

Testing The Antecedents of Patient Satisfaction

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Abstract

This study examines the antecedents of patient satisfaction: waiting time, staff friendliness, and staff competence. The research was conducted at two community health centers (Puskesmas) in Jembrana Regency. The study population includes patients who have used the services of these health centers. The sampling technique used is non-probability sampling through purposive sampling. The sample size in this study is 130 respondents. The results of the hypothesis testing using multiple regression show that all three antecedents affect patient satisfaction.

Keywords: *waiting time, staff friendliness, staff competence, patient satisfaction*

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INTRODUCTION

The Community Health Center is a health service unit that serves as the frontline in Indonesia's health system. As a primary healthcare provider, The Community Health Center is crucial in ensuring the accessibility and quality of healthcare services for the broader community, particularly in remote areas. The Community Health Center holds a vital role in Indonesia's health system. The Community Health Center provides primary healthcare services, including disease prevention, health promotion, treatment, and rehabilitation. These services encompass essential health check-ups, immunizations, management of infectious diseases, and health education. By focusing on primary health, The Community Health Center helps reduce the burden on hospitals and prevents more severe disease complications. The success of The Community Health Center in providing optimal services directly impacts public health and the efficiency of the national health system. Puskesmas significantly reduces morbidity and mortality rates through its preventive and curative programs (Agustina et al., 2019). Everyone receiving services at Puskesmas undoubtedly wants to be served well so they feel satisfied. However, not all visitors experience satisfaction with the services at Puskesmas.

Patient satisfaction is a crucial indicator in assessing the quality of services at The Community Health Center. Satisfied patients tend to perceive the services provided positively, which can enhance their trust in the health facility. A study by Allahham (2013) shows that patient satisfaction is essential in building long-term relationships between patients and healthcare providers. Patient satisfaction is defined as the patient's subjective evaluation of their experience with the healthcare services received, including perceptions of service quality, interactions with healthcare workers, and clinical outcomes achieved (Al-Abri & Al-Balushi, 2014). Healthcare professionals' communication, empathy, and attention impact patient satisfaction, which is the evaluation and perception of the quality of services received. This satisfaction is closely related to positive health outcomes and treatment adherence (Doyle et al., 2013). Patient satisfaction is generally defined as the subjective evaluation of patients regarding their experience with the healthcare services received. Patient satisfaction results from comparing the patient's expectations with the reality of the services received. The patient will feel satisfied if the services meet or exceed expectations (Jha et al., 2008). In this context, patient satisfaction encompasses various aspects, such as the quality of interactions with healthcare workers, the comfort of facilities, and the clinical outcomes achieved. Research by Tsai et al. (2015) emphasizes that medical outcomes and the overall patient experience during the service influence patient satisfaction.

Waiting time is one of the factors frequently complained about by patients at health facilities, including The Community Health Center. Patient satisfaction is significantly impacted by how long or short the waiting period is perceived. Shorter waiting times are associated with higher patient satisfaction at The Community Health

Center Popayato. More than the actual waiting time, the perception of waiting time substantially influences patient satisfaction (Hidayat et al., 2023). Staff friendliness can create a more comfortable and supportive patient environment, reducing fear and anxiety and increasing patient trust in the services provided.

Additionally, the need for complex medical services can also affect waiting time. The impact of long waiting times has also been a significant concern. Longer waiting times can lead to decreased patient satisfaction with healthcare services. This can affect patient loyalty to the health centre or hospital (Patel et al., 2019).

Friendly staff can also better listen to and respond to patients' needs, contributing to increased satisfaction. The friendliness of healthcare workers includes a friendly attitude, attention, and empathy when interacting with patients. Research shows that friendly and empathetic interactions between healthcare workers can significantly increase patient satisfaction (Uhas et al., 2008). Another factor influencing patient satisfaction is staff competence. Waiting time in healthcare services has become a significant concern for researchers and practitioners in the health field. Numerous studies have been conducted to understand the factors influencing waiting time, its impact on patient satisfaction, and strategies to reduce waiting times. Waiting time in healthcare services is the period between the patient's arrival and the provision of the required medical care or treatment (Murray & Berwick, 2003). Factors influencing waiting time include the number of patients arriving, the need for complex medical services, the availability of medical personnel, and the efficiency of registration and scheduling systems (Sun et al., 2010). The volume of patients visiting the hospital or health centre is one of the variables affecting wait times. Longer wait times in the emergency room are a direct result of a large rise in patient volume (Liddy et al., 2017).

Healthcare worker competence includes knowledge, technical skills, and the ability to provide quality healthcare services. The technical competence of healthcare workers is positively related to patient satisfaction at The Community Health Center. The high competence of healthcare workers correlates positively with patient satisfaction because it ensures accurate diagnoses and efficient care (Vatica & Lubis, 2021). One essential personal quality that allows workers to produce better work is competence (Surajiyo, 2019). Being competent means having the necessary work attitude to complement your knowledge and skills, which allows you to execute a task or job (Silviana & Darmawan, 2017). Generally, there are three (3) elements of competence, namely: a) knowledge, b) skills, and c) behavior (personal attributes). In general, competence is the level of skills, knowledge, and behavior an individual possesses when performing organizational tasks (Komariah, 2019). Medical knowledge is the foundation of healthcare worker competence. Without in-depth and up-to-date knowledge, healthcare workers cannot make accurate diagnoses or provide appropriate care (Ermianti, 2018). Technical skills involve using medical tools and performing medical procedures correctly. Technical skills are crucial in identifying and managing workplace ergonomic and psychosocial health hazards. Good technical skills allow healthcare workers to quickly identify risks and take appropriate action to

prevent injuries and illnesses (Saputra & Putra, 2020). Professional attitude includes work ethics, dedication, and responsibility towards tasks. Patient trust and the quality of healthcare services can be enhanced by healthcare professionals who exhibit high professionalism (Sadli & Al Vionita, 2021). This research is essential to understand how specific factors such as waiting time, staff friendliness, and staff competence affect patient satisfaction at Community Health Centers. With a better understanding of these factors, Community Health Centers management can develop more effective strategies to improve service quality and patient satisfaction. Through this research, practical solutions are expected to address issues of long waiting times, lack of friendliness, and low competence in some Community Health Centers, thereby enhancing patient satisfaction and the quality of healthcare services in Indonesia.

METHODOLOGY

Patients receiving care at these Community Health Centres comprise the study's population. Purposive sampling with non-probability sampling was the sampling strategy used. The criteria for respondents were those who had used the health services in question more than twice. The number of respondents in this study was 130 patients. Variable measurement was carried out using a Likert Scale. The waiting time variable was measured with four questions, staff friendliness with three questions, staff competence with five questions, and consumer satisfaction with four questions. The research instrument testing was done using validity and reliability tests. The analysis method used multiple regression with the help of SPSS Software version 23.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The respondents in this study comprised 130 individuals, consisting of 32 men and 98 women. There were 46 respondents under 30 years old, 63 respondents aged 30-50, and 21 respondents over 50. Regarding their occupations, there were nine civil servants/military personnel, 40 private-sector employees, 27 entrepreneurs, 52 homemakers, and two students. The validity test results indicated that all items had a loading factor above 0.5, meaning all items were valid and could be included in further testing (Hair et al., 2019). Furthermore, the reliability test results showed that all variables had a Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.7, indicating reliability (Hair et al., 2019). The results of the validity and reliability tests can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1.
Validity and Reliability Test

Validity		Reliability			
Variable	Item	Component			
		1	2	3	4
Waiting Time	wt1		.807		
	wt2		.887		
	wt3		.879		
	wt4		.819		
Staff Friendliness	kp1				.803
	kp2				.695
	kp3				.748
Staff Competence	kom1	.820			
	kom2	.913			
	kom3	.846			
	kom4	.756			
	kom5	.648			
Patient Satisfaction	kep1			.631	
	kep2			.857	
	kep3			.806	
	kep4			.663	

Source: Research Results, 2023

The results of hypothesis testing using multiple regression shows that all three proposed hypotheses are supported. The results of hypothesis testing can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2.
Validity and Reliability Test

Hypothesis		β	t	Significance	Description
1	Waiting time → patient satisfaction.	0.087	2.068	0.041	supported

2:	Staff friendliness → patient satisfaction	0.313	4.116	0.000	supported
3:	Staff competence → patient satisfaction	0.334	4.340	0.000	supported

Source: Research Results, 2023

Table 2 displays the testing findings, which indicate that waiting time positively affects patient satisfaction, as indicated by $\beta = 0.087$, $t = 2.068$, and probability = 0.041, which means hypothesis 1 is supported. Patient satisfaction is one of the key indicators in assessing the quality of healthcare services. One crucial factor that influences patient satisfaction is waiting time. Short waiting times are often associated with higher levels of patient satisfaction because patients expect efficient and timely service (Bleustein et al., 2014). Therefore, it is essential to understand how waiting time affects patients' perceptions of the healthcare services they receive. A study conducted by (Camacho et al., 2006) showed that reducing waiting time increases patient satisfaction and enhances perceptions of the competence and efficiency of healthcare workers. Anderson et al. (2007) Revealed that short waiting times are often associated with perceptions of better service quality. Patients who feel their waiting time is well-managed tend to give higher ratings to the services they receive.

The testing results in Table 2 show that the friendliness of the staff has a positive effect on patient satisfaction, as indicated by $\beta = 0.313$, $t = 4.116$, and probability = 0.000, which means hypothesis 2 is supported. Hospitality is a crucial aspect of service as it significantly impacts customer satisfaction. The friendliness of staff members demonstrates their sincerity and attentiveness while serving customers, which can create a sense of comfort for those receiving the service. A good relationship between the service provider and the patient can be established through the staff's hospitality. Research by Azar and Efendi (2020) has proven that the friendliness of service positively and significantly impacts customer satisfaction. Similarly, (Pratama, 2020) has shown a medium and significant relationship between tourist satisfaction and hospitality.

The testing results in Table 2 show that the friendliness of the staff has a positive effect on patient satisfaction, as indicated by $\beta = 0.334$, $t = 4.340$, and probability = 0.000, which means hypothesis 2 is supported. The fundamental quality of people is competence, which denotes methods of thinking or acting, assessing circumstances, and providing them with sustained support. Competence is crucial when it comes to a person's fundamental capacity to carry out a task using the necessary work ethic and skills, knowledge, and abilities. In the realm of service provision, competence is one of the factors influencing customer satisfaction. Research conducted by (Navis et al., 2020) found that the competence of healthcare workers significantly affects the quality of service, which in turn impacts the satisfaction of inpatients. This indicates that improving the competence of healthcare personnel will enhance the quality of service perceived by patients. Rensi (2019) proved that medical staff competence positively and significantly influences patient satisfaction. Accordingly, attempts to increase patient happiness are significantly impacted by the skill of medical staff. Meanwhile,

(Wijayanti et al., 2018) found that competence partially significantly affects customer satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

Short waiting times can reduce patient discomfort and boredom, enhancing their overall experience. Therefore, community health centres are advised to optimize service flow and time management to minimize patient waiting times. Secondly, the friendliness of the staff is a critical factor in building a good relationship between patients and healthcare providers. Practical communication training for healthcare workers is necessary to ensure they interact with patients more empathetically and kindly. Furthermore, staff competence is crucial in ensuring patients receive high-quality and professional care. Investment in continuous education and training for healthcare workers can enhance their skills and knowledge, positively impacting patient satisfaction. For future research, it is recommended that more in-depth studies be conducted with larger samples and a variety of healthcare services to strengthen these findings. Other elements impacting patient satisfaction include service charges, physical facilities, and family participation in the patient's treatment. These may also be investigated through research. Consequently, a more thorough grasp of the variables impacting patient happiness may be attained, and this understanding can be applied to raise the standard of healthcare services as a whole.

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