

ANALYSIS OF SERVICE QUALITY TOWARDS PATIENT LOYALTY WITH PATIENT SATISFACTION AS AN INTERVENING VARIABLE (SURVEY STUDY AT HERMINA MANADO HOSPITAL)

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Abstract

The quality of health services as the most important indicator for hospitals. Optimizing service quality, building a positive hospital image, and providing supporting health service facilities are parts that marketers need to consider in order to build patient loyalty by increasing hospital patient satisfaction. This study aims to analyze the quality of health services, patient satisfaction and patient loyalty at Hermina Manado Hospital. This study uses a quantitative approach. The sample in this study amounted to 100 respondents. The data analysis used is descriptive analysis and verification analysis using path analysis. The results of the descriptive analysis of the quality of health services, patient satisfaction and patient loyalty of respondents gave a good assessment, there were still some shortcomings that must be considered for improvement. While the results of the verification study, the path analysis model showed that the path coefficient value between variables was positive and the path coefficient value of the indirect influence was greater than the direct influence ($62.4\% > 52.0\%$), meaning that the patient satisfaction variable as an intervening variable was able to mediate the health service quality variable with the patient loyalty variable.

Keywords: Patient Satisfaction, Quality of Health Services, Patient Loyalty

Introduction

The hospital's role as a healthcare institution is to provide quality healthcare services and be accountable to the community, especially within its coverage area. The hospital's function is to provide specialist or secondary medical services and sub-specialist or tertiary medical services (Abdurrahman, 2018). Therefore, the hospital's primary product is medical services. Within its operations, the service-producing unit within the hospital is the facility. As a service-producing unit, the facility is the spearhead of hospital operations (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019).

Hospitals play a highly strategic role in accelerating improvements in public health. The new paradigm of healthcare requires hospitals to provide quality services tailored to patient needs and desires while adhering to a professional code of ethics. With rapid technological developments and increasingly fierce competition, hospitals are required to continuously improve the quality of their services (Supriyanto, 2019). The hospital's role as a healthcare institution is to provide quality healthcare services and be accountable to the community, especially within its coverage area. Meanwhile, the function of a hospital is to provide specialist or secondary medical services and sub-specialist or tertiary medical services (Al-Assaf, 2018). Therefore, the primary product of a hospital is medical services. In its activities, the service-producing unit within the hospital is the installation. As

a service-producing unit, the installation in the hospital is the spearhead of hospital operations (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2019). Hospitals provide several types of services to meet patient needs. Complete services will have an impact on increasing the number of patients.

Every patient desires good healthcare because it is a fundamental human need. Everyone desires to be valued, cared for, and to have equal standing in society. In reality, healthcare delivery in Indonesia often presents disparities between patients. There is ample evidence that healthcare providers provide poor service. Many providers discriminate against patients based on their social status. Good care is reserved for wealthy patients, while less affluent patients are often denied access to quality care (Kotler, 2018). Furthermore, the need to provide the best possible service to patients is a requirement for healthcare providers. Those in need of healthcare services will undoubtedly seek out providers who are reputable and can satisfy them (Agus, 2023).

The quality of healthcare services is still not optimal in terms of providing high-quality care. Because services are not yet fully excellent, staff must be able to provide high-quality healthcare services to patients. Quality healthcare is defined as service that satisfies users and is implemented in accordance with established codes of ethics and standards (Kotler, 2018). Along with technological advances, particularly in healthcare, the increasing number of healthcare providers accepting patients at hospitals has undoubtedly impacted patient loyalty. Healthcare is a crucial factor affecting an individual's quality of life. It involves a series of interactions between patients and healthcare providers that must be well-executed to achieve optimal outcomes. Healthcare quality refers to the extent to which the services provided meet the patient's needs and expectations. In this context, patient satisfaction is often used as a measure of healthcare effectiveness (Kornelis, 2024).

A quality healthcare system is a crucial aspect in meeting the public's needs and expectations for healthcare services. Hospitals are a crucial component of healthcare systems in many countries, particularly in meeting the needs of the community. Hospital service quality plays a crucial role in ensuring patients receive appropriate and satisfactory care (Anjayati, 2021).

According to several previous studies, patient satisfaction is influenced by various factors, one of which is service quality. This service quality encompasses various aspects, such as the professional skills of healthcare workers, the availability of medical facilities and equipment, waiting times, and even healthcare workers' attitudes toward patients (Anjayati, 2021). Further research is needed to understand how this service quality influences patient satisfaction and to what extent. Patient satisfaction is a crucial measure in evaluating the effectiveness and success of healthcare services (Dewi Lukita Sari, 2020). Patients who are satisfied with the services provided are more likely to maintain a good relationship with the healthcare facility and contribute to improving their own health. Therefore, it is crucial to understand the influence of community health center service quality on patient satisfaction (Diana, 2024).

Meanwhile, several studies have shown that patient satisfaction levels also have a significant impact on overall health outcomes (Firaldi, 2023). Patients who are satisfied with the care they receive tend to be more compliant with medical instructions, have better recovery rates, and are less likely to seek alternative medical services (Susilawati, 2021). Therefore, understanding the factors that influence patient satisfaction is crucial. Various factors can influence community health center service quality and patient satisfaction. Several factors identified through previous research include: accessibility of healthcare facilities, medical staff capabilities, availability of medical facilities and equipment, clarity of information provided to patients, interactions between patients and medical staff, waiting times, and effective communication (Fahri, 2024).

Patient satisfaction is the most important indicator for hospitals. Patient satisfaction is a valuable asset for hospitals, as satisfied patients are more likely to return to the hospital, fostering patient loyalty. Loyalty has become a compelling issue in marketing because it benefits companies, particularly in retaining existing customers and serving as an effective promotional tool for acquiring

new customers. Empirical research demonstrates that customer satisfaction alone is not enough to generate loyalty. A company's products need to be considered; aspects of friendliness, service, cost, and punctuality must be considered to influence consumer satisfaction. This will foster customer loyalty and loyalty after experiencing quality service, satisfaction, and the availability of facilities that facilitate transactions (Agustyarum, 2024).

Optimizing service quality, building a positive hospital image, and providing supporting healthcare facilities are all key factors marketers need to consider to foster patient loyalty by increasing patient satisfaction. As institutions committed to meeting healthcare needs, hospitals must prioritize the services they provide to the community, ensuring customer satisfaction and loyalty. Satisfaction is achieved if the quality of care meets the hospital's promises and contributes to the patient's health and recovery. Quality healthcare is considered high-quality if it satisfies every user, consistent with the average satisfaction level (Fahri, 2024). To achieve sustainable improvement, hospitals must prioritize patients, who are the primary consumers of their services (Ramli, 2019). One key is striving to meet patients' health needs so they are satisfied and happy with their hospital experience. Satisfied patients need to be retained. Strong factors are needed to create loyalty among satisfied patients and retain them as loyal customers. These important factors are called service quality and customer satisfaction levels (Widyoktorapika, 2017). Tjiptono (2018) states that for a number of service types, perceptions arising from interactions between customers and service facilities significantly influence the quality of the service in question in the eyes of customers.

Ultimately, building loyalty is necessary to maintain a company's sustainability. Simply put, loyalty is a customer who consistently uses a company's products or services. Customer loyalty reflects the customer's continued attitude based on the satisfaction they feel from their experience using the company's facilities or services (Kotler, 2018). By improving service quality, building strong patient loyalty to the hospital, and providing useful facilities and service activities for customers, it is hoped that this will create patient satisfaction (Goonros, 2019). Hermina Manado Hospital, a hospital with comprehensive healthcare facilities and services, is supported by competent doctors who strive to provide satisfaction and comfort to patients, their families, and the community. The hospital's vision is to "make Hermina Hospital a leading hospital in its area and able to compete in the era of globalization." This is a goal that must be achieved, among other things, by improving the quality of healthcare services, increasing patient satisfaction, and fostering patient loyalty.

Issues related to patient loyalty that healthcare providers must address include service quality, including physical facilities and infrastructure, capacity to provide healthcare services, speed of service delivery, assurance and certainty, and empathy, all of which contribute to patient satisfaction (Almomani, 2020). Currently, healthcare users not only assess the end result, which is recovery, but also assess what they see and feel during treatment. In this regard, healthcare providers cannot act arbitrarily but must foster trust, provide excellent service, and establish a commitment to healthcare users, thereby fostering satisfaction and loyalty. Based on the explanation above, we can see that service quality is an important factor in increasing patient satisfaction and patient loyalty. This study aims to analyze the quality of health services, patient satisfaction and patient loyalty at Hermina Manado Hospital.

Method

This study uses a quantitative research design with a descriptive analysis approach and verification analysis using path analysis. This study was conducted at Hermina Hospital Manado. This study began on July 3, 2025, to July 10, 2025. The sampling technique used a random sampling technique. The sample in this study amounted to 100 respondents. The instrument used by the researcher was a questionnaire consisting of 30 statements. The variables in this study were the quality of health services (X), patient satisfaction (Y), and patient loyalty (Z). Data analysis used descriptive analysis, verification analysis, correlation coefficient analysis, and determination analysis (R²). Hypothesis testing used a partial test (t-test).

Results

Descriptive Analysis

Table 1. Quality of Health Services

Variable	Total Score	Average	Category
Quality of Health Services	4.036	4.04	Good

Source: Primary Data Processing Results, 2025

It can be seen that the total score for the service quality variable is 4.036 with an average of 4.04. Therefore, from these calculations, it can be concluded that respondents' perceptions of service quality are in the good category.

Tabel 2. Patient Satisfaction

Variable	Total Score	Average	Category
Patient Satisfaction	4.200	4.20	Good

Source: Primary Data Processing Results, 2025

It can be seen that the total score for the Patient Satisfaction variable is 4.200 with an average of 4.20. Therefore, from these calculations, it can be concluded that respondents' perceptions of Patient Satisfaction are in the good category.

Table 3. Patient Loyalty

Variable	Total Score	Average	Category
Patient Loyalty	4.060	4.06	Good

Source: Primary Data Processing Results, 2025

It can be seen that the total score for the Patient Loyalty variable is 4.060 with an average of 4.06. Therefore, from these calculations, it can be concluded that respondents' perceptions of Patient Loyalty are in the good category.

Verification Analysis (*Path Analysis*)

Tabel 4. Direct and Indirect Influence

Variable	Path Coefficient	Influence	
		Direct	Indirect
Quality of service towards patient satisfaction	0.774	$0.774 \times 0.774 = \mathbf{0.599}$	
Patient satisfaction towards patient loyalty	0.806	$0.806 \times 0.806 = \mathbf{0.650}$	
Quality of service towards patient loyalty	0.721	$0.721 \times 0.721 = \mathbf{0.520}$	
Quality of service towards patient loyalty through patient satisfaction			$0.774 \times 0.806 = \mathbf{0.624}$

The table shows that the total contribution of service quality to patient loyalty is 52.0%, and the indirect effect of service quality on patient loyalty through patient satisfaction is 62.4%. This indicates that the indirect effect is greater than the direct effect, or $62.40\% > 52.0\%$. This means that patient satisfaction, as an intervening variable, is able to mediate the relationship between service quality and patient loyalty.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis Testing the Effect of Service Quality on Patient Satisfaction

The p-value was 0.000, meaning $p\text{-value} < \alpha = 0.05$, and the calculated t-value was greater than 1.98. This means that H_{01} is rejected and H_{a1} is accepted, indicating a significant effect between service quality and patient satisfaction. Therefore, the hypothesis stating that service quality has a significant effect on patient satisfaction is accepted.

Hypothesis Testing the Effect of Patient Satisfaction on Patient Loyalty

The p-value was 0.000, meaning $p\text{-value} < \alpha = 0.05$, and the calculated t-value was greater than 1.98. This means that H_{02} is rejected and H_{a2} is accepted, indicating a significant effect between patient satisfaction and patient loyalty. Therefore, the hypothesis stating that patient satisfaction has a significant effect on patient loyalty is accepted.

Hypothesis Testing the Effect of Service Quality on Patient Loyalty

The p-value was 0.000, meaning $p\text{-value} < \alpha = 0.05$, and the calculated t-value was greater than 1.98. This means that H_{03} is rejected and H_{a3} is accepted. Therefore, there is a significant effect between service quality and patient loyalty. Therefore, the hypothesis stating that there is a significant effect between service quality and patient loyalty is accepted.

Testing the Effect of Service Quality on Patient Loyalty Through Patient Satisfaction

Hypothesis 4 was tested using the Sobel test to determine the mediating effect of patient satisfaction on the relationship between service quality and patient loyalty. The hypotheses tested were:

$H_{04}=p=0$: Service quality has no effect on patient loyalty through patient satisfaction

$H_{a4}=p\neq 0$: Service quality has an effect on patient loyalty through patient satisfaction

To test the significance of patient satisfaction as a mediating variable in the model, the Sobel test results can be examined. First, find the calculated t-value for service quality obtained from the path analysis calculation in the first substructure, which is 12.112. Then, find the calculated t-value for patient satisfaction on patient loyalty obtained from the path analysis calculation in the second substructure, which is 13.490. After each calculated t-value is known, the next step is to enter these values into the Sobel test calculator, with the following results:

Table 5. Results of the Sobel Test: Service Quality on Patient Loyalty Mediated by Patient Satisfaction

Input:		Test statistic:	p-value:
t_a	12.112	Sobel test:	9.01240598
t_b	13.490	Aroian test:	8.99872721
		Goodman test:	9.02614732
		Reset all	Calculate

Based on the calculation results, the calculated t value for the mediation effect test on this hypothesis is 9.012. If $\alpha = 0.05$ then the t table = 1.98. From the calculation above, it can be concluded that the calculated t of 9.012 is greater than the t table of 1.98 with a significance level of 0.05, so it can be concluded that patient satisfaction is able to mediate the relationship between service quality and patient loyalty. Thus, hypothesis 4 can be accepted and the type of mediation of patient satisfaction is partial mediation, where both patient satisfaction and service quality do not have a significant influence on patient loyalty.

Discussion

Descriptive Analysis

Quality of Healthcare Services

Respondents' assessments categorized healthcare services as good, although there are still areas for improvement. This requires further development and improvement, particularly in healthcare facilities. This research, supported by Sitepu & Kosasih (2024), explains that improving the quality of healthcare in hospitals is crucial for improving patient outcomes, ensuring safety, and maintaining a competitive advantage in the healthcare market. Quality improvement initiatives address not only patient care but also optimizing hospital management and operational efficiency, such as building, developing facilities, and expanding patient rooms. The following section outlines key aspects of this importance.

Andini's (2022) research states that high-quality healthcare is directly correlated with improved patient safety and outcomes, reducing the risk of medical errors and adverse events. Effective quality improvement programs are crucial because they streamline processes and improve patient care while managing costs. Visionary management is crucial for driving innovation and enhancing patient-focused care models, ultimately leading to better health outcomes. Furthermore, implementing Total Quality Management (TQM) and complying with accreditation standards is crucial for optimizing service delivery in hospitals. This also includes involving physicians in quality improvement efforts, as their involvement significantly impacts the success of these initiatives.

Sari's research (2020) suggests that strategies such as providing support from hospital leadership and utilizing data to identify areas for improvement can increase physician engagement. Conversely, while focusing on quality improvement is paramount, it is important to recognize the

challenges hospitals face, such as resource constraints and the need for cultural change within healthcare organizations. Addressing these challenges is crucial for sustaining long-term quality improvement.

Patient Satisfaction

Respondents' assessments of patient satisfaction were categorized as good, although there are still areas for improvement. However, patient satisfaction can also be achieved if the services provided, facilities, and patient experiences are good. Research by Babatola (2022) states that patient satisfaction needs to be improved in healthcare to ensure good service quality and the sustainability of healthcare facilities. Patient satisfaction is a crucial indicator in assessing service quality and impacts patient trust and loyalty. This is also supported by research by Kawi (2024), which explains the importance of patient satisfaction, explaining that it is one of the main indicators for assessing the quality of healthcare services. Satisfied patients tend to have more trust in healthcare facilities and the medical staff providing them. Patient satisfaction also contributes to increased loyalty, as patients are more likely to return to the same healthcare facility when they need care. High patient satisfaction can enhance a healthcare facility's reputation, attract more patients, and build a positive image.

Patient Loyalty

Respondents' assessments of patient loyalty were categorized as good, although some areas still need improvement. Patient loyalty needs to be improved because it impacts trust and a good hospital reputation. This is supported by research by Eglseer (2020), which states that patient loyalty and repeat visits are crucial for hospitals. Loyal patients tend to trust the hospital and recommend it to others. Furthermore, patient loyalty can enhance a hospital's reputation in the eyes of the public. Loyal patients are more likely to return to the hospital, thereby increasing revenue. Huriati's (2022) research also states that loyal patients tend to use more hospital services, thereby increasing revenue. Furthermore, they can provide constructive feedback, help improve service quality, increase patient and family satisfaction, enhance the hospital's ability to retain patients and improve service quality, and enhance the hospital's competitive advantage in the market. Thus, patient loyalty and repeat visits are crucial for hospitals to improve their reputation, revenue, service quality, and competence (Lilik, 2021).

Verification Analysis (*Path Analysis*)

The Influence of Service Quality on Patient Satisfaction

Service quality has a positive and significant impact on patient satisfaction. Service quality is an intangible measure taken by a hospital institution that can be felt by patients. Service quality can be measured by assessing the service received by consumers to meet their needs and expectations. This is also related to patient satisfaction. This aligns with research by Haerudin (2022), which explains that service quality has a significant and direct positive relationship with patient satisfaction.

According to research by Almomani (2020), hospitals should prioritize service delivery by improving patient care, providing optimal care, and instilling trust in patients. Good quality nursing care can increase patient repeat visits (Andina, 2024). Service quality, as a health measure, is a consumer's assessment of the level of service received relative to the level of service expected. If the service received or perceived matches expectations, then the service quality is perceived as good and satisfactory (Kotler, 2019).

The Influence of Satisfaction on Patient Loyalty

Patient satisfaction has a positive and significant impact on patient loyalty. Azharuddin's theory (2023) explains patient satisfaction as a primary indicator of a healthcare facility's standards and a measure of service quality. Low customer satisfaction will impact the number of visits, which will affect the facility's profitability. Employee attitudes toward customers will also impact service quality. Patient satisfaction arises after patients experience feedback from staff. Customer satisfaction can be demonstrated through patient attitudes toward staff. Patient satisfaction and loyalty are interconnected. This means that if a company makes efforts to increase patient loyalty, if the company decreases its efforts to improve patient satisfaction, the level of patient loyalty will decrease. Customer or patient loyalty is determined by both service quality and customer or patient satisfaction. Customer loyalty can be defined as someone who purchases something regularly and repeatedly (Bhatt, 2024). In this case, the theory used for patient loyalty is Giffin's (2018) theory, which argues that loyalty refers more to the behavioral manifestations of decision-making units to continuously purchase goods/services from a selected company.

The Direct Influence of Service Quality on Patient Loyalty

Service quality directly has a positive and significant effect on patient loyalty. According to Tjiptono's (2018) theory, service quality can be defined as efforts to fulfill consumer needs and desires and the accuracy of delivery to match consumer expectations. Service quality can be defined as efforts to fulfill consumer needs and desires and the accuracy of delivery to match consumer expectations. Service quality can be determined by comparing consumer perceptions of the service they actually receive with improved service, which will undoubtedly impact patient interest in returning. Service quality is the extent to which the difference between reality and expectations for the services they receive. Research by Fahri (2024) explains that patient loyalty is key to success for healthcare providers. Patient loyalty is a manifestation and continuation of patient satisfaction in using the facilities and services provided by the hospital, as well as their continued patient retention.

The Indirect Effect of Service Quality on Patient Loyalty Through Patient Satisfaction

Service quality indirectly has a positive and significant effect on patient loyalty through patient satisfaction. Service quality is a way to compare the perceived service received by customers with the actual service they expect. If the service expected by customers is greater than the service actually received, the service can be considered low quality. If the service expected by customers is lower than the service actually received, the service can be considered high quality. If the service received is equal to the expected service, the service is considered satisfactory (Azharuddin, 2023). Hammad's theory (2022) explains that service quality is a way to determine the extent of the difference between reality and reality. This relates to patient loyalty. Patient loyalty is paramount for hospitals because patient retention is a benchmark of service. This aligns with research conducted by Ferreira (2023), which states that service quality and customer satisfaction influence patient loyalty. This means that service quality and satisfaction levels influence patient loyalty. This, in turn, influences customer satisfaction, in this case, patients, and automatically increases patient loyalty when requiring healthcare services in the future.

Conclusion

Service quality, patient satisfaction, and patient loyalty at Hermina Hospital Manado are in the good category. Service quality has a positive and significant effect on patient satisfaction at Hermina Hospital Manado. Patient satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on patient loyalty at Hermina Hospital Manado. Service quality has a positive and significant effect on patient loyalty at Hermina Hospital Manado. Service quality has a significant indirect effect on patient loyalty through patient satisfaction at Hermina Hospital Manado. The results of the path analysis model indicate that the indirect effect is greater than the direct effect. Therefore, patient satisfaction, as an intervening variable, can play a mediating role between service quality and patient loyalty at Hermina Hospital Manado.

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