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Article

The Effect of Service Quality Toward Patient Loyalty in Special Hospital of South Sulawesi

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ABSTRACT

The obligation of hospitals to continuously improve and ensure service quality is regulated in Article 40 of Law No. 44 of 2009 concerning hospitals. High-quality services create emotional bonds with patients, resulting in positive experiences and increased loyalty. Therefore, service quality is essential to achieving patient satisfaction, which fosters loyalty. This study aims to determine the influence of service quality on patient loyalty at the Special Hospital of South Sulawesi Province. This quantitative research used a cross-sectional design. The sample consisted of 147 returning patients who received services at the outpatient installation of Dadi Regional Special Hospital (RSKD). The results showed that service quality significantly affects patient satisfaction. Furthermore, service quality has a significant impact on patient loyalty. These findings highlight the importance for hospitals to remain committed to improving service quality as a strategic effort to increase patient satisfaction and loyalty. Enhancing satisfaction will, in turn, support hospital strategies and the achievement of organizational goals.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

Hospitals are centers for providing public health services as a form of fulfilling the rights of Indonesian citizens in accordance with Article 28H of the 1945 Constitution concerning citizen rights, one of which is to obtain health services. The obligation of hospitals to continue to improve and guarantee the quality of their services is regulated in Article 40 of Law No. 44 of 2009 concerning hospitals. Hospitals are expected to become social organizations engaged in the health sector with the function of providing comprehensive health services, efforts to cure diseases (curative) and prevention of diseases (preventive) to the community as expected. According to the World Health Association (WHO), a hospital is the entire organization and medical services that function to provide complete health services to the community, both curative and rehabilitative, where the service products reach family and environmental services from various social groups ranging from simple to upper middle class (Ayuningtiyas et al, 2015).

In carrying out its function as the person responsible for the creation of comprehensive health services, the government should have hospitals with quality, fair, and equitable service levels. (Asemrew, 2020). However, in reality, the rapid development of technology and information and increasingly tight competition between industrial companies require hospitals, both private and government, especially government hospitals, to improve the quality and quality of service in order to compete and meet consumer needs that are still far from what is expected. This is influenced by three important changes that provide challenges as well as opportunities, namely limited resources, the existence of decentralization policies and the level of awareness of the importance of quality (quality awareness) in health services (Listyorini, 2021).

The approach to the quality and quality of health services can be seen from several perspectives, namely the perspective of the health service provider, the perspective of the funder, the perspective of the owner of the health service facility, and the patient's perspective (Pohan, 2006). From the four perspectives above, it can be said that the patient's perspective on the service provider has an important role because it can find out more about what the patient's opinions and views actually are. As is known, the patient's perspective has implications for continuous improvement so that the quality of service must be continuously updated at all times in order to create good quality and quality of health services. Patient satisfaction is a sensation of the level of satisfaction experienced after using or obtaining a service (Nurfitriani, 2021). Therefore, patient satisfaction often reflects a gap between the

expected service and the experience after obtaining the service (Ampah, 2019). This proves that the quality of service is influenced by two factors, namely expected service and perceived service where quality should start from the patient's needs and end with the patient's perception (Endeshaw, 2021). With that, hospitals as service providers are required to understand what are actually the basic needs that determine patient satisfaction itself.

Good quality hospital services tend to provide emotional bonds to patients resulting in positive experiences and ultimately increasing patient loyalty that will continue continuously (Meesala and Paul, 2018). Greater patient satisfaction with hospital services increases compliance with doctor's orders, loyalty, positive word of mouth impressions by patients, reduces the number of patient complaints, higher profits, higher patient return rates and more patient referrals (Zarei et al., 2015). So it can be seen that service quality is a must and an indicator to achieve patient satisfaction which ultimately facilitates the creation of patient loyalty. Patient satisfaction is an indicator that must be considered in health services and has become an important issue for governments around the world, including in Indonesia. Patient satisfaction standards in health services are set nationally by the Ministry of Health. In accordance with the Regulation of the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia in 2016 concerning Minimum Service Standards for patient satisfaction, which is above 90% (Kurniajati, 2022). If a health service is found with a patient satisfaction level below 90%, then it is considered that the health service provided does not meet minimum standards or is not of good quality.

South Sulawesi Province has 90 general hospitals and 33 specialty hospitals (Central Statistics Agency, 2021). The increasing number of hospitals in South Sulawesi is not followed by the fulfillment of patient satisfaction levels in this province. Of the 31 specialty hospitals, at least 4 specialty hospitals are managed by the provincial government, including RSKD Dadi, RSKDIA Siti Fatimah, and RSKDIA Pertiwi. RSKD Dadi is a specialty hospital that currently not only acts as a hospital for special services for ODGJ (people with mental disorders), but has been able to serve general patients. In addition, RSKDIA Siti Fatimah and RSKDIA Pertiwi are special hospitals that provide maternal and child health services. These three hospitals are currently receiving special attention from the South Sulawesi Provincial Government in accordance with the priority program of the South Sulawesi Provincial Government in the 2018-2023 Regional Medium-Term Development Plan document, namely the hospital service quality and specialization development program.

Measuring the level of patient satisfaction with services is very important to assess the total

satisfaction of health services provided by the hospital, as well as to determine whether the patient's needs and expectations have been met. This is a reference for health service providers to set the right strategies and interventions to be given to patients (Hussein Ibrahim et al., 2021). For this reason, the quality of hospital services must be oriented towards consumer/patient satisfaction which ultimately leads to the creation of patient loyalty (Ar Bajamal and Anindita, 2020). Loyalty describes the commitment given by consumers to reuse services in the future (Hidajahningtyas et al., 2013a). Patient loyalty is considered to be an important factor, especially in the sustainability of the hospital industry, this is in line with research conducted by Fanany, (2015) which states that the benefits of loyalty in consumers in the form of service costs for an old consumer are much less than for new consumers. Therefore, it is known that hospitals, especially Regional Special Hospitals in South Sulawesi Province, need to improve the quality of service so that good patient satisfaction rates are obtained in accordance with the Decree of the Minister of Health in 2008 concerning Minimum Hospital Service Standards in the context of health services. This is considered important, especially in the era of the National Health Insurance System where government and private hospitals have the same position as health providers, which means that both have the same market segment. In responding to this, a change in perspective is needed in terms of organizing health services, which initially patients were "customers" who needed hospitals, but now it must be reversed that patients do not depend on hospitals but rather hospitals that need loyal patients, so that patients are very important people and must be satisfied (Zuckerman et al., 2012). This is very necessary in order to create a healthy hospital industry, especially at RSKD in South Sulawesi Province.

1.2 Research Purposes

The purpose of this study is to analyze the influence of service quality on patient loyalty at the Outpatient Installation of the Regional Special Hospital (RSKD) of South Sulawesi Province by measuring patients' perceptions of the services received and the level of loyalty demonstrated, in order to determine the extent to which the services provided can create satisfaction and encourage patients to remain loyal to the hospital, as well as to provide recommendations for improvements in efforts to enhance service quality and sustain patient loyalty.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Quality healthcare services are a key factor in creating patient satisfaction and loyalty. According to Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988), service

quality can be measured through five dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. In the hospital context, these five dimensions reflect how medical and non-medical services are delivered professionally and humanely. Previous research by Andaleeb (2001) also indicated that patients' perceptions of service quality significantly influence satisfaction and their decision to return to the same hospital. Meanwhile, Lovelock and Wirtz (2011) emphasized that customer loyalty, including patient loyalty, is not only affected by service quality but also by the emotional experience during interactions with service providers. In a health insurance system such as BPJS in Indonesia, patients' perceptions of service quality are crucial, as they influence their decision to remain loyal or switch to another healthcare provider (Tjiptono & Chandra, 2012).

3. METHODOLOGY

Location and research design

The type of research used in this study is quantitative research, with a cross-sectional study design that aims to determine the relationship between independent variables and dependent variables where the measurement between cause and effect is at the same time. The scope of this study focuses on the Special Hospital of South Sulawesi Province which has outpatient installations RSKD Dadi.

Population and sample

The population in this study were all patients with old patient status, namely patients who previously came with the aim of getting services at the inpatient and outpatient installations of RSKD Dadi. The number of samples in this study was 147 samples.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 1. Frequency Distribution in Outpatient Installations at Specialized Hospitals in South Sulawesi Province

Variable	Research Sample	
	N	%
Service Quality		
Good	112	76,2
Not Good	35	23,8
Customer Loyalty		
Tall	120	81,6
Low	27	18,4

Based on table 1, it shows that most respondents in the Outpatient Installation have a good perception of the quality of service during treatment at the Regional Special Hospital of South Sulawesi Province, namely 76.2%, and most

respondents stated that patient loyalty is in the high category towards the services received during treatment at the Regional Special Hospital of South Sulawesi Province, namely 81.6%.

Table 2. Bivariate Analysis of Service Quality Variables on Patient Loyalty

<i>Service Quality</i>	<i>Customer Loyalty</i>		<i>p-value</i>
	Tall	Low	
	%	%	
Good	88,4	11,6	0,000
Not Good	60,0	40,0	
Total	93,9	18,4	

Based on table 2, it shows that in the outpatient installation of RSKD Dadi, the p value (Sig.) is 0.000, which means that there is a significant relationship between service quality and patient loyalty at the hospital.

Loyalty according to some experts is a function of customer satisfaction or in this case, patients. Patients who feel satisfied can take repeated actions as repeated use of services in the future and tell others about the performance of the service product they feel. Loyalty to patients here is the impact of patient loyalty to a particular medical service or service that is manifested continuously from patient satisfaction in using the facilities or services provided by the hospital and to become repeat users at the hospital concerned. Loyalty is a real form of patient willingness to reuse, which has strength and a positive attitude towards the hospital (Fitriani, 2014).

There are five dimensions of loyalty, In the dimension of psychological commitment. with a high level of loyalty of 80.3% at RSKD Dadi because patients feel a sense of belonging to a high house and the service provided is the only best in Makassar. From this, the hospital should increase the emotional or psychological attachment of commitment to a product or service because it is considered a key element in developing and maintaining customer loyalty. Baloglu stated that truly loyal customers not only have repeat purchasing behavior but have high preferences and commitments (Baloglu, 2002). While in the dimension of "Cost Changes" with a high level of loyalty of 82.3% at RSKD Dadi, the high value obtained at RSKD Dadi. In the dimension of "cost changes" for the hospital has a tariff setting strategy where the aim is that the use of tariffs is used appropriately and can be planned well. Although this study was conducted in a government hospital, it is known that the determination of hospital tariffs has been determined based on the Decree of the Minister of Health or the Regional Government.

Various studies have shown that the quality of government hospital services is low due to limited government subsidies and low hospital rates with a bureaucratic management system. So it is important to determine rates in order to create trust and loyalty, the consequences of which in determining rates must be competitive and also followed by an increase in the quality of pleasant services so that the perception obtained by patients of health services influences the decision to choose or use the service in the future. In addition, this also affects other people who want to use the same service because recommendations from other people are usually quickly accepted as a reference for choosing a health service and can increase loyalty in the dimension of "publicity behavior (word of mouth)". The hospital pays more attention to Word of Mouth Marketing carried out by customers because it is an effective and at the same time economical way for the hospital to be able to increase the number of consumers in the future. High loyalty from customers will then provide a greater ripple effect for the hospital with Word of Mouth Marketing, which is an effective and at the same time economical way for the hospital to be able to increase the number of consumers in the future.

Then in measuring the intention related to customer loyalty, the dimensions of cooperation and publicity behavior are referred to as "voluntary partnership" which is often suggested as a result of loyalty behavior. In the dimension of "cooperation" is defined as working together between consumers and companies in achieving common goals and also as the customer's desire to help the hospital.

Another study that is also in line with this study is a study conducted by Winata et al., (2022) service quality has no effect on patient loyalty. This result is not in accordance with all previous studies, this happens because in the world of health, the effectiveness of treatment is more considered in terms of satisfaction so that patients will be more loyal, while in this study the quality of service assessed in the questionnaire did not have the effectiveness of the treatment given. Likewise, the findings of Lestariningsih et al., (2018) stated that service quality has a positive but insignificant effect on loyalty, the study shows that there are still other variables that can be mediating variables. And also in line with Rehaman (2018) in the health service industry in Pakistan which states that service quality is a variable that has a positive and significant effect on patient satisfaction in the Sargodha district, Pakistan. Similar research conducted by Ajmal et al., (2022) showed that service quality had a negative and insignificant effect on patient loyalty at the Oral Surgery Polyclinic, Sawerigading Hospital, Palopo. This is because patients are not affected by service quality variables such as performance, suitability, reliability in deciding loyalty because

patients pay more attention to the image of the hospital that suits their needs and desires and the staff working in the hospital have not been able to provide maximum satisfaction or comfort to patients during treatment. Patients consider the costs incurred to pay for inpatient care or outpatient examinations to be the same as paying for inpatient care at other hospitals that have better comfort.

This study is also inconsistent with previous research conducted by Eryanto (2011) on the relationship between service quality and patient loyalty, the results of the study showed a positive and significant influence between service quality and patient loyalty. Zulfadly's research (2013) also showed results of a positive and significant influence between service quality and loyalty.

Based on findings in the field, the factor that may cause the insignificant relationship between service quality and loyalty is that most respondents who have made repeat visits come from middle to lower income society. Judging from the characteristics of the respondents' work in the questionnaire, most of the respondents were housewives or unemployed (average 44%), so they were sensitive to price changes. The loyalty variable with the indicator of cost changes where patients were willing to pay more showed that patients tended to disagree with the choice. This contradicts the question "I never worry about hospital costs, if I get treatment at this hospital", respondents tended to agree or strongly agree. Another factor that is a limitation in this study is that the majority of respondents are BPJS (National Health Insurance) holders. The ratio of patients using BPJS is higher than general patients, apparently because of the responsibility of government hospitals as hospitals that serve all people including the less fortunate. These patients are BPJS holders, meaning that all health costs are borne by the Government, it is clear that they tend to hesitate or even disagree when asked about their willingness to pay more. From these observations, the above factors are likely in line with the opinion of Mamun et al., (2014) that price sensitivity affects customer loyalty, in addition to price sensitivity, satisfaction with price can also affect loyalty (Hortamani et al., 2013). In addition, the loyalty figures shown in the results of this study can be influenced by the inability of respondents to assess the technical competence of a hospital service so that the loyalty that occurs comes from subjective and interpersonal assessments of each respondent. The conclusion of this study is that the quality of service does not affect patient loyalty at the Outpatient Installation of the Special Hospital of South Sulawesi Province. This means that the quality of service provided is not able to foster patient loyalty at the Outpatient Installation of the Special Hospital of South Sulawesi Province.

4. CONCLUSION

There is an influence of service quality on patient loyalty at the Outpatient Installation of RSKD South Sulawesi Province. This means that good service quality will increase patient satisfaction and increased patient satisfaction will create high loyalty.

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