

The Role of Patient Trust as A Mediation Variable on The Effect of Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness on Outpatient Patient Satisfaction in Bhayangkara Hospital Semarang

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Abstract. *This study aims to analyze the role of patient trust as a mediating variable in the influence of tangibles, reliability, and responsiveness on outpatient satisfaction at Bhayangkara Hospital Semarang. The research was motivated by the gap (service gap) between patient expectations and actual service experiences, as well as the results of previous studies that showed the influence of the three dimensions of SERVQUAL was not consistent on patient satisfaction. The approach used was a quantitative explanatory with a purposive sampling technique. The sample consisted of 150 outpatients who met the inclusion criteria. Data were collected through a five-point Likert scale questionnaire and analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) method with the help of SmartPLS version 3.0. The results showed that all hypotheses were accepted. Tangibles, reliability, and responsiveness had a positive and significant effect on patient trust and patient satisfaction directly. Patient trust also had a positive and significant effect on patient satisfaction with a coefficient of 0.425. In addition, patient trust was proven to significantly mediate the influence of tangibles, reliability, and responsiveness on patient satisfaction. Tangibles were the most dominant variable influencing patient trust with a coefficient of 0.612, while patient trust was the variable with the greatest influence on patient satisfaction. The R-Square value for patient trust was 0.578 and patient satisfaction was 0.478, which are categorized as moderate. The study recommends that Bhayangkara Semarang Hospital improve the quality of its physical facilities, service reliability, staff responsiveness, and establish transparent communication to strengthen outpatient trust and satisfaction.*

Keywords: Patient Trust; Patient Satisfaction; Reliability; Responsiveness; Tangibles.

1. Introduction

Healthcare plays a crucial role in improving public welfare and reflects the quality of a region's development. As public awareness of the importance of quality healthcare services increases, healthcare institutions are required to provide services that are not only superior

medically, but also reflect the patient experience. Patients are increasingly critical in assessing service quality, making it a strategic factor determining public satisfaction and trust in healthcare facilities (Parasuraman et al., 1988). This development has also driven the adoption of patient-centered care, a service approach that places patient needs, perceptions, and experiences at the center of the healthcare process (Institute of Medicine, 2001).

Efforts to improve service quality are inseparable from understanding the aspects assessed by patients during service delivery. The SERVQUAL model emphasizes that tangibles, reliability, and responsiveness are the most easily observed and perceived by patients. Tangibles encompass physical facilities, medical equipment, cleanliness, and comfort of hospital facilities. Well-maintained physical conditions can create a positive first impression and influence patients' assessment of the overall service (Zeithaml et al., 2006). Furthermore, reliability relates to a hospital's ability to provide services promptly, accurately, and consistently. Accuracy in carrying out medical and administrative procedures contributes significantly to patient confidence that the hospital is capable of delivering services according to expectations (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Responsiveness, meanwhile, relates to the readiness of healthcare workers in providing assistance and information. Prompt and responsive service reflects the care and professionalism of healthcare workers (Ladhari, 2009).

On the other hand, developments in healthcare services indicate that patient satisfaction is shaped not only by physical and procedural service components, but also by psychological aspects such as patient trust (Laila, 2024). Trust encompasses patients' belief that healthcare professionals possess competence, integrity, and good intentions in providing care. Trust is a crucial element because patients are vulnerable and must rely on the expertise of medical professionals to obtain the best possible care. When this trust is well-established, patient perceptions of service quality tend to improve, resulting in higher levels of satisfaction (Thom et al., 2004).

Several previous studies have examined the influence of service quality dimensions on patient satisfaction. Purwitasari et al. (2023) found that all SERVQUAL dimensions had a positive and significant influence on chemotherapy patient satisfaction at Ken Saras Hospital, Ungaran. This study demonstrated that adequate physical facilities, prompt service, and responsiveness of healthcare workers play a crucial role in shaping patient satisfaction. Similarities between this and that study lie in the focus on using service quality dimensions, particularly tangibles, reliability, and responsiveness, as determinants of satisfaction. However, the difference lies in the type of service studied; that study examined inpatient chemotherapy patients, while this study focused on outpatients and did not include the assurance and empathy dimensions as in previous studies.

Furthermore, research by Saputro et al. (2024) on service quality at Bhayangkara Hospital in Pontianak showed that reliability was the most dominant dimension influencing patient

satisfaction at the BPJS Internal Medicine polyclinic. Timeliness of service, consistency of medical procedures, and the ability of healthcare workers to fulfill service promises are important indicators that determine patient perceptions of service quality. Similarities between this study and that study are that they both measure the influence of tangibles, reliability, and responsiveness to patient satisfaction and within the Bhayangkara Hospital environment. However, that study focused on internal medicine clinics and BPJS patients, while this study focuses on general outpatient services with a broader patient base.

Meanwhile, other studies have revealed that SERVQUAL is not always significant for patient satisfaction. For example, research conducted by Kitapci, Akdogan, and Dortyol (2014) analyzed the influence of SERVQUAL dimensions on patient satisfaction in public hospitals in Turkey. The results showed that tangibles, reliability, and responsiveness did not have a significant influence on patient satisfaction, while the dimensions of assurance and empathy proved to have a positive influence. These findings suggest that some SERVQUAL dimensions are not always the main determinants of satisfaction, especially in the context of healthcare. Similarities with this study lie in the focus of the analysis on three dimensions that often show inconsistent results: tangibles, reliability, and responsiveness. The difference is that Kitapci et al.'s study did not include psychological variables such as patient trust in the relationship model, thus failing to explain the possibility of a mediating mechanism.

Another study by Yunningsih (2022) at Indramayu Regional General Hospital showed similar findings. The study reported that reliability and responsiveness had no significant effect on inpatient satisfaction, while tangibles and assurance had a positive effect. These results strengthen the evidence that reliability and responsiveness are two dimensions of SERVQUAL whose effects tend to vary across healthcare contexts. These findings illustrate that service quality is often influenced by the characteristics of each hospital, making institutional factors an important factor to consider in evaluating service quality.

Bhayangkara Hospital Semarang as a referral hospital for the community and police officers has high demands for continues to improve the quality of its services. Bhayangkara Hospital has unique characteristics because it serves both the general public and police personnel. The diverse service load and high number of visits require the hospital to manage its services effectively and efficiently. The outpatient unit is one of the most visited areas, so the quality of service in this unit significantly determines patients' overall perception of the hospital.

Based on patient satisfaction rating data obtained from Google Review for outpatient services at Bhayangkara Hospital Semarang over the past six months, the distribution of ratings was as follows: rating 1 with 17 reviews, rating 2 with 4 reviews, rating 3 with 2 reviews, seven reviews had a rating of 4, and 50 had a rating of 5. Although the majority of patients gave excellent ratings (rating 5), approximately 35% of patients gave less than perfect ratings (ratings 1–4). This situation indicates a service gap between patient

expectations for service quality and their actual experience. Several reviews indicate that patients still find discrepancies in certain aspects, such as the timeliness of examinations, the responsiveness of staff, and the comfort of physical facilities.

Based on these developments, this study was conducted to analyze the role of patient trust as a mediating variable in the influence of tangibles, reliability, and responsiveness on outpatient satisfaction at Bhayangkara Hospital, Semarang. The results are expected to contribute to the development of health service theory and provide practical recommendations for improving the quality of hospital services.

2. Research Methods

This study specifically focuses on medical services in outpatient units, including the services provided by doctors and nurses, as well as the medical procedures patients receive during examinations and treatment. This focus was chosen because medical services are the core of healthcare services and directly influence patient perceptions of quality, trust, and satisfaction.

In the context of rapid, visit-based outpatient care, the interaction between patients and healthcare providers is the most significant aspect experienced by patients. Therefore, this study focuses on the quality of medical services as a key factor in shaping the patient experience.

This study did not include non-medical services such as general administration, parking, security, or other supporting facilities, except those directly related to the medical service process. This limitation was implemented to focus the analysis and ensure the results are more accurate in accordance with the research objectives.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. The Influence of Tangibles on Patient Trust

The test results show that Tangibles have a positive and significant effect on Patient Trust, with a coefficient value of 0.612 and a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$. This means that the better the physical condition of the hospital, the cleanliness of the service room, the completeness of the medical facilities, and the appearance of the medical staff, the higher the level of patient trust.

These findings indicate that the physical aspect is the first impression patients receive when receiving healthcare services. A hospital with a clean, comfortable environment and adequate facilities will foster confidence that the hospital maintains professional and safe service standards.

The results of this study align with the SERVQUAL theory by Parasuraman et al. (1988), which places tangibles as an important dimension of service quality. Research by Azhar et al. (2024)

also states that physical evidence of health services has a significant influence on the formation of trust. Patient trust. Therefore, Bhayangkara Hospital Semarang needs to continue to maintain the quality of its physical facilities and the comfort of its service environment to maintain patient trust.

3.1.1. The Influence of Reliability on Patient Trust

The results of the study indicate that reliability has a positive and significant effect on patient trust, with a coefficient of 0.319 and a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$. This means that the more reliable a hospital's services are in providing services appropriately, accurately, and consistently, the higher the patient's trust. Service reliability is reflected in the doctor's schedule accuracy, diagnosis accuracy, examination thoroughness, and consistency of service procedures. When patients receive services that meet their expectations and minimize errors, confidence in the hospital's competence will increase.

This finding aligns with research by Randa et al. (2024), which found that reliability was a dominant dimension in increasing patient satisfaction and positive perceptions at Bhayangkara Hospital in Makassar. Therefore, hospitals need to ensure consistent service standards to maintain patient trust.

3.1.2. The Influence of Responsiveness on Patient Trust

The test results show that responsiveness has a positive and significant effect on patient trust, with a coefficient of 0.415 and a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$. This indicates that the speed of medical personnel in assisting patients, responding to complaints, providing information, and being ready when needed will increase patient trust in the hospital.

In outpatient care, patients place great importance on the speed and care of the staff because the service is immediate and requires certainty of time. When patients feel they are being treated quickly and promptly, their perception of the hospital's professionalism increases. These results support this. Zeithaml et al.'s (2006) opinion that responsiveness is an important indicator of customer satisfaction and loyalty in services.

3.2. The Influence of Tangibles on Patient Satisfaction

The results of the study showed that Tangibles had a positive and significant effect on Patient Satisfaction, with a coefficient of 0.210 and a p-value of $0.009 < 0.05$. This means that the better the physical facilities, room cleanliness, environmental comfort, and completeness of medical facilities, the more satisfied patients will be with the services they receive.

Hospital patients tend to judge service quality based on tangible aspects. Comfortable waiting rooms, modern equipment, and a clean environment can enhance a patient's positive experience during treatment. This finding aligns with research by Lupiyoadi (2013), which states that tangible service evidence significantly influences customer perceptions and

satisfaction.

3.2.1. The Influence of Reliability on Patient Satisfaction

The test results show that reliability has a positive and significant effect on patient satisfaction, with a coefficient of 0.218 and a p-value of $0.001 < 0.05$. This indicates that the accuracy of service schedules, thoroughness of examinations, and the accuracy of medical procedures can increase patient satisfaction.

Patients are satisfied when the hospital delivers the promised service consistently and without errors. Reliable service reduces patient anxiety and increases comfort. This research aligns with Randa et al. (2024), who found that reliability is a dominant factor in BPJS patient satisfaction in hospitals.

3.2.2. The Influence of Responsiveness on Patient Satisfaction

The results of the study show that Responsiveness has a positive and significant effect on Patient Satisfaction, with a coefficient of 0.139 and p-value $0.045 < 0.05$. Although the influence is smaller than other variables, these results show that the speed and alertness of officers remain important factors in shaping patient satisfaction.

Outpatient care is synonymous with waiting times and speed of service delivery. Therefore, the faster medical personnel respond to patient needs, the higher the level of satisfaction. This study's findings align with Parasuraman et al.'s (1988) theory, which states that responsiveness is a key dimension of service quality, related to employees' willingness to help customers and provide prompt service. In the hospital context, staff responsiveness is a crucial determinant because patients require reassurance and immediate attention.

3.2.3. The Influence of Patient Trust on Patient Satisfaction

The test results show that Patient Trust has a positive and significant effect on Patient Satisfaction, with a coefficient of 0.425 and a p-value of $0.000 < 0.05$. This means that the higher the patient's trust in the hospital's competence, integrity, and concern, the higher the patient satisfaction.

Trust is a crucial psychological factor in healthcare because patients entrust their health to medical personnel. If patients trust in the quality of the hospital, their service experience will be more satisfying. This finding aligns with the theory of Mayer et al. (1995), which explains that trust is formed from competence, integrity, and benevolence.

4. Conclusion

Based on the results of research on the influence of Tangibles, Reliability, and Responsiveness on Patient Satisfaction with Patient Trust as a mediating variable in outpatients at Bhayangkara Hospital Semarang, the following conclusions can be drawn: 1. Tangibles have a positive and significant impact on patient trust. This indicates that the

physical condition of a hospital, such as the cleanliness of the service room, the completeness of medical facilities, the comfort of the environment, and the appearance of medical personnel, can increase patient confidence in the hospital's quality. 2. Reliability has a positive and significant impact on patient trust. This means that timely, accurate, consistent, and reliable service will increase patient trust in the hospital. 3. Responsiveness has a positive and significant impact on patient trust. This indicates that the speed and responsiveness of staff in assisting patients and responding to their needs can build patient trust. 4. Tangibles have a positive and significant impact on patient satisfaction. The better the physical facilities and service environment of a hospital, the higher the patient satisfaction. 5. Reliability has a positive and significant impact on patient satisfaction. Consistent, thorough, and service that meets patient expectations has been shown to increase patient satisfaction. 6. Responsiveness has a positive and significant impact on patient satisfaction. The speed of service and the readiness of staff to handle patients can provide a more satisfying service experience. 7. Patient trust has a positive and significant impact on patient satisfaction. The higher the patient's level of trust in the hospital's competence, integrity, and care, the higher the patient satisfaction. 8. Patient trust mediates the influence of tangibles, reliability, and responsiveness on patient satisfaction. This suggests that service quality not only directly increases satisfaction but also primarily increases patient trust. Overall, the research results show that Tangibles are the most dominant variable influencing Patient Trust, while Patient Trust has the greatest influence on Patient Satisfaction.

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