

THE INFLUENCE OF HOSPITAL IMAGE AND SERVICE QUALITY ON PATIENTS' LOYALTY

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ABSTRACT

Situated in the eastern region of Bandung, the Anisa Medical Center Hospital grapples with challenges stemming from public dissatisfaction, which has manifested in a detrimental impact on its overall reputation and patient loyalty. This research, falling within the verificative category and employing a case study method with 194 respondents through a simple random sampling technique, systematically delves into the intricate dynamics between hospital reputation, public service quality, and their combined influence on patient loyalty. The findings reveal a prevailing perception of the hospital's reputation as high (65.59%) and public service quality as commendable (79.38%), which positively correlates with a significant proportion of respondents expressing high patient loyalty (81.44%). In light of these outcomes, strategic recommendations emerge, encompassing initiatives to fortify the hospital's standing, such as bolstering facilities, cultivating a health-centric environment, meticulous maintenance and enhancement of existing amenities, delivery of exemplary services, and ensuring swift, procedural responsiveness. These measures are thoughtfully proposed to not only rectify current shortcomings but also to actively contribute to the elevation of the hospital's reputation, enhancement of service quality, and the ultimate reinforcement of patient loyalty.

Keyword: hospital image, service quality, patients' loyalty.

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the health service industry in Indonesia has undergone significant and rapid development, marked by the proliferation of diverse healthcare facilities, ranging from conventional clinics to state-of-the-art hospitals. This evolution is emblematic of a dynamic response to global competition, reflecting a society with a global outlook and increasingly stringent quality standards [1]. Against this backdrop, the central focus on enhancing the quality of healthcare and attracting patients to hospitals revolves around the pivotal aspect of service delivery [2]. The contemporary healthcare landscape necessitates hospitals to not only meet but exceed patient expectations to remain competitive. In this era of heightened global awareness and discerning patient choices, the key to success lies in elevating patient satisfaction levels, thereby positioning a hospital as a preferred choice amidst a myriad of healthcare options [3].

Salesman [4], defines hospital as an integral component of both social and medical organizations, playing a comprehensive role in furnishing complete health services to the community, encompassing both curative and preventive dimensions. Its outreach extends beyond the institutional confines to families and the broader home environment. Hospitals further function as hubs for the training of health professionals and as arenas for multidimensional research spanning bio-psycho-socioeconomic-cultural dimensions. The overarching objective of

hospital management lies in the generation of service products or health services that authentically meet the diverse needs and expectations of patients across various facets, including quality (both medical and non-medical), service typologies, procedural methodologies, pricing structures, and requisite information dissemination. In essence, the hospital is conceived as a multifaceted institution that is not only pivotal in healthcare delivery but also instrumental in advancing medical knowledge, education, and socio-cultural understanding [5].

Hospitals find themselves amidst heightened competitive dynamics, a consequence of open-market policies within the medical services industry, as observed by Silalahi [6]. Factors such as population growth and an increasing societal emphasis on health further propel the demand for community services, prompting a transformative shift in the healthcare sector toward a customer-centric orientation. In response to these dynamics, hospitals are strategically devising marketing approaches to enhance their societal standing and elevate service quality, with the overarching goal of amplifying patient satisfaction and fostering loyalty [7]. The efficacy of such endeavors hinges on multifaceted factors, including the hospital's historical trajectory, the comprehensiveness of its facilities and infrastructure, and its track record in delivering services to patients. Crucially, the formation of the hospital's public image is intricately linked to the knowledge and information disseminated about it. Positive information, ranging from the services offered to the quality of medical equipment and the competence of human resources such as doctors and nurses, contributes to a favorable image, while negative information begets an adverse perception. In essence, the success of a hospital in shaping its public image is contingent upon strategic communication and the actualization of high-quality services across various dimensions [8].

The investigation into hospital image has emerged as a focal point for researchers, with conceptual models striving to elucidate the pivotal role of brand image in shaping customer-perceived value. The imaging stage assumes particular significance for hospitals, as it stands poised to engender customer loyalty. Swain's [9] insights emphasize the dual nature of hospital image, serving both as a conduit and custodian for fostering harmonious relationships with clientele. The research demonstrates that a hospital's image exerts both direct and indirect influences on patient loyalty. This implies that a positive hospital image not only directly enhances patient loyalty by augmenting satisfaction but also indirectly influences satisfaction by elevating perceived service quality, subsequently fostering an increased intention among patients to revisit. Concurrently, Supangat [10] and Shamsudin [11] underscore the positive correlation between company image and customer loyalty, the substantial impact of service quality on customer loyalty, and the combined influence of company image and service quality on shaping and fortifying customer loyalty. These findings collectively underscore the intricate dynamics wherein a hospital's image plays a pivotal role in shaping not only patient satisfaction but also the enduring loyalty of its clientele.

The second critical determinant influencing customer loyalty is the provision of excellent customer service. Remarkable customer service stands as a pivotal element in cultivating customer satisfaction, thereby fostering enduring customer loyalty. In the realm of service-oriented entities, such as companies or agencies, the delivery of high-quality service is imperative, serving as a metric to gauge the attained performance level. The efficacy of service quality hinges on the alignment between customers' expectations or desires and their actual perceptions of the service received [12]. Essentially, service quality represents the disparity between what customers anticipate and what they experience. The implementation of superior service quality is not merely a preference but a necessity for a company's longevity. Whether in the context of goods or services, the ability of producers to consistently meet consumer expectations determines the quality. Satisfied consumers not only cultivate loyalty but also become advocates through word-of-mouth recommendations, thereby enhancing the company's image in the eyes of the consumer base. In essence, the provision of exceptional customer service is integral to not only meeting but surpassing consumer expectations, fostering loyalty, and fortifying the overall standing of the company [13].

Numerous hospitals in Indonesia are currently undertaking concerted initiatives to both cultivate and sustain customer loyalty, with the Annisa Medical Center (AMC) Hospital exemplifying these endeavors. AMC is strategically focusing on preserving the physical infrastructure of its hospital buildings in alignment with market segments and differentiated strategies. Moreover, the hospital is proactively managing patient complaints, demonstrating an effective approach to not only attract new customers but also uphold the loyalty of existing patrons. Despite these efforts, concerns persist regarding the hospital's image, stemming from certain patient grievances. Addressing these issues is paramount for AMC to mitigate negative perceptions and enhance its overall image. To achieve this, there is a compelling need for the hospital to elevate the quality of services rendered to patients, thereby engendering a profound sense of satisfaction and fostering positive perceptions among its clientele. This concerted effort towards service improvement is integral for AMC to bolster its image, attract new clientele, and fortify loyalty among existing patients.

The comprehensiveness of facilities also plays a pivotal role in shaping both patient satisfaction and loyalty. As defined by Thi [14], facilities serve as instrumental means to facilitate the execution of functions and provide convenience. Within the context of hospitals, facilities can be categorized into primary and ancillary components.

Primary facilities encompass critical elements such as buildings, treatment rooms, waiting areas, doctor's practices, laboratory setups, radiology installations, emergency units, and pharmacies. Complementary supporting facilities include spaces for worship, bathrooms, parking lots, cafeterias, and recreational areas. The provision of well-equipped facilities contributes significantly to enhancing consumer empathy, particularly in the healthcare sector, where patients and their families place immense importance on the quality of amenities available. By ensuring the availability of comprehensive and quality facilities, hospitals can not only meet but exceed consumer expectations, fostering a heightened sense of empathy and satisfaction among patients and their families during their healthcare experience.

The augmentation of patient loyalty is intricately linked to the meticulous crafting of a favorable hospital image and the delivery of high service quality [7]. However, the practicalities in the field often deviate from theoretical ideals. A case in point is observed at AMC, where trend data spanning the years 2011 to 2015 reveals a consistent decline in the frequency of both outpatient and inpatient general patient visits. This incongruity between theory and real-world outcomes underscores the dynamic nature of the healthcare landscape. The contemporary healthcare environment is marked by intense competition among hospitals vying to attract and retain customers, a reality that poses a formidable challenge for management in their pursuit of elevating service quality. The need to address this decline in patient visits at AMC becomes a critical imperative, necessitating a comprehensive strategic approach that encompasses image enhancement, service quality refinement, and a nuanced understanding of the evolving dynamics in the competitive healthcare sector.

In a preliminary study conducted by researchers on December 10, 2016, a discerning insight into the factors influencing patient decisions to seek treatment or revisit AMC Hospital emerged. The majority of respondents cited positive interpersonal relationships and well-received control services from nurses as the primary reasons for choosing AMC Hospital. However, noteworthy concerns surfaced, as some respondents reported instances where certain nurses or units displayed a lack of understanding regarding personal patient needs, demonstrating indifference and a failure to address complaints effectively. Furthermore, complaints were lodged about incomplete facilities, compelling patients to seek services at alternative hospitals. Additionally, patient experiences indicated that AMC Hospital's classification as a level 1 service post-Puskesmas referral in the Cileunyi area posed reluctance among patients to choose AMC Hospital for visits. Location and cost considerations also factored significantly into patients' decision-making processes when selecting a hospital, indicating a complex interplay of factors influencing patient perceptions and choices in the healthcare landscape.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research adopts a verification approach, wherein the gathered data undergoes systematic processing and analysis to draw conclusive insights. The targeted population for this study comprises patients at Annisa Medical Center Hospital. Utilizing the Slovin formula for sample size determination, the research sample was established at 99 outpatients and 95 inpatients, resulting in a total sample size of 194 individuals. Primary data for this study was obtained through the administration of questionnaires to the designated samples, encompassing both outpatients and inpatients at Annisa Medical Center Hospital. These questionnaires were meticulously designed to elicit responses pertaining to the specific problem or area under investigation. The collected data from the instrument will undergo descriptive processing and analysis, subsequently undergoing verification through the application of the path analysis method. This comprehensive methodology ensures a rigorous examination of the relationships and dynamics inherent in the research variables, contributing to the overall robustness of the study's findings.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research delves into three key variables: Hospital Image, represented by 10 questionnaire items; Service Quality, encapsulated by 17 questionnaire items; and Patient Loyalty, gauged through 9 questions. These variables were meticulously incorporated into the questionnaire disseminated among the respondents. The subsequent data processing unveiled outcomes that are comprehensively detailed in Table 1, encapsulating the multifaceted dimensions of Hospital Image, Service Quality, and Patient Loyalty. This detailed breakdown serves as a foundational reference, enabling a nuanced understanding of the interplay and nuances inherent in each variable, fostering a robust foundation for subsequent analyses and insights. The clarity provided by the comprehensive representation of these variables in the research questionnaire offers a strategic vantage point for discerning patterns, correlations, and implications pertinent to the overarching research objectives.

Table -1: Variable Valuations Results

Valuation Categories	Hospital Image		Service Quality		Patients' Loyalty	
	Σ	%	Σ	%	Σ	%
High	135	69.59%	154	79.38%	158	81.44%
Moderate	59	30.41%	40	20.62%	36	18.56%
Low	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Total	194	100%	194	100%	194	100%

The insightful analysis of the tabulated data above unveils a robust pattern in the respondents' evaluations of Annisa Medical Center Hospital's image, service quality, and patient loyalty. Notably, a substantial majority of 135 individuals (69.59%) assess the hospital's image as high, with an additional 30.41% attributing a moderate categorization, while intriguingly, none categorize it as low. This collective inclination leans decisively towards a positive evaluation of the hospital's image, highlighting its resonance and positive perception among the surveyed individuals. In a parallel vein, the meticulous examination of the data showcases a parallel trend in the assessment of service quality, with an impressive 79.38% of respondents deeming it high, and 20.62% acknowledging a moderate rating. The absence of low ratings accentuates a prevailing sentiment of contentment and approval regarding the quality of services provided by Annisa Medical Center Hospital.

Furthermore, the data portrays a resonant endorsement of patient loyalty, with a remarkable 81.44% of respondents categorizing it as high and 18.56% as moderate. The conspicuous absence of low ratings underscores a strong proclivity among respondents to recognize and appreciate the hospital's efforts in fostering patient loyalty. These compelling findings collectively underscore not only the efficacy of Annisa Medical Center Hospital in cultivating a positive image and delivering high-quality services but also its success in engendering a sense of loyalty among its patient demographic. This positive resonance holds promising implications for the hospital's reputation and its capacity to attract and retain a satisfied patient base.

In seeking causal relationships or the influence of research variables in path analysis, the initial step involves calculating the correlation matrix of the examined variables: Hospital Image (X1), Service Quality (X2), and Patient Loyalty (Y). The Pearson Product Moment (PPM) correlation technique was employed to assess the relationships between these variables. Correlation values indicate the presence of a relationship between each variable and the others involved in the calculation. Referring to the significance testing in the SPSS program, if the probability value is 0.05 or smaller, denoted as $[0.05 \leq \text{Sig}]$, H_0 is accepted, signifying insignificance. Conversely, if the probability value is 0.05 or greater, denoted as $[0.05 \geq \text{Sig}]$, H_0 is rejected, indicating significance.

The analysis results indicate that all variables exhibit significant correlations, implying that each variable influences the others. The magnitude of correlation coefficients is categorized based on the following table:

1. Hospital Image variable (X1) has a correlation value of $r_{x1x2} = 0.459$ with the Service Quality variable (X2), with a Sig. value of 0.000. Consequently, it can be inferred that there is a significantly strong relationship between X1 and X2.
2. Hospital Image variable (X1) has a correlation value of $r_{x1y} = 0.436$ with the Patient Loyalty variable (Y), with a Sig. value of 0.000. Thus, it can be concluded that there is a significantly strong relationship between X1 and Y.
3. Service Quality variable (X2) has a correlation value of $r_{x2y} = 0.589$ with the Patient Loyalty variable (Y), with a Sig. value of 0.000. Hence, it can be inferred that there is a significantly strong relationship between X2 and Y. This robust correlation analysis lays the foundation for further exploration of the interplay between these variables in subsequent analyses.

The path coefficient values for Hospital Image and Service Quality exhibit Sig. values < 0.05 , specifically 0.001 and 0.000, indicating the significance of these path coefficients. In the structural model presented in the table, the coefficient of determination (R^2) is observed to be 0.382 or 38.2%, and the magnitude of the residual coefficient (ϵ) is calculated as $\sqrt{1-0.382} = 0.786$. This analysis provides insights into the proportion of variability in the dependent variable explained by the independent variables and the residual variance.

Moreover, the decision-making criteria are elucidated, wherein H_0 is rejected if the t-value $>$ t-table and accepted if the t-value $<$ t-table. The critical t-value is derived based on a significance level of 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$) and degrees of freedom (df) = $n-k$. Similarly, for significance levels, if Sig. $>$ 0.05, H_0 is accepted, whereas if Sig. $<$ 0.05, H_0 is rejected. These statistical decision criteria underscore the importance of rigorously evaluating the hypothesis tests, providing a robust foundation for drawing meaningful conclusions from the structural model analysis.

Table -2: Variables Correlation Calculation Results

Variables	Path Coefficients	t_{count}	t_{table}	Count Sig.	Research Sig.	Test Results
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X1 - Y	0.210	3.284	1.972	0.001	0.050	H0 unsupported
X2 - Y	0.493	7.697	1.972	0.000	0.050	H0 unsupported
X1, X2- Y	0.382	59.061	3.078	0.000	0.050	H0 unsupported

Based on the data presented in Table 2, it is evident that the partial test or t-test yields a calculated t-value (t-test) of 3.284, surpassing the critical t-value (t-table) of 1.972. Consequently, H0 is rejected. The obtained significance value is 0.001, indicating its superiority to the research significance level ($0.001 < 0.05$), leading to the rejection of H0. Thus, a decisive inference can be drawn that there is a significant influence of Hospital Image on Patient Loyalty. In a parallel vein, the analysis of the same table reveals that the partial test or t-test produces a calculated t-value (t-test) of 7.697, exceeding the critical t-value (t-table) of 1.972. Therefore, H0 is rejected. The significance value obtained is 0.000, demonstrating its diminutive magnitude compared to the research significance level ($0.000 < 0.05$), leading to the rejection of H0. Hence, a definitive conclusion emerges that Service Quality significantly influences Patient Loyalty.

Moreover, the simultaneous or F-test, as indicated in the table, yields a calculated F-value (F-test) of 59.061, surpassing the critical F-value (F-table) of 3.043. Consequently, H0 is rejected. The obtained significance value is 0.000, underscoring its substantial deviation from the research significance level ($0.000 < 0.05$), leading to the rejection of H0. Thus, a conclusive decision can be made that both Hospital Image and Service Quality jointly exert a significant influence on Patient Loyalty. These rigorous statistical analyses offer robust evidence supporting the hypotheses and provide valuable insights into the intricate relationships among the variables under investigation.

Table -3: The Influence of Hospital Image and Service Quality on Patients' Loyalty

Variables	Direct	Indirect Through		Total
		X1	X2	
X1-Y	4,42%	-	4,76%	9,2%
X2-Y	24,28%	4,76%	-	29,0%
Total Influence				38,2%

The table above reveals that the combined influence of X1 and X2 on Y is 38.2%. This percentage is derived from the individual impacts of X1 and X2 on Y, specifically:

1. The influence of X1 on Y is 9.2%.
2. The influence of X2 on Y is 29.0%.

Analyzing these results, it becomes evident that the variable exerting the most significant influence on Patient Loyalty is Service Quality, contributing a substantial 29.0%. This finding underscores the pivotal role of Service Quality in shaping and enhancing Patient Loyalty, providing valuable insights into the relative importance of each variable in the context of the overall model. The following figure displays the path diagram of this research.

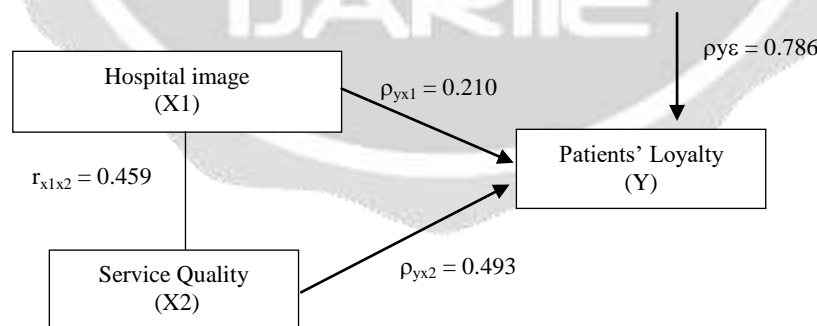


Fig -1: Path Analysis Diagram

The hospital's image has been proven to significantly influence patient loyalty. This finding aligns with the research conducted by Ajmal [15], which concluded that the hospital's image has a significant impact on loyalty. This implies that the higher the perceived image of the hospital according to the patients, the higher the patient loyalty to the hospital. The hospital's image is a variable that can affect patient loyalty. Examining the role of the hospital's image in shaping patient loyalty in the service sector, it is found that both direct and indirect effects of the image influence loyalty. According to Asnawi [16], the hospital's image is the patient's perception of quality associated with the

brand or company name. At the organizational level, the hospital's image is defined as the perception of an organization reflected in the patient's memory. Annisa Medical Center Hospital is a company that has a positive image in the minds of patients, both in terms of brand image and the image of the hospital itself. This positive image is capable of influencing the patient's perception that the hospital's services are of high quality, resulting in greater performance and product benefits. The belief that the hospital can provide greater comfort and benefits will likely lead patients to maintain their loyalty, even if other hospitals offer lower treatment costs.

The research findings indicate that the service quality variable has been proven to have a significant and positive impact on patient loyalty. This outcome aligns with a study conducted by Suwarsito [17] and Akbar [18] which found that various service quality factors, including tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, collectively have a significant influence on customer loyalty at Papaya Darmo Supermarket in Surabaya. These results also resonate with the perspective presented by Kotler & Keller [19], asserting that service quality is the overall form and characteristics of a product, encompassing both goods and services, demonstrating its ability to satisfy or fulfill patient needs. The implementation of service quality by a company involves providing the best service to patients with the aim of creating satisfaction and ultimately fostering loyalty. The quality of service provided by a company shapes the patient's perception. A positive perception of the received service quality enhances the patient's desire to remain loyal to the hospital's services and be willing to recommend them to others.

The research findings reveal that both the hospital's image and service quality variables have a significant and positive impact on patient loyalty. This outcome aligns with the study conducted by Listyorini [7], which found that the image has an indirect influence on loyalty through customer satisfaction. The research results also support the findings of Boonlertvanich [20], indicating that service quality has an indirect impact on customer loyalty. A positive image shapes the community's mindset that, when facing health challenges, there is no need for second thoughts about where to seek healthcare services. This confidence is based on personal experiences or information obtained. Similarly, the implementation of service quality by a company involves providing the best service to patients with the aim of creating satisfaction and ultimately fostering loyalty. The quality of service provided by a company shapes the patient's perception [21]. Positive perceptions of the received service quality and a good hospital image increase patient expectation, leading to high levels of loyalty.

5. CONCLUSIONS

After discussing the Influence of Hospital Image and Service Quality on Patient Loyalty in AMC Hospital, the conclusions based on the descriptions presented in the previous chapters are:

1. The image of Annisa Medical Center Hospital is generally perceived positively by the majority of respondents, with 69.59% indicating a high category for the hospital image.
2. The service quality of Annisa Medical Center Hospital towards patients is considered good, as evidenced by 79.38% of respondents rating the service quality in the high category.
3. Patient loyalty at Annisa Medical Center Hospital is rated high, with 81.44% of respondents expressing loyalty in the high category.
4. The impact of Hospital Image on Patient Loyalty at Annisa Medical Center Hospital is 9.2%, signifying a significant influence of the hospital image on patient loyalty.
5. The impact of Service Quality on Patient Loyalty at Annisa Medical Center Hospital is 29.0%, indicating a significant influence of service quality on patient loyalty.
6. The combined impact of Hospital Image and Service Quality on Patient Loyalty at Annisa Medical Center Hospital is 38.2%, with the remaining 61.8% influenced by other unexamined variables. There is a significant simultaneous influence of Hospital Image and Service Quality on Patient Loyalty at Annisa Medical Center Hospital.

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