



Original Research Article

Outpatient patient satisfaction with service quality, hospital image: Mediated by patient trust

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Abstract

Background: Patient satisfaction serves as a critical indicator of healthcare quality and is integral to the long-term success of healthcare institutions. Understanding the factors that influence patient satisfaction is essential for improving healthcare delivery and policy.

Objectives: This study aims to examine the influence of service quality, hospital image, and patient trust on the satisfaction of National Health Insurance outpatients at Tertiary Care Hospital of RS Khusus Bedah Hasta Husada. It also investigates whether patient trust mediates the relationship between service quality, hospital image, and patient satisfaction.

Materials and Methods: A quantitative approach with an explanatory research design was employed. Data were collected using structured questionnaires from 99 National Health Insurance outpatients, selected through purposive sampling. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to analyze the relationships between variables.

Results: The results show that service quality significantly influences outpatient satisfaction ($\beta = 0.613$, $p < 0.001$) and patient trust ($\beta = 0.309$, $p < 0.001$), while hospital image positively affects patient trust ($\beta = 0.508$, $p < 0.001$) but does not directly impact satisfaction ($\beta = 0.042$, $p = 0.335$). Indirect testing reveals that patient trust does not mediate the relationship between service quality and satisfaction ($\beta = 0.054$, $p = 0.221$) or between hospital image and satisfaction ($\beta = 0.088$, $p = 0.102$). Overall, service quality plays the most critical role in improving patient satisfaction, while hospital image primarily strengthens patient trust.

Conclusion: This study underscores the importance of service quality and trust in enhancing patient satisfaction. Hospital policies should prioritize improvements in medical personnel skills, service efficiency, and facility cleanliness to meet patient expectations and foster trust.

Keywords: Service quality, Hospital image, Patient Trust, Patient satisfaction.

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1. Introduction

The healthcare industry in Indonesia has experienced rapid development in the last few decades, along with various reforms carried out by the government to improve the quality of healthcare services. This development is influenced by various factors, such as population growth, lifestyle changes, and increasing public awareness of the importance of health.¹ In this context, hospitals as healthcare service providers are at the forefront of providing quality services to the community.

One of the government programs that plays an important role in increasing public access to health services is the National Health Insurance-Indonesian Healthy Card (JKN-KIS). As of October 1, 2023, the coverage of JKN-KIS participants has reached 264.5 million people or around 94.46% of the total population of Indonesia, with a target of reaching 98% in 2024.² The use of health services by JKN participants continues to increase, as reflected in visit data that reached 104.36 million visits in 2022.³ This increase requires health service providers, including hospitals, to maintain and improve the quality of facilities so that they can continue to meet service standards.

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Although the JKN-KIS program has increased access to health services, there are still various challenges in its implementation, especially related to the quality of services. At Tertiary Care Hospital of RS Khusus Bedah Hasta Husada, the phenomenon of National Health Insurance patient dissatisfaction, especially in outpatient services, is a major concern. Based on data obtained from the General Sub-Division of the Public Relations Unit of Tertiary Care Hospital of RS Khusus Bedah Hasta Husada, several aspects such as long waiting times, limited facilities, and less than optimal interaction with medical personnel are often complaints from patients.

Patient satisfaction is a critical indicator of health service quality and directly affects hospital sustainability. Previous studies have highlighted the important role of service quality and hospital image in determining patient satisfaction. Studies by Amalia & Ikhtiar, Citra et al., and Akbar et al. showed a positive and significant relationship between hospital image and patient satisfaction.^{4,5,6} However, different findings by Sulistyono & Gumilar and Putri et al. showed no significant impact, creating a research gap.^{7,8} Similarly, although service quality is consistently associated with patient satisfaction, variations in findings require further investigation.^{9,10}

Trust emerged as an important mediating factor in understanding the relationship. Trust is defined as the belief that a healthcare provider delivers safe, effective, and high-quality care.¹¹ Trust strengthens patient relationships and loyalty.¹² Studies by Imran & Ramli, Eftitah et al., and Wijaya et al. confirmed the positive impact of hospital image on trust, while Anandiha reported inconclusive results.^{14,15,16,19} Trust also significantly mediated the relationship between service quality and satisfaction, strengthening the influence of service quality and hospital image on patient satisfaction.^{13,17,18}

At Tertiary Care Hospital of RS Khusus Bedah Hasta Husada, the phenomenon of decreasing outpatient visits and patient dissatisfaction, especially among National Health Insurance patients, emphasizes the importance of these variables. Frequent complaints related to long waiting times, unfriendly staff behavior, and inadequate facilities, as recorded in the JKN Mobile application, have a negative impact on the hospital's reputation and image. This issue highlights the need for a strategy that integrates improving service quality, hospital image, and trust to improve patient satisfaction.

This study addresses the gap by examining the relationship between service quality, hospital image, trust, and patient satisfaction in National Health Insurance outpatients at Tertiary Care Hospital of RS Khusus Bedah Hasta Husada. This study aims to contribute to the academic literature and provide practical insights for hospital managers in designing effective strategies to improve patient trust and satisfaction.

2. Materials and Methods

This study employed a quantitative research design with an explanatory research approach to analyze the causal relationships between service quality, hospital image, patient trust, and patient satisfaction. Explanatory research aims to explain cause-and-effect relationships between variables. The study was conducted from October to November 2024.

The population in this study consisted of 5,875 National Health Insurance patients who had received outpatient services at the surgical clinic of Tertiary Care Hospital of RS Khusus Bedah Hasta Husada for one year in 2023. The sample was selected using purposive sampling. The inclusion criteria for the sample were National Health Insurance patients from the surgical outpatient clinic who had received at least one outpatient service during the study period, ensuring they could provide an assessment of hospital services. Additionally, respondents were required to be 18-55 years old and willing to participate in the study by completing the questionnaire.

The sample size was calculated using Slovin's formula with a 10% margin of error. Based on the calculation, a minimum of 99 respondents was required. To ensure completeness, the sample was rounded up to 100 respondents. Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the Institutional Ethics Committee (IEC) (No.180/071028/Kaprodi.MM/SuratIjinPenelitian/XI/2024). Respondents provided informed consent before participating, and their confidentiality was maintained.

The interviews were conducted by the researcher in the waiting area of the surgical clinic. The data collection method involved the use of a structured questionnaire, which was administered to the respondents. Each interview session took approximately 15 to 30 minutes to complete.

Data collection was conducted starting in November 2024 using Likert scale measurements. This study focused on four main variables, namely service quality, hospital image, patient satisfaction, patient trust. The following are the measurements used in each variable and its indicators.

Variables	Code	Dimensions	Item	Validity	Reliability	Source
Service Quality (X1)	X1.1	Reliability	SQ.1	0.703	0.959	29
			SQ.2	0.521		
			SQ.3	0.821		
			SQ.4	0.833		
	X1.2	Responsiveness	SQ.5	0.737		
			SQ.6	0.734		
			SQ.7	0.796		
			SQ.8	0.558		
	X1.3	Assurance	SQ.9	0.821		
			SQ.10	0.833		
			SQ.11	0.821		
			SQ.12	0.647		
			SQ.13	0.632		
	X1.4	Empathy	SQ.14	0.827		
			SQ.15	0.565		
			SQ.16	0.652		
			SQ.17	0.534		
	X1.5	Physical Evidence (Tangibles)	SQ.18	0.585		
			SQ.19	0.565		
			SQ.20	0.618		
			SQ.21	0.651		
			SQ.22	0.659		
			SQ.23	0.617		
Hospital Image (X2)	X2.1	Reputation	HI.1	0.65	0.918	30
			HI.2	0.888		
	X2.2	Brand Image	HI.3	0.596		
			HI.4	0.905		
	X2.3	General Acknowledgement	HI.5	0.832		
			HI.6	0.785		
Patient Satisfaction (Y)	Y.1	Satisfaction with Medical Services	PS.1	0.923	0.974	31
			PS.2	0.841		
			PS.3	0.942		
	Y.2	Satisfaction with Facilities	PS.4	0.771		
			PS.5	0.942		
			PS.6	0.923		
			PS.7	0.841		
	Y.3	Satisfaction with Service Speed	PS.8	0.942		
			PS.9	0.811		
			PS.10	0.942		
Patient Trust(Z)	Z.1	Trust in Competence	PT.1	0.787	0.974	32
			PT.2	0.874		
			PT.3	0.848		
			PT.4	0.858		
			PT.5	0.944		
			PT.6	0.847		
	Z.2	Information Transparency	PT.7	0.711		
			PT.8	0.904		
			PT.9	0.925		
			PT.10	0.716		
	Z.3	Consistency of Service	PT.11	0.949		
			PT.12	0.83		
			PT.13	0.868		
			PT.14	0.77		
			PT.15	0.82		

The questionnaires used in this study, including Service Quality (X1), Hospital Image (X2), Patient Satisfaction (Y), and Patient Trust (Z), have been tested for validity and reliability. The results indicated that all questionnaire items met the required validity and reliability standards, making them suitable for data collection in this study.

This research uses the method *Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling* (PLS-SEM) to evaluate the direct influence between financial literacy and financial well-being on business sustainability. In addition, financial well-being functions as a mediating variable that bridges the relationship between financial literacy and business sustainability (indirect influence). To test the mediation effect, the Sobel test is used. Meanwhile, digital financial inclusion is included as a moderating variable that strengthens the influence of financial well-being on business sustainability.

3. Results

3.1. Respondent characteristics

Table 1: Characteristics of research subjects

No	Respondent Characteristics	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Age		
	≤ 20 years	28	28
	21 – 30 years	27	27
	31 – 40 years	17	17
	> 41 years	28	28
	Total	100	100
2	Gender		
	Man	54	54
	Woman	46	46
	Total	100	100
3	Type of work		
	Students	35	35
	civil servant	4	4
	Private Employee/Self-Employed	43	43
	Other	18	18
	Total	100	100
4	Level of education		
	Graduated from elementary school	8	8
	Graduated from junior high school	21	21
	Graduated from high school	54	54
	Diploma	5	5
	Bachelor	12	12
	Total	100	100

Based on **Table 1**, it shows that most respondents are aged ≤20 years, as many as 28 people (28%). Respondents aged 21-30 years are as many as 27 people (27%). Respondents aged 31-40 years are 17 people (17%). Meanwhile, respondents aged >41 years are the smallest number, which is 28 people (28%). **Table 1** shows that most respondents are male, as many as 54 people (54%), while female respondents are 46 people (46%). **Table 1** shows that most respondents have a high school education, as many as 54 people (54%). As many as 21 respondents (21%) have graduated from junior high school, 12 respondents (12%) have a bachelor's degree, 8 respondents (8%) have graduated from elementary school, and the remaining 5 people (5%) have a diploma. Based on **Table 1**, most respondents work as private employees or entrepreneurs, as many as 43 people (43%). As many as 35 respondents (35%) were students, while 4 people (4%) worked as civil servants and 18 respondents (18%) had other jobs.

3.2. Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis testing is conducted to determine the relationship between variables in this study. Testing is conducted directly or indirectly using statistical analysis with coefficient indicators (β) and p-value.

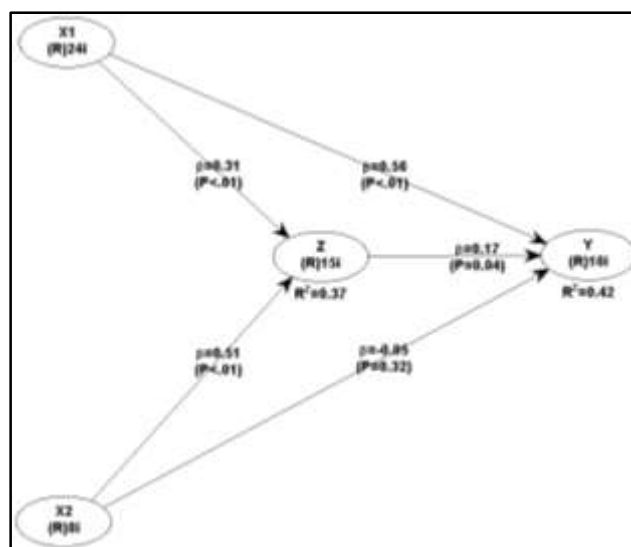


Figure 2: Relationship between variables in the structural model

3.3. Direct hypothesis testing

Direct hypothesis testing evaluates the direct relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The results of the hypothesis testing are presented in **Table 2**.

Table 2: Direct hypothesis testing

No	Hypothesis	Coefficient (β)	p-value	Conclusion	Results
1	There is a positive and significant influence of service quality on outpatient satisfaction at Tertiary Care Hospital of RS Khusus Bedah Hasta Husada .	0.613	<0.001	Positive and significant	H1 Accepted
2	There is a positive and significant influence of hospital image on outpatient satisfaction at Tertiary Care Hospital of RS Khusus Bedah Hasta Husada .	0.042	0.335	Not significant	H2 Rejected
3	There is a positive and significant influence of service quality on outpatient trust at Tertiary Care Hospital of RS Khusus Bedah Hasta Husada .	0.309	<0.001	Positive and significant	H3 Accepted
4	There is a positive and significant influence of hospital image on outpatient trust at Tertiary Care Hospital of RS Khusus Bedah Hasta Husada .	0.508	<0.001	Positive and significant	H4 Accepted
5	There is a positive and significant influence of patient trust on outpatient satisfaction at Tertiary Care Hospital of RS Khusus Bedah Hasta Husada .	0.174	0.036	Positive and significant	H5 Accepted

Table 3: Indirect hypothesis testing

No	Hypothesis	Coefficient (β)	p-value	Conclusion	Results
1	Patient trust mediates the influence of service quality on outpatient satisfaction at Tertiary Care Hospital of RS Khusus Bedah Hasta Husada .	0.054	0.221	Not significant	H6 Rejected
2	Patient trust mediates the influence of hospital image on outpatient satisfaction at Tertiary Care Hospital of RS Khusus Bedah Hasta Husada.	0.088	0.102	Not significant	H7 Rejected

The results of direct hypothesis testing show that service quality has a positive and significant effect on outpatient satisfaction at Tertiary Care Hospital of RS Khusus Bedah Hasta Husada, with a β coefficient of 0.613 and a p-value <0.001. This shows that the better the quality of service provided, the level of patient satisfaction will increase significantly. In addition, service quality also has a positive and significant effect on patient trust, with a β coefficient of 0.309 and a p-value <0.001, which means that good service quality can increase patient trust in the hospital.

Hospital image has a positive and significant effect on patient trust, with a β coefficient of 0.508 and a p-value <0.001. This indicates that a good hospital image will increase the level of patient trust. However, hospital image does not have a significant effect on patient satisfaction, with a β coefficient of 0.042 and a p-value of 0.335. This indicates that although hospital image is important, this factor does not directly affect patient satisfaction significantly.

Patient trust also has a positive and significant influence on patient satisfaction, with a β coefficient of 0.174 and a p-value of 0.036. This means that high patient trust in the hospital can increase their satisfaction.

3.4. Indirect hypothesis testing

Indirect hypothesis testing evaluates the mediating role of patient trust in the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. **Table 3**

The results of indirect hypothesis testing indicate that patient trust does not mediate the relationship between service quality and patient satisfaction, with a β coefficient of 0.054 and a p-value of 0.221. This means that service quality directly affects patient satisfaction without involving patient trust as a mediating variable. In addition, patient trust also does not mediate the relationship between hospital image and patient satisfaction, with a β coefficient of 0.088 and a p-value of 0.102. This indicates that hospital image, either directly or through patient trust, does not significantly affect patient satisfaction. Overall, service quality is the factor that has the most direct influence on patient satisfaction, while hospital image has a greater role in building patient trust than in increasing patient satisfaction.

4. Discussion

The results of the study showed that service quality has a positive and significant effect on outpatient satisfaction with a β value of 0.613 and $p < 0.001$. This confirms that the higher the quality of service provided, the level of patient satisfaction will also increase. This finding is in line with previous studies showing that service quality plays an important role in creating patient satisfaction and loyalty.^{20,21,22} In addition, other studies also confirm that service quality is significantly related to the level of patient satisfaction and loyalty.^{23,24,25} Thus, service quality is the main factor that must be considered to improve patient satisfaction.

Based on the results of the study, hospital image did not have a significant effect on outpatient satisfaction, with a β value of 0.042 and $p = 0.335$. This indicates that patient satisfaction is more influenced by other factors, such as service quality or trust built through direct patient experience. This finding is different from several previous studies which stated that hospital image affects patient satisfaction.²⁶ However, other studies have revealed that direct patient experience of hospital services has a greater influence on satisfaction than the image built.^{27,28} Therefore, the main focus in improving patient satisfaction is to ensure good service quality, without relying too much on hospital image alone.

This study shows that service quality has a positive and significant effect on patient trust, with a β value of 0.573 and $p < 0.001$. This means that the better the quality of service provided, the higher the level of patient trust in the hospital. This supports previous findings stating that good service quality creates a sense of security and trust among patients.^{21,22} Patient trust is often influenced by aspects of medical staff professionalism, clarity of information, and friendliness of health workers, all of which are part of service quality.²⁰

Hospital image was found to have a positive and significant influence on outpatient trust, with a β value of 0.246 and $p < 0.001$. These results indicate that a positive hospital image can increase patient trust, although its influence is not as great as service quality. Previous studies have also stated that a good hospital reputation increases patient trust in the quality of services provided.^{26,27} However, this study emphasizes that hospital image tends to be a supporting factor, while service quality remains the main factor in building patient trust.

The results of the study showed that trust has a positive and significant effect on patient satisfaction, with a β value of 0.324 and $p < 0.001$. This finding confirms that the higher the level of patient trust in the hospital, the more likely they are to feel satisfied with the services received. Other studies

support this, where patient trust in medical personnel and health facilities is closely related to perceived satisfaction.^{24,28} Trust creates a sense of comfort and certainty for patients, which directly impacts their satisfaction with health services.

Patient satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on outpatient loyalty, with a β value of 0.552 and $p < 0.001$. This indicates that patients who are satisfied with hospital services tend to be more loyal and willing to use the same service in the future. Previous studies have shown that patient satisfaction is the key to building long-term loyalty.^{23,25} This loyalty is also often characterized by the patient's willingness to recommend the hospital to others, which further strengthens the hospital's reputation.²⁷

Trust was found to have a positive and significant effect on patient loyalty, with a β value of 0.175 and $p < 0.001$. This shows that patient trust in the hospital not only increases satisfaction but also encourages loyalty. Patients who trust the hospital tend to be more loyal and do not easily switch to other health facilities. This finding is supported by previous studies stating that trust is a fundamental element in creating long-term loyalty.^{21,22}

Overall, service quality is the most dominant factor influencing patient satisfaction and loyalty, followed by trust, while hospital image plays a more supporting role. These findings imply that hospitals need to prioritize improving service quality to create a positive patient experience, resulting in high satisfaction and loyalty. This study also underlines the importance of building patient trust through transparent communication, professionalism, and consistent service.^{20,23,24}

5. Conclusion

The findings of this study highlight that service quality has a positive and significant impact on outpatient satisfaction at Tertiary Care Hospital of RS Khusus Bedah Hasta Husada, indicating that improvements in service quality directly enhance patient satisfaction. Conversely, hospital image does not significantly affect outpatient satisfaction, suggesting that factors such as service delivery may hold greater importance for patients compared to the hospital's reputation.^{30,31,32}

Service quality also positively and significantly influences patient trust, and trust further enhances patient satisfaction. Additionally, a favorable hospital image significantly increases patient trust. However, patient trust does not mediate the relationship between service quality and patient satisfaction, nor between hospital image and patient satisfaction, indicating that these relationships are direct and do not rely on trust as an intermediary factor.

This study has several limitations. First, the data were collected from a single hospital, limiting the generalizability

of the findings to other healthcare settings. Second, the study focused solely on National Health Insurance outpatients, excluding other patient groups whose satisfaction determinants may differ. Third, the cross-sectional design of the study restricts the ability to establish causal relationships over time. Future research could address these limitations by including multiple hospitals, broadening the scope to other patient groups, and employing a longitudinal research design.

The study provides important implications for hospital policies, emphasizing that the quality of services must align with patient expectations. Key areas for improvement include enhancing the skills and competencies of medical personnel, ensuring prompt and efficient service delivery, and maintaining high standards of facility cleanliness. These efforts are crucial for fostering patient trust and satisfaction, thereby strengthening the hospital's overall performance and reputation.

6. Source of Funding

None.

7. Conflict of Interest

None.

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