for evaluating the quality of healthcare services, including dental and oral care. **Objective:** This study aimed to assess the level of patient satisfaction with dental and oral health services at Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital. **Methods:** A descriptive study with a cross-sectional design was conducted from September to October 2024. A total of 100 patients who had completed treatment at Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital were selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire based on five dimensions of service quality: responsiveness, tangibles, reliability, assurance, and empathy. **Results:** The results showed a high level of patient satisfaction across all dimensions: responsiveness (97%), tangibles (88%), reliability (99%), assurance (98%), and empathy (99%). **Conclusion:** The overall level of patient satisfaction with dental and oral health services at Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital was found to be high, indicating that the hospital provides quality services aligned with patient expectations.

Keywords: Patient satisfaction, dental services, service quality, Universitas Syiah Kuala, cross-sectional study

1. Introduction

Dental and oral health is an important component of individual and community health. According to Act Number 36 of 2009 concerning Health, dental and oral health services must be provided by the central government, local government, and community to maintain and improve the community's health level. This service included improving dental health, preventing dental diseases, treating dental diseases, and recovering dental health. This service is carried out sustainably and integratedly. Individual dental health services, community dental health services, and student dental health are used to promote dental and oral health.¹

Based on the Basic Health Research by the Ministry of Health (2018), the Indonesian population who have dental and oral health problems reaches 57.6%, with the majority of children (93%) and adults (16.4%). Based on Riskesdas 2018, Aceh Province shows comprehensive data regarding dental and oral health experienced by Acehnese population, which is 47.0% of decayed tooth/dental caries/toothache, 19.8% of tooth loss due to extraction/tooth loss due to natural exfoliation, 4.6% of restored tooth or filled tooth due to dental caries, and 9.3% of mobile tooth.^{2,5}

The success of treatment related to dental and oral problems certainly cannot be separated from the quality of services provided by health facilities to patients. High-quality service is really required because it is the right of every patient and can provide an opportunity to compete with other healthcare providers (Sagay, 2023). Health service refers to any effort provided individually or collectively in an organization to maintain and improve health, prevent and cure diseases, and recover the health of individuals, families, groups, or communities (Depkes RI, 2009). There are 5 (five) dimensions that can be used to assess the quality of health services: Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, Empathy, and Tangibles.⁴

The main indicator of the quality of health services is patient satisfaction. Patient satisfaction is the level of patient feeling that arises as a result of the health service performance obtained after patients compare it with what she/he feel. Patient will feel satisfied if the health service performance obtained is equal to or beyond their expectations. The need and expectation for fast and appropriate services, affordable medical costs, skilled healthcare professionals, and a friendly and communicative attitude are some of the patients' demands. Only a few health services are able to meet these demands. Satisfied patients are valuable assets because if patients are satisfied with the services provided, they will continue to use the service, while if patients are not satisfied, they will tell other people about their bad experiences.^{4,6}

Patient satisfaction with health services is influenced by several factors, which are classified into two categories: provider-related and patient-related. Provider-related factors include the competence of healthcare providers, interpersonal skills, such as friendliness, attentiveness, and empathy, which are the most frequently reported determining factors related to satisfaction in health service literature, and characteristics of facilities (e.g., physical environment, type of facilities, and level of facilities). Meanwhile, the patient-related factors are the characteristics of patients, including gender, age, race, socioeconomic status, health status, and expectations, which are predictors of patient satisfaction.⁷

Several studies explain that there is a relationship between patient satisfaction and the quality of service provided. A study by Noni (2018) stated that there is a significant relationship between the quality of dental and oral health and patient satisfaction in dr. Sobirin Regional Hospital, Lubuklinggau City. A study by Nia and Nuraisya (2023) stated that out of five dimensions of quality, patient satisfaction towards the quality of service in the dental clinic in Puskesmas (Community Health Center) Lepo-Lepo is in the satisfied category. A study by Sagay (2023) stated that there is a strong significant relationship between the quality of service, observed from five dimensions, and the level of patient satisfaction in the Dental Clinic in Hermina Hospital, Manado. A study by Nurhaeni (2022) shows that patients are satisfied with the dental and oral health service in Puskesmas Marangkayu, Kutai Kartanegara Regency, in terms of assurance, reliability, responsiveness, tangibility, or empathy.^{5,8,4}

Dental and Oral Hospital provides specific dental and oral health services, thereby enabling evaluation of patient satisfaction with the services provided. Patients usually visit the dentist regularly for routine checkups or to treat dental problems. Dental and Oral Hospital involves close interaction between patients and medical personnel, thus enabling a study to evaluate aspects influencing patient satisfaction. Patient satisfaction is an important indicator in evaluating the quality of dental and oral health services.²⁶ By considering the factors above, Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital is a strategic place to conduct a study on the level of patient satisfaction.

2. Materials and Methods

Study Design and Period

This research was designed as a descriptive observational study with a cross-sectional approach. The study was conducted over a one-month period, specifically from 11 September to 11 October 2024, at Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital.

Ethical Consideration

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Dentistry, Universitas Syiah Kuala, under approval number 197/KE/FKG/2020. All procedures conducted in this study complied with institutional and national research ethics guidelines. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their inclusion in the study.

Sampling Method

A purposive sampling technique with a non-probability approach was applied to select participants. This technique was used to ensure that only individuals meeting specific inclusion criteria were enrolled.

Participants and Inclusion Criteria

The study involved a total of 100 participants. The inclusion criteria were patients aged between 18 and 45 years who had visited and completed dental or oral treatment procedures at Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital during the data collection period. Additionally, only those who had provided written informed consent indicating their voluntary participation were included in the study.

Data Collection Instrument

Data were collected using a structured survey questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of items that measured patient satisfaction across five service quality dimensions: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, tangibles, and empathy, following the SERVQUAL framework.

Data Analysis

The collected data were tabulated and analyzed descriptively. The frequency and percentage distributions were calculated to determine the level of patient satisfaction for each dimension. Results were presented in tabular format for clarity and comparative interpretation.

3. Result and Discussion

This section presents the findings of the study on patient satisfaction with dental and oral health services at Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital. The results are categorized based on the five dimensions of service quality as outlined in the SERVQUAL framework: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, tangibles, and empathy. These dimensions serve as essential indicators for evaluating the quality of healthcare delivery from the patient's perspective. The analysis is based on responses from 100 patients who had completed their dental or oral treatment at the hospital during the study period. The data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analyzed to determine the frequency distribution and satisfaction levels for each service dimension.

The discussion compares the findings of this study with previous literature to provide a comprehensive interpretation of the results. Factors influencing patient satisfaction such as service performance, staff responsiveness, communication effectiveness, facility conditions, and empathy shown by dental personnel – are also examined in light of existing evidence. The implications of the findings for improving service quality in dental hospital settings are also discussed.

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the study participants in terms of gender and age. Out of the 100 respondents, 64% were female and 36% were male, indicating that the majority of the patients who received treatment at Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital during the study period were women. In terms of age distribution, the largest proportion of participants fell within the 26–44 years age group, accounting for 60% of the total sample. This was followed by the 18–25 years age group, representing 25% of respondents, while only 15% were aged over 44 years. These findings suggest that the hospital services were most utilized by adults in their productive and working age, which aligns with the general trend that individuals in this age range are more proactive in seeking dental care for both preventive and restorative purposes.

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of the subjects based on gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	36	36.0%
Female	64	64.0%
Total	100	100%
Age		
18-25	25	25.0%
26-44	60	60.0%
>44	15	15.0%
Total	100	100%

Table 1 shows that the majority of subjects were females. Based on the study conducted by Irawan (2018), the utilization of dental and oral health services can be influenced by gender. A similar

study was also conducted by Bulgareli (2018), which demonstrated that females are more sensitive to the presence of dental caries.³⁸ The majority of those seeking treatment at USK Dental Hospital were 26-44 years old. This age mostly utilizes dental and oral health. This is similar to the study conducted by Hidana (2018), where the age group with the highest utilization of healthcare services is late adolescent who are in their productive period, so they have a higher awareness of seeking care when required. As individuals grow older, their ability to make decisions, think rationally, increase wisdom, regulate emotions, and tolerate differing perspectives tends to increase.^{30,31,32}

Table 2 illustrates the distribution of patient satisfaction across five service quality dimensions—reliability, responsiveness, assurance, tangibles, and empathy—based on the SERVQUAL model. The reliability dimension received the highest satisfaction level, with 99% of patients reporting being very satisfied, and only 1% indicating they were quite satisfied. No respondents reported being dissatisfied in this category, suggesting that the hospital staff consistently provided accurate and dependable services. In the responsiveness dimension, 97% of patients felt very satisfied, while 3% were quite satisfied, and none reported dissatisfaction. This reflects the hospital's effectiveness in delivering prompt and responsive care, including fast handling of patient needs and inquiries.

The assurance dimension also showed high satisfaction, with 98% of patients very satisfied and 2% quite satisfied. This indicates strong patient trust in the competence, communication, and courtesy of the healthcare providers. The tangibles dimension received slightly lower satisfaction levels compared to the other dimensions. While 88% of patients were very satisfied, 8% were quite satisfied, and 4% expressed dissatisfaction. This suggests room for improvement in physical facilities such as waiting areas, equipment, and the hospital's overall environment.

Lastly, the empathy dimension also received a highly positive response, with 99% of patients reporting being very satisfied and only 1% quite satisfied. This demonstrates that patients perceived the dental staff as attentive, understanding, and respectful of individual patient needs. Overall, the findings from Table 2 indicate that patient satisfaction with dental and oral health services at Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital is remarkably high across all dimensions, particularly in aspects related to provider competence, interpersonal communication, and responsiveness.

Table 2. Frequency Distribution Based on Dimensions in Dental and Oral Health Services in Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital

Health Services	Level of Patient Satisfaction			Total
	Not Satisfied	Quite Satisfied	Very Satisfied	
Reliability	0 (0%)	1 (1.0%)	99 (99.0%)	100
Responsiveness	0 (0%)	3 (3.0%)	97 (97.0%)	100
Assurance	0 (0%)	2 (2.0%)	98 (98.0%)	100
Tangibles	4 (4.0%)	8 (8.0%)	88 (88.0%)	100
Empathy	0 (0%)	1 (1.0%)	99 (99.0%)	100

Table 2 shows that in the reliability dimension, the subjects felt very satisfied with dental and oral health services in Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital. This study was presented by 5 attributes, including ease of procedures, administration services, accuracy of service schedule in Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital, straightforward service processes, and the precision of healthcare personnel. Based on the percentage results, it can be seen that subjects were very satisfied with the 5 attributes. Subjects assessed quite satisfied in 4 attributes: administration services, punctuality of service schedule in Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital, straightforward service processes, and the accuracy of healthcare personnel.

Table 3 presents the overall levels of patient satisfaction with dental and oral health services at Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital. The majority of respondents, accounting for 99 out of 100 patients (99.0%), reported a high level of satisfaction with the services they received. Only 1 respondent (1.0%) indicated moderate satisfaction, and no respondents (0.0%) expressed low satisfaction. These findings reflect a strong positive perception among patients regarding the quality of services provided by the hospital. The overwhelmingly high satisfaction rate suggests that the institution has been successful in meeting patient expectations across various aspects of care, including service reliability, responsiveness, professionalism, facility standards, and staff empathy. The absence of respondents in the low satisfaction category further emphasizes the effectiveness of the hospital's service delivery in ensuring positive patient experiences.

Table 3. Frequency Distribution Based on the Level of Patient Satisfaction towards Dental and Oral Health Service in Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital

Patient Satisfaction	Frequency	Percentage
High	99	99.0%
Moderate	1	1.0%
Low	0	0%
Total	100	100%

Table 3 shows that subjects of the study with high patient satisfaction were 99 (99%) subjects. This study was conducted to observe the level of patient satisfaction with dental and oral health services in Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital. Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital is a health facility that provides comprehensive, integrated, and equitable services that are accessible to the general public. Quality and effective health services in a hospital include comfortable services, friendly staff, good communication between doctor and patient, adequate quality and quantity of medical equipment, good quality of hospital environment, and affordable treatment costs, which can influence patient satisfaction. Patients tend to give good references to others for the service they receive.²⁶

Reliability is the ability of the hospital to provide services as promised accurately and reliably. Performance must be in accordance with patient expectations, which means time accuracy and equal services for all patients. Reliability is the most dominant factor influencing patient satisfaction. Service must recognize that a patient's recovery is not only determined by the medicines provided but also influenced by the way health workers provide services, such as attitude, skill, and knowledge.³⁷ This result is in line with the study conducted by Nurhaeni (2022), which demonstrated that 88% were very satisfied with the service in the reliability dimension. A similar result was also reported in a study conducted by Wahyu (2017), which concluded that the majority of patients generally trust the reliability and accuracy of the service provided by health workers. The results of this study are also similar to the study conducted by Yanti (2023), which demonstrated that 87% of respondents were very satisfied with the straightforward service process, ease of administrative procedures, friendliness of health workers, and punctuality of health workers.^{1,9,27}

For the responsiveness dimension, the subjects were very satisfied with dental and oral health services in Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital. This study found 4 attributes, including speed of doctor and nurse in addressing patient complaints, clear and easily understandable information, fast actions by doctor and nurse, and short waiting times for services. These 4 attributes obtained a 'very satisfied' rating from subjects. Subjects who rated quite satisfied on 2 attributes were in the questions: fast actions by doctor and nurse, and short waiting times for services.

The responsiveness dimension is an ability to help and provide fast and appropriate services for patients by providing clear information. Responsiveness from hospital management will give patients a sense of trust that they will always be helped. A study conducted by Akbar (2022) suggested that responsiveness is one of the indicators that is always included in various studies related to the quality of services. Responsiveness can also be seen in the attitude of medical experts expected by patients during treatment.²⁸ This is in line with a study conducted by Raharja (2018), which stated that 97% of patients were very satisfied with the responsiveness dimension in providing dental and oral health services. The results of the study conducted by Adriatman (2024) reported that 90% of respondents were very satisfied with dental and oral health services in the responsiveness dimension. This means that the dimension has been considered fast and responsive. A similar study conducted by Kosnan (2020) found that some patients were very satisfied with services provided in the responsiveness dimension due to the delivery of information that is easy for the patients to understand.^{17,34,39}

For the assurance dimension, the subjects were very satisfied with dental and oral health services in Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital. 98% of subjects assessed 6 attributes, including dentists providing a sense of security and trust in patients, dentists' knowledge about patient conditions, dentists' ability to handle patient complaints, explanation of procedures, explanation of examination results, and patient confidentiality. Subjects who rated quite satisfied with two attributes were in the questions: dentist's ability in addressing patient complaints and explanation of procedures.

Assurance is knowledge, politeness, and the ability of health workers to instill patient trust in the components of communication, credibility, security, competence, and politeness. Assurance has

an influence on patient satisfaction. The better the patient's perception of assurance, the higher the patient's satisfaction. Assurance of security provided by the hospital will make patients feel secure and eliminate hesitation in seeking treatment; moreover, assurance provided by the hospital will have a positive influence on patient satisfaction as the hospital is able to meet patients' expectations through the knowledge and skills of the doctors and nurses.^{35,40} This study is in line with the study conducted by Anas (2018), which stated that 76.5% of patients are satisfied with the assurance and certainty of dental and oral health workers. A similar study by Rubini (2023) found that subjects are very satisfied with the dentist's ability to provide a sense of security, thereby minimizing perceived risks and fostering trust in patients.^{35,17,40}

For the tangibles dimension, subjects were satisfied and dissatisfied with dental and oral health services at Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital. This includes 5 attributes: cleanliness, neatness, and comfort of the room; well-organized interior and exterior design; completeness of equipment used; cleanliness and neat appearance of staff; and adequate patient waiting chairs. Meanwhile, some respondents were dissatisfied with the waiting room facility. This is presumed to be due to the limited waiting area and the insufficient chairs.

The tangible dimension is an aspect of service quality that is experienced, perceived, and assessed by patients through their senses. A good tangible aspect will improve patient expectations. Therefore, a facility is an important infrastructure in improving patient satisfaction, for instance, providing convenience, meeting needs, and providing comfort for service users. If the facility provided is in accordance with the needs, patients will be satisfied, and they will give an assessment (affective reaction) of the health facilities and infrastructures that are closely related to the provision of health services.¹⁷

This study is similar to the study conducted by Adriatman (2024), demonstrating that 85% of respondents are in the very satisfied category and some respondents are in the quite satisfied and dissatisfied categories with the dentist's and nurse's appearance, cleanliness and completeness of equipment, and condition of the waiting room. According to the assumption by Yanti (2023), a hospital cannot operate effectively solely by having human resources; however, it must also be supported by adequate supporting facilities, both medical and non-medical. A similar study was also conducted by Jequeline (2023). The results of this study showed that the tangible dimension must be supported by facilities; the more comfortable the facilities, the higher the patient satisfaction.^{17,27,36}

The empathy dimension, the subjects were very satisfied with dental and oral health services in Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital. This dimension was assessed by 99% of subjects based on 4 attributes, including giving attention to patients, addressing the complaints of patients and their families, serving all patients regardless of social status, and providing opportunities for patients and their families to ask questions. Subjects who rated quite satisfied to two attributes were in the questions: serving all patients regardless of social status and providing opportunities for patients and their families to ask questions.

Empathy is the ability of health workers to provide services with full attention and sensitivity to what the patient is experiencing. Patients' sensitivity due to pain, suffering, and helplessness can cause them and their families to become easily angry, depressed, and sometimes resistant to undergoing treatment. This study is in line with the study conducted by Raharja (2018), where this dimension was assessed as 'very satisfied' by 97% of subjects in providing dental and oral health services. A study conducted by Rubin (2023) assessed that subjects were very satisfied with the services in the empathy dimension. Meanwhile, in this dimension, services provided are considered to be able to understand patients' complaints and act according to patients' needs.^{17,39}

Based on Table 3, the level of patient satisfaction in Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital is considered high based on the services provided. The quality of service highly determines the level of an individual's satisfaction. Satisfaction is essentially the level of feeling where an individual expresses the result of comparing the service performance received and expected. Based on the study conducted by Nurhaeni (2022), services provided by a health institution must have specific characteristics, where the characteristics must include elements and quality. Patient satisfaction is actually the most important thing. If the patient is not satisfied with the services provided, he/she will not seek out or accept quality service, even though the services are available, easily accessible, and affordable. The level of patient satisfaction in Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital showed that subjects were satisfied with the services provided. This satisfaction is attributed to the competence, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangible aspects demonstrated by doctors or nurses in providing services

according to fundamental human needs to possess, to be supported, to feel secure, to build connections, and to create emotional bonds.^{1,33}

4. Conclusion

The level of patient satisfaction in dental and oral health services in Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital in dimensions of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, tangibles, and empathy is considered high based on the services provided.

5. Limitations

This study was conducted in a single institutional setting, Universitas Syiah Kuala Dental Hospital, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other dental healthcare facilities. The use of a purposive sampling method may also introduce selection bias, as participants were not randomly selected. Furthermore, the reliance on self-reported data through questionnaires may be subject to response bias, particularly social desirability bias. Future research involving multi-center studies with larger, randomized samples and qualitative interviews is recommended to obtain deeper insights into factors influencing patient satisfaction in dental and oral health services.

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Authors Contribution

Contribution	Andriany P	Novita CF	Mulkhairul I	Rahmayani L	Sofya PA	Ilham M
Concepts or ideas	√				√	√
Design	√				√	√
Definition of intellectual content	√				√	√
Literature search	√	√	√	√	√	√
Experimental studies	√	√	√	√	√	√
Data acquisition	√	√	√	√	√	√
Data analysis	√	√	√	√	√	√
Statistical analysis	√	√	√	√	√	√
Manuscript preparation	√	√				√
Manuscript editing	√	√	√	√	√	√
Manuscript review	√	√	√	√	√	√



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