

Research Article

FACTORS RELATED TO LOYALTY OF INPATIENTS AT SOUTH GUNUNGSITOLI PUBLIC HEALTH CENTER

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: The quality of service assessed by patients is an important basis for determining patient satisfaction and loyalty. This study aims to determine the factors associated with the loyalty of inpatients at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center. **Methodology:** This is a cross-sectional study conducted among patients receiving inpatient health services at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center, Gunungsitoli City, Nias, Indonesia. Public Health Center is a first-level health service that provides basic services for patients, both outpatient and inpatient. **Results:** There are 61% of respondents stated that health services at South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center are of good quality and service image is in a good category. Aspects of satisfaction, there are 66.7% of patients are satisfied with the health services that have been received. Aspects of loyalty there are 64.4% of loyal respondents. There is a relationship between service quality, service image, patient satisfaction, and loyalty of inpatients at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center. **Conclusion:** This study showed that the service quality, the image of the Public Health Center, and patient satisfaction are related to the loyalty of inpatients at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center.

Keywords: quality, image, satisfaction, loyalty.

INTRODUCTION

The world of health in Indonesia is currently experiencing a transition period from a fully social institution to a business institution so health services are often referred to as socio-economic institutions [1]. This is of course a polemic in itself for health services as a social institution that is faced with an economic situation, even though health service organizations must continue to prioritize social aspects rather than financial aspects [2]. This is due to the not optimal quality of health services in the country (Indonesia), the reason for a large number of Indonesians' lack of adequate health facilities and less than optimal services, and other reasons why many Indonesian patients seek medical treatment abroad because they think that Indonesian health workers are often wrong in diagnosing [3]. so many patients who come from Indonesia seek treatment abroad, one of which is in Malaysia [4]. Good health service quality is the key to the success of health service providers. The quality of service assessed by patients is an important basis for determining patient satisfaction and loyalty. Patient satisfaction as an indicator of service outcome services will determine the success of service and quality of service in the hospital [5]. The dimensions for assessing patient loyalty according to Arab, et al [6] are positive word of mouth about health services, recommending health services to others, and a desire to reuse hospital services. This dimension of loyalty has an impact on the loyalty of as much as 54.8% of patients in the hospital, and as much as 45.2% of patient loyalty is influenced by other factors outside the dimension of loyalty [7]. The most influential factors related to patient loyalty are the quality of services and healthcare facilities [8]. In line with this, there is a relationship between patient loyalty and service quality, and the image of healthcare facilities. From this source, it can be said that service quality, patient satisfaction, and the image of the Public Health Center are factors related to patient loyalty to a health facility [9].

During the period 2019-2021, the utilization of inpatient services at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center decreased. It can be seen that in 2019 there were 160 patients, in 2000 there were 142 patients, and in 2001 there were 99 patients. At the same time, data from the Gunungsitoli City Health Office shows that in general an increase in the number of inpatient use of Public Health Centers in Gunungsitoli City, namely 10,321 visits in 2019, 12,547 in 2020, and as many as 14,345 visits in 2021. The initial survey conducted by the author showed that most of the inpatients at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center were the first patients to be hospitalized at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center. This means that only a small proportion are old patients (patients who have also been treated before). When this phenomenon fell in love with an officer at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center, the author got the answer that most of the diseases that could have been handled by the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center turned out to be the patients who immediately asked for help to Dr Thomson Nias General Hospital. One of the patients I met during the initial survey stated that the reason for not being given at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center was because the quality of service was still not satisfactory. The unsatisfactory quality of service includes officers providing services immediately, accurately, and satisfactorily, responsiveness, doubts about improvement, communication with health workers, employee equipment, and communication facilities that support providing a service. On the other hand, the patient said that the image of Dr. Thomson Nias Hospital was still better than that of the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center. This shows that there is a high probability that there is a relationship between patient dissatisfaction and the number of visits that have decreased due to the less-than-optimal quality of service. This research was related to the effect of service quality, the image of the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center, and patient satisfaction related to loyalty.

METHODOLOGY

This is a cross-sectional study conducted among patients receiving inpatient health services at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center, Gunungsitoli City, Nias, Indonesia. Public Health Center is a first-level health service that provides basic services for patients, both outpatient and inpatient. The study was conducted between March and August 2022. All variables were assessed using a structured observer questionnaire which was administered. Service quality is assessed using the health center service quality standard which includes administration, inpatient services, medical services, medical support services, and drug services. The image of the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center is assessed by asking about

perceptions about the image of the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center and patient satisfaction is assessed in 5 indicators, namely reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. Loyalty is assessed by recommending South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center services to others, and by a desire to reuse hospital services. Each question is provided with an answer on a Likert scale. All information was organized into tables and data were analyzed using the Chi-Square Test level set at $p < 0.05$.

RESULTS

Univariate analysis in this study includes service quality, service image, patient satisfaction, and patient loyalty.

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Research Variables

No	Variable	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
1	Services Quality		
	Good Frequency	55	61.1
	Poor Frequency	35	38.9
2	Service Image		
	Good Frequency	55	61.1
	Poor Frequency	35	38.9
3	Patien's Satisfaction		
	Good Frequency	60	66.7
	Poor Frequency	30	33,3
4	Loyalty		
	Good Frequency	58	64.4
	Poor Frequency	32	35,6

The data in Table 1 shows that respondents' perceptions of service quality and service image at South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center are 61% qualified and 38.9% are not qualified. The aspect of patient satisfaction with the services received, 66.7% of respondents were satisfied with the services at South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center and 33.3% were dissatisfied. The data in the table also shows that 64.4% of respondents are loyal to health services at South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center and 35.6% are disloyal.

Table 2: Service Quality and Patient Loyalty

			Patient Loyalty				Total		p-value
			Good		Poor				
		n	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Service Quality	Good	n	46	83.6	9	16.4	55	100.0	
	Poor	n	12	34.3	23	65.7	35	100.0	
Total			58	-	32	-	90	-	

Based on Table 2, it can be seen that of the 55 respondents who have the perception that health services at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center are of quality, there are 83.6% have loyalty in the sense that they will return to using the services at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center and only 16.4% who do not. loyal; On the other hand, of the 35 respondents who have the perception that health services at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center are not of high quality, 34.3% have loyalty and most (65.7%) are disloyal in the sense that they will not use the services at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center again. Furthermore, based on the results of hypothesis testing using the Chi-Square test, the $p\text{-value} = 0.00$ or $p < 0.05$. This shows that there is a relationship between service quality and the loyalty of inpatients at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center.

Table 3: Service Image and Patient Loyalty

			Patient Loyalty				Total		p-value
			Good		Poor				
		n	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Service Image	Good	n	43	78.2	12	21.8	55	100.0	
	Poor	n	15	42.9	20	57.1	35	100.0	
Total			58		32		90		

Based on Table 3, it can be seen that of the 55 respondents who have a good perception that the image of the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center is good, 78.2% have loyalty in the sense that they will return to use the services at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center and only 21.8% are disloyal; On the other hand, of the 35 respondents who have a perception that the image of the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center is not good, there are 42.9% who have loyalty and most (57.1%) are disloyal in the sense that they will not use the services at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center again. Furthermore, based on the results of hypothesis testing using the Chi-Square test, the $p\text{-value} = 0.01$ or $p < 0.05$. This shows that there is a relationship between the image of the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center and the loyalty of inpatients at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center

Table 4: Service Satisfaction and Patient Loyalty

			Patient Loyalty				Total		p-value
			Good		Poor		n	%	
			n	%	n	%			
Service Satisfaction	Good	n	48	80.0	12	20.0	60	100.0	0.00
	Poor	n	10	33.3	20	66.7	30	100.0	
Total			58		32		90		

Based on Table 4, it can be seen that of the 60 respondents who were satisfied with the services at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center, 80.0% had loyalty in the sense that they would return to using the services at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center and only 20.08% were disloyal; On the other hand, 33.3% of the 30 respondents who were dissatisfied with the services at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center had loyalty and most (66.7%) were disloyal in the sense that they would not use the services at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center again. Furthermore, based on the results of hypothesis testing using the Chi-Square test, the p-value = 0.00 or $p < 0.05$. This shows that there is a relationship between patient satisfaction and loyalty of inpatients at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center

DISCUSSION

Relationship between Service Quality and Patient Loyalty

The results of this study indicate that there is a relationship between service quality and loyalty of inpatients at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center. The results of this study are in line with the results of research by Ertika, et al [10], Susi [11], Adelina, et al [12], Ketut [13], and Dani [14] which prove there is a relationship between service quality and patient loyalty. The quality of service at South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center is a service activity provided by the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center that can meet the desires, expectations, and needs and can provide satisfaction for patients and their families as service users [15]. When examined further, based on respondents' answers, several things cause patient disloyalty, both in terms of service quality, service image, and patient satisfaction. Complaints from the aspect of service quality are mostly the responsiveness and empathy of officers who are still lacking. From the service image aspect, South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center has not been able to properly translate the expectations of the community by presenting itself as a Public Health Center with the best quality of service provided to patients. Likewise, from the aspect of patient satisfaction, most of them think that South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center employees provide services that are unfair and still view social status. As stated by Supriyono [16], a healthcare provider must be able to provide good and correct service to his patients so that his patients feel satisfied with the quality of service at the Puskesmas, quality is the overall characteristics and characteristics of a product that has influenced the ability to satisfy the stated or implicitly.

Relationship between Puskesmas Image and Patient Loyalty

The results of this study indicate that there is a relationship between service image at South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center and patient loyalty. These results are in line with the results of research by Inti, et al [17], Aswin, et al [18], Rusmiati, et al [19], Hafid [20], and Afrizal and Suhadi [21] which have proven a relationship between service quality, service image, and patient loyalty. Quoting Yunida's opinion [22], the service image at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center is what patients and their families think about as consumers of health services about health care products received at South

Gunungsitoli Public Health Center, including perceptions and attitudes as reaction to these services. For South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center, a good service image is necessary. The service image of the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center is a set of beliefs, ideas, and messages that are owned by the community who use health services at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center towards the health services provided. The dynamics of the development and progress of the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center depend on the extent to which the health services provided are of high quality. Therefore, South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center should provide quality services to achieve patient satisfaction which breeds customer loyalty. As Ashar [23] states, 3 things can distinguish images between various brands that are evaluated by consumers which can increase the possibility of making purchasing decisions for a brand, namely: favorability of brand association, Strength of brand association, and Uniqueness of brand association. Patients can create brand associations based on product attributes, product benefits, and overall evaluation or attitude toward the brand of South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center.

Relationship between Patient Satisfaction and Patient Loyalty

The results of this study indicate that there is a relationship between patient satisfaction and loyalty of inpatients at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center. These results are in line with the results of research conducted by Multia, et al [24], Isnurrini [25], Sri, et al [26], Emma [27], and Septi [28], showing a relationship between patient satisfaction and loyalty. Patient satisfaction is a person's feelings of pleasure or disappointment that arise after comparing expectations and reality. If the performance is below the customer's expectations, the customer is not satisfied, if it meets the expectations of the satisfied customer, as Aji [29] said that satisfaction is a condition that is felt by the consumer after he receives a service that meets his expectations. Quoting Irene's opinion quoted by Aji [29], there are several benefits of increasing patient satisfaction, including it is a means to face competitors; is the best promotion; is the company's most important asset; ensures the growth and development of service organizations; customers are increasingly critical in choosing products; satisfied customers will be loyal, and satisfied customers will recommend the organization to those in need. Patient satisfaction with the services received at South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center is a patient's response to the fulfillment of their needs and expectations. This is a patient's assessment of the products and services at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center which is a reflection of the level of enjoyment obtained with the fulfillment of needs and expectations [30].

CONCLUSION

This study showed that the service quality, the image of the Public Health Center, and patient satisfaction are related to the loyalty of inpatients at the South Gunungsitoli Public Health Center.

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Conflict of interest

The authors hereby declare no conflict of interest.

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