

## DETERMINANT VARIABLES INFLUENCING PATIENT INTENTION AND DECISION MAKING AT Q DENT SMILE DENTAL CLINIC

Shella Presilia<sup>1</sup>

Kalbis University, Pulomas Selatan Kav 22, Jakarta, 13210, Indonesia

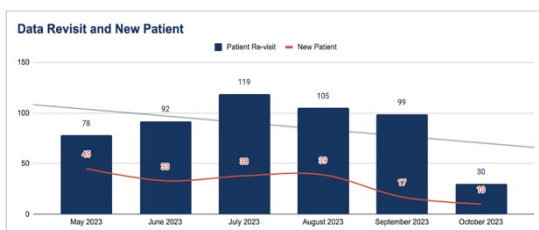
### ABSTRACT

Q Dent Smile dental clinic is facing difficulties in attracting new patients. To address this issue, the research aims to identify the influence of brand image and firm generated content (FGC) on patient intention, which impacts their decision to choose Q Dent Smile. This study employs the SEM PLS method with a sample of 200 data. The results indicate that FGC positively influences brand image. In addition, brand image and FGC positively influences the patient intention. Brand image also has a direct positive effect on the decision to choose a dental clinic. However, FGC does not directly influence the decision to choose the dental clinic. However, in an indirect test, patient intention significantly mediates the influence of FGC on clinic choice.

**Keywords** - brand image, firm generated content, customer intention, purchase decision

### INTRODUCTION

In the dental clinic industry, patients play an important role in the survival of a dental clinic, including Q Dent Smile. In order to ensure the long-term operation of the dental clinic, effective strategic planning is needed to increase the number of new patients and to keep existing patients coming for dental care. The problem currently facing the Q Dent Smile dental clinic is a significant decline in the



number of new patients. Based on Fig. 1, it can be seen that in the period from May 2023 to October 2023, Q Dent Smile dental clinic served 523 existing patients, while it was able to attract only 182 new patients. On average, Q Dent Smile can only attract about 35% of new patients. In fact, dental clinics are highly dependent on the number of new patients who undergo treatment.

Fig. 1. Q Dent Smile Patient Data

Therefore, a pre-survey was conducted to identify the factors that influence prospective patients when choosing a dental clinic for dental treatment. The pre-survey was conducted on October 10, 2023 among 25 respondents who were looking for a place to get dental treatment. The result shows that social media and brands with a positive reputation are the most important factors for respondents when choosing a dental clinic. In order to gain a potential market, it is necessary to have a good marketing department, one of which is by building a good brand image (Iskandar & Haryanti, 2022). The stronger the brand image of the dental clinic, the easier it is to attract new patients. These findings align with those of prior research by Setyowati et al. (2020), which determined that brand image can be regarded as a pivotal strategy in patient decision-making regarding hospital selection.

Similarly, research conducted by Haque et al. (2020) indicates that a favourable brand image can facilitate and reinforce patients' intentions regarding their selection of a specific hospital. A brand image enables consumers to ascertain the quality of a service, which in turn

informs their decisions regarding the selection of health services (Setyowati et al., 2020). Therefore, dental clinics need to be able to offer the best services and be able to present a positive image to reassure potential patients. In addition to the brand image factor, the social media factor is also a significant consideration for prospective patients when selecting a dental clinic.

Furthermore, social media can serve as an additional factor that may influence patient attraction. The results of the study conducted by Hariyanti and colleagues (2023) indicate that social media has a positive and significant impact on patient intention to visit. A variety of strategies and activities can be employed on social media with the objective of attracting new patients. One such strategy is the use of social media content. Social media can be utilized optimally to carry out marketing activities through the presentation of content in an attractive manner (Parlindungan & Ferica, 2020). As evidenced by the findings of Onofrei et al. (2021) and Dara & Mariah (2020), the content disseminated on social media exerts a profound impact on consumer purchase intentions. The creation of high-quality and pertinent content offers a means of providing value to the company. It is therefore crucial for companies, including dental clinics, to develop high-quality, original content. Firm-generated content (FGC) represents the primary mode of communication on online platforms, including social media. The objective of FGC is to engage with customers, and it is entirely under the control of the company. The content produced by the company and published through social media platforms represents a significant source of information for prospective patients. By displaying relevant content, it can enhance awareness of the significance of dental care and motivate individuals to visit the dental clinic or seek further information about the dental care that prospective patients require.

In light of the aforementioned phenomena, it can be posited that effective management of a dental clinic's brand image and FGC may foster patient intention, which could subsequently influence the patient's decision regarding the

selection of a dental clinic. Accordingly, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled "Determinant Variables Influencing Patient Intention and Decision Making at Q Dent Smile Dental Clinic" The study will address three formulations of the problem: 1. Is there an influence of X2 on X1? 2. Is there an influence of X2 and X1 on Y through Z simultaneously and partially? 3. Is there an influence of X on Y?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This study is grounded in two theoretical framework is the theory of reasoned action and the theory of planned behaviour. This study employs the theory of reasoned action because it can elucidate the manner in which consumers who receive stimuli can process and elicit action.

Given that consumer behaviour in this study does not emerge abruptly, the theory of planned behaviour can be integrated to elucidate how consumers deliberate and deliberate before making a purchasing decision. In accordance with the theory of reasoned action (TRA), an individual's likelihood of engaging in a specific behaviour is contingent upon their intention to perform that behaviour. In (Harjana, 2023), the TRA is delineated with several assumptions, including:

- Individuals possess goals and intentions
- Attitudes toward behavior are shaped by beliefs
- Subjective norms exert influence on intentions
- Intentions predict behavior

In 1985, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) was developed as an extension of the preceding theory, namely the TRA. In the TPB, a new element is introduced in the form of the variable perceived behavioral control, which is posited to exert a significant influence on behavior (Harjana, 2023:20). The core of TPB is the individual's intention to perform a specific behavior, as postulated by TRA. Intention can be interpreted as a motivational drive that influences behavior, indicating the strength of the effort that will be made. The

stronger the individual's intention to perform a behavior, the greater the likelihood of that behavior being carried out (Ajzen, 1991).

The brand image is regarded as a pivotal element in the initial stages of fostering consumer trust in a brand. This is due to the fact that it can facilitate consumer recall of the brand name, logo, and value proposition (Astono & Kurniatin, 2021). A brand image represents a brand's reputation and associations that have been established over time. The construction of a robust brand image is a lengthy process. Consequently, a robust strategy is essential to preserve the company's favourable and positive brand image (Nurjanah & Faizal, 2019).

As outlined by Keller (2003), the dimensions that shape a brand image in relation to brand associations can be classified as follows (Krisprimandoyo, 2021, p. 44):

- The favourability of brand association
- The strength of a brand association
- Uniqueness of brand associations

The FGC refers to content produced by companies with the objective of introducing and promoting their products or services. This content is disseminated through various media, including social networks (Liang et al., 2020). As posited by Kumar et al. (2016) in Yang et al. (2019), FGC represents a form of marketing communication created on a company's social media with the objective of conveying marketing messages in order to attract consumers.

In their research, Schivinski and Dabrowski identified four key factors for evaluating the effectiveness of firm-generated content communication. These include satisfaction with social media accounts, expectations of social media accounts, the appeal of social media accounts, and social media performance (Schivinski & Dabrowski, 2015). The individual making the purchasing decision is significantly influenced by information imbalance (Yang et al., 2019). The availability of information about a product or service has a significant impact on consumer purchasing decisions. When consumers have access to a wealth of information, they are more likely to

make informed decisions and purchase the product or service in question. Conversely, when consumers lack sufficient information, their purchasing decisions are likely to be less informed. Consequently, firms may utilize FGC to furnish consumers with comprehensive data regarding the products or services they offer, thereby facilitating more informed purchasing decisions (Liang et al., 2020).

As Choi and Lee (2017) have observed, FGC has the capacity to influence purchasing decisions, given that it facilitates access to comprehensive information about products and services. Consequently, FGC represents a valuable marketing strategy.

Purchase interest is generated when consumers have completed an alternative evaluation process. In this evaluation process, consumers will consider a number of factors in determining which product or service they will utilize, with brand or brand preference playing a significant role (Sari, 2020).

In this evaluation process, customers will search for and encounter a plethora of information through a multitude of channels, including social media.

As posited by (Lucas and Britt, 2003), purchase interest encompasses a number of constituent elements, including attention, interest, desire and conviction.

The concept of a purchase decision, as defined by Kudo (2013) in Agustin et al. (2020), refers to the attitude of consumers who take action to purchase a specific product or service with the expectation that it will satisfy their needs and are willing to assume the associated risks. In the meantime, Kotler and Armstrong (2001) in Komalasari et al. (2021) posit that the decision-making process encompasses five distinct stages. The stages are problem recognition, the search for information, evaluate the alternatives, purchase decision, and behavior after purchase (Sutisna, 2002).

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a quantitative research methodology. The study employs a survey methodology, utilizing a questionnaire as the

primary instrument for data collection. The objective of this study is to examine prospective new patients seeking dental care at Q Dent Smile. The number of prospective new patients is 300. This study employs a probability sampling technique. According to the results of the Slovin formula, all respondents from a population of 300 are deemed to be healthy, and there are no elderly or children who completed the questionnaire. The entire population is thus considered to have the same right to participate. The researcher proceeded to include a total of 200 respondents in the study. This number is stated to be representative because it has exceeded the minimum sample limit of 171 respondents.

## RESULTS

In SEM, inner model and outer model tests are performed. In the outer model, measurements of outer loading/loading factor, average variance extracted (AVE), and cross loading are performed. In the loading factor, all indicator values have a loading factor value of more than 0.6, so it can be concluded that all indicators of the patient's decision variable in choosing a dental clinic are valid, where the indicators can measure the patient's decision variable in choosing a dental clinic.

In AVE, the value of all measurement items included in the above variables is 0.50. This means that the evaluation of the outer model from the aspect of convergent validity is fulfilled.

In cross loading, each indicator of each variable correlates more strongly with the main variable it measures. Therefore, all aspects of discriminant validity are met at the item level.

Meanwhile, to define that our variable is reliable or not, we can measure with Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. The Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values of each variable have values greater than 0.7, indicating that overall the items are consistent or reliable in measuring each variable.

In inner model test, we will measure R Square, Effect Size and Predictive Relevance.

Variabel	R Square	R Square Adjusted
(X1) Brand Image	0.734	0.733
(Y) Keputusan Pasien Memilih Klinik Gigi	0.684	0.679
(Z) Minat Pasien	0.649	0.645

Variabel	(X1) Brand Image	(X2) Firm Generated Content	(Y) Keputusan Pasien Memilih Klinik Gigi	(Z) Minat Pasien
(X1) Brand Image			0.054	0.113
(X2) Firm Generated Content	2.759		0.005	0.153
(Y) Keputusan Pasien Memilih Klinik Gigi				0.312
(Z) Minat Pasien				

Brand image is evidenced by the high explanatory power of 73.3% for this variable. The remaining 26.7% is attributed to other variables that fall outside the scope of this study. The considerable variation in patients' decisions regarding the selection of a dental clinic, as indicated by brand image and FGC, is 67.9% (strong influence). Similarly, the substantial variation in patients' intention, as influenced by brand image and FGC, is 64.5% (moderate influence).

Variabel	Q <sup>2</sup> Predict
(X1) Brand Image	0.736
(Y) Keputusan Pasien Memilih Klinik Gigi	0.531
(Z) Minat Pasien	0.615

2.759, which indicates that the impact of X2 on X1 is considerable. The F<sup>2</sup> value for X1 in comparison to Z is 0.113, indicating that the influence of X1 on Z is approaching that of a medium effect. The F<sup>2</sup> value for X1 against Y is 0.054, indicating that the influence of X1 on Y is within the small category. The F<sup>2</sup> value for X2 against Z is 0.153, indicating that X2 exerts a medium influence on Z. The F<sup>2</sup> value for X2 against Y is 0.005, suggesting that X2 has a minimal influence on Y, falling below the threshold of the small category. The F<sup>2</sup> value for Z against Y is 0.312, indicating that Z exerts a large influence on Y.

Fig. 4. Value of predictive relevance

Hair stipulates that the Q<sup>2</sup> value must exceed 0.5. As evidenced by the results presented in the table below, all values are above 0.5 but not exceeding 1, thereby substantiating the

conclusion that all three variables possess high predictive relevance.

## **DISCUSSION**

The influence of FGC on brand image. From the results of the hypothesis test between FGC and brand image, it can be concluded that the hypothesis can be accepted. This is consistent with the research conducted by (Sidharta et al., 2021; Damayanti et al., 2021), which explains that social media content has a positive and significant influence on brand image. By utilizing social media platforms, dental clinics can present credible content and patients can easily get the latest information about dental care. This is because the content generated by the company is fully controlled by the company, so it can strengthen the brand image through social media.

The influence of brand image on patient intention. From the results of hypothesis testing between brand image and patient intention, it can be concluded that the hypothesis can be accepted. The results of this study are consistent with the research of (Sidharta et al., 2021; Salhab et al., 2023; Komalasari et al., 2021), which states that brand image has a positive influence on purchase intention. Therefore, research by (Sukawati, 2021; Hosgor & Sevim, 2022 and Vimla & Taneja, 2020) emphasizes that companies need to build and maintain brand image because brand image plays an important role.

In order to increase patients' intention in seeking dental care, dental clinics must develop the ability to create or build a positive brand image. According to (Maulana & Ayuningtyas, 2023), a positive brand image is built through the trust that patients have. Therefore, it is very important for dental clinics to develop effective strategies to build a brand image so that dental clinics are superior to their competitors and can increase patients' confidence in seeking dental care.

When building a brand image, dental clinics can also emphasize the cleanliness and sterilization aspects of the dental clinic. This is

because patients tend to be more interested in receiving dental care in clinics that are kept clean. This is also explained in research (Khalife et al., 2023), the cleanliness aspect is one of the main concerns of patients. Patients who come to the dental clinic for treatment will feel safer if the environment in the clinic is clean and sterile. Therefore, ensuring that cleanliness is maintained can provide a positive image. It is hoped that by building a positive brand image, dental clinics can achieve superior performance and increase patient intention.

The influence of FGC on patient intention. From the results of the hypothesis test between FGC and patient intention, it can be concluded that the hypothesis can be accepted. This is in line with the research conducted by (Salhab et al., 2023), which explains that there is a positive and significant influence between social media marketing and purchase intention. Thus, research by Richter & Kazley, 2020; Majeed et al., 2022; Emini & Zeqiri, 2021), says that social media is an important platform that can have an impact on purchase intention. Another study by (Kedan et al., 2021) also shows that FGC has a positive and significant influence on purchase intention. The concept of FGC is content activity on social media that is fully controlled by the firm. Looking at the behavior of Indonesian consumers who tend to seek information through social media, this is reinforced by data from Katadata Insight Center and the Ministry of Communication and Information (2021), which shows that 73% of Indonesians prefer to seek information through social media (Databoks, 2022). Therefore, this can be used by business actors of dental clinics to utilize company generated content to provide information about dental care to patients.

According to (Richter & Kazley, 2020), social media is a new trend for patients in seeking health information. Where research (Salhab et al., 2023) provides an explanation that social media allows consumers to get more information about products or services so that they can increase purchase intention.

According to (Kedan et al., 2021), FGC plays an important role in influencing purchase behavior as well as being an important channel for promotion.

The influence of brand image on patients' decisions to choose a dental clinic. From the results of the hypothesis test between brand image and patient decisions to choose a dental clinic, it can be concluded that the hypothesis can be accepted. This is consistent with the research conducted by (Husen et al., 2022; Agustin, 2020; Setyowati et al., 2020), which explains that brand image has an influence on patient visits to the clinic. According to research by (Havidz et al., 2020), brand image also influences decisions to use services. Therefore, dental clinics must also be able to understand patients' desires so that the clinic's brand image can be positive. In improving this brand image as one of the strategies that can be carried out by clinics to increase the number of new patients (Setyowati et al., 2020).

From the results of the hypothesis test carried out by indirect effect, patient intention can significantly mediate brand image in increasing patient decisions in choosing a dental clinic. When the brand image is better perceived by patients, the higher the patient's intention and the higher the patient's decision to choose a dental clinic. According to (Komalasari et al., 2021), patient intention increases due to a positive brand image. Thus, patients will feel more confident in choosing a dental clinic if they can feel the benefits offered by the clinic.

In connection with research, clinic staff from doctors, nurses, and administrators must provide the best service, where by paying attention to patients by asking about their complaints, explaining the right treatment, and ensuring that the treatment that has been performed has no problems, patients feel more cared for, which has an impact on increasing patient intention in undergoing dental care.

Therefore, dental clinics must continue to review and improve their advantages, strengths and uniqueness to build a strong brand image.

Because a strong brand image will be embedded in the minds of patients.

The influence of FGC on patient decisions in choosing a dental clinic. From the results of the hypothesis test between FGC and patient decisions in choosing a dental clinic, it can be concluded that the hypothesis cannot be accepted. This is not in line with the research conducted by (Gwenisa and Pranomo, 2022), which shows that FGC has a positive effect on customer purchase decisions in choosing dental clinics.

Where FGC does not have a significant direct influence on patient decisions in choosing a dental clinic. This is due to the many considerations in deciding the right clinic to entrust their dental care. However, when the hypothesis test was conducted using an indirect effect, patient intention was able to significantly mediate FGC in increasing patient decisions in choosing a dental clinic. According to (Yang et al., 2019), when consumers have limited and non-comprehensive information, it can affect their confidence in making purchase decisions.

Therefore, companies can use FGC as a tool to provide consumers with a lot of detailed and comprehensive information. Research conducted by (Kedan et al., 2021) explains that FGC can attract consumers' long-term interest and make purchasing decisions.

The influence of patient intention on patient decisions in choosing a dental clinic. From the results of the hypothesis test between patient intention and patient decisions in choosing a dental clinic, it can be concluded that the hypothesis can be accepted. This is in line with research conducted by (Subana and Kerti 2019; Hafizi and Ali, 2021), which explains that intention has a positive and significant effect on purchasing decisions.

According to research conducted by (Hafizi and Ali, 2021; Komalasari et al., 2021), it shows that the higher the intention in purchasing, the higher the level of purchasing decisions.

## CONCLUSION

In order to maintain the continuity of dental clinic operations, it is essential that management implement a strategy to increase the number of new patients. Of the five direct effect hypotheses, one was rejected; namely, that FGC influences patients' decisions to choose a dental clinic. However, when viewed through the lens of patient intention, it became evident that patient intention is able to mediate FGC with patients' decisions to choose a dental clinic. Therefore, it can be argued that dental clinics are required to create strategies that can strengthen intention.

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