

Effect of Trust and Satisfaction on Outpatient Loyalty at Sundari Hospital in 2025

Muhammad Adiul Ilham^{1*}, Ribka Panjaitan², Julita Arnis³, Dermawan Syah Putra Gulo⁴

^{1,2,3}Hospital Administration Study Program, Faculty of Public Health, Institut Kesehatan Helvetia, Medan
Email: azamsuedjono1707@gmail.com

Service quality is a critical determinant of patient satisfaction and loyalty in healthcare settings, as it reflects the extent to which services meet patient expectations. This study aimed to examine the effects of trust and patient satisfaction on outpatient loyalty at Sundari Hospital in 2025. A quantitative descriptive approach was employed, involving 99 outpatient respondents who completed structured questionnaires. Data were analyzed using univariate and bivariate techniques, with the chi-square test applied to assess the associations between variables. The results indicated that 63.6% of respondents reported high levels of trust, 60.6% reported high satisfaction, and 56.6% demonstrated loyalty toward the hospital. Chi-square analysis revealed that both trust ($p = 0.003$) and satisfaction ($p = 0.012$) significantly influenced outpatient loyalty. The findings confirm that enhancing patient trust and satisfaction can strengthen loyalty, which is essential for sustaining patient engagement and promoting repeat visits. These results provide practical insights for healthcare managers seeking to improve service quality and patient-centered strategies, highlighting the importance of fostering trust and satisfaction to achieve better patient retention and long-term institutional performance.

Keywords: atient loyalty, Trust, Patient satisfaction, Outpatient services, Healthcare service quality

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Corresponding Author:

Muhammad Adiul Ilham
Institut Kesehatan Helvetia
azamsuedjono1707@gmail.com

1. Introduction

Quality healthcare is an essential component in a modern healthcare system as it determines not only the patients' perception of the quality of care received but also plays a vital part in influencing the patients' satisfaction and loyalty [1]. Based on the study, service quality in terms of reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurance and physical facilities has been found positively related with the patient satisfaction levels. Satisfied patients usually show willingness to use the same healthcare service again, to suggest the hospital to others and to form long-term partnerships with the healthcare institution. Patient loyalty is a strategic indicator of hospital performance in the increasingly tough healthcare competition since it contributes to revenue stability and enhanced organizational image and reputation, and the sustainability of hospital operations [2].

A critical aspect affecting patient loyalty is the trust patients place in health care providers [3]. This trust comprises the patients' faith in doctors and healthcare professionals' competence, the reliability of services and the ability of the healthcare facility to offer safe, effective and appropriate care during outpatient visits [3]. High trust fosters long-term relationships between patients and healthcare professionals, enhances satisfaction and intention to revisit the same service in the future. Trust is an important construct in outpatient treatment as patients usually seek continuity of care and recurrent encounters with health care personnel [4].

Patient satisfaction is a major indicator of the quality of healthcare and is the basis for continual improvement efforts in healthcare organizations [5]. High level of satisfaction demonstrates the congruence between patient expectations and the services received, and contributes to enhanced patient trust and loyalty [6]. When measuring service quality, the SERVQUAL model created by Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry specifies five important factors that influence patient perceptions: responsiveness, reliability, assurance, empathy and tangibles [7]. These five characteristics are still commonly employed in modern healthcare research and have been proven to be highly connected to patient satisfaction and quality of service experiences in hospitals and other healthcare institutions [8]. Therefore, health care institutions should improve all aspects of service quality to improve patient satisfaction and retain the competitiveness of the business [9].

The past studies have highlighted service quality, however there is a research void in private type C hospitals in Indonesia, especially Sundari General Hospital in Medan. Data from the 2024 outpatient satisfaction survey revealed satisfaction ranging from 80.3% to 97.87%, with average satisfaction not regularly surpassing basic service standards ($\geq 90\%$). The main reasons for patient discontent are the delay in receiving examination findings, the inconsistency of the doctor's appointment time, hostile staff, and the poor conditions of the waiting area [10]. The results suggest that there is a need for more comprehensive examination of the factors affecting patient loyalty in Sundari General Hospital [11]. Treatment quality, the patient experience and the happiness with the treatment obtained are the factors of the patient desire to revisit the healthcare services. Empirical study shows that patients evaluate services on the basis of effectiveness, quality of interaction with the medical personnel and administrative experience. Bad service can destroy confidence and patient loyalty. However, there is a lack of study that particularly investigates the relationship between trust and satisfaction of outpatients and their loyalty in private type C hospitals, which is a crucial research gap [12].

Sundari General Hospital offers several types of inpatient care like ICU and NICU facilities. This hospital is led by dr. Zulkarnain Hutasuhut and continues to try to increase the quality of medical services and facilities. A preliminary poll of 10 outpatients showed dissatisfaction with various areas of the service, including delays in examination results, inaccurate specialist doctor practice times, unpleasant staff attitudes and uncomfortable waiting room circumstances [13]. The research is based on a literature analysis and field studies. The research was conducted to examine the effect of trust and satisfaction on outpatient loyalty at Sundari General Hospital in 2025. This study is expected to make practical contributions to hospital administration in enhancing service quality, preserving patient satisfaction, and devising effective ways to sustain long-term patient loyalty. The gap of existing research is the absence of contextual studies in type C private hospitals in Indonesia that assess trust and satisfaction simultaneously on outpatient loyalty.

2. Method

This study uses a quantitative cross-sectional design. This study aims to determine the effect of trust and patient satisfaction on outpatient loyalty at Sundari Hospital Medan in January-July 2025. The study involved 14,290 outpatients who attended the hospital between November 2024 and January 2025. A purposive sampling method was used with a sample size of 99 respondents computed using Slovin's formula with 10% margin of error. Inclusion criteria were desire to participate and literacy, and having attended >1 outpatient appointment, and exclusion criteria were unwillingness and illiteracy or having only 1 visit. Data were acquired by utilizing a validated structured questionnaire and analyzed using univariate and bivariate approaches. Univariate analysis was done to characterize each variable using frequency distributions and percentages. Bivariate analysis was performed using the chi-square test to evaluate the correlations between independent and dependent variables at a significance threshold of $p < 0.05$. A p-

value less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant. This design permitted the objective and empirical evaluation of patterns and associations within the out-patient population on a non-repeated measures basis.

3. Results and Discussion

Bivariate Analysis

Table 1. Cross Tabulation between Trust and Satisfaction with Outpatient Loyalty at Sundari Hospital in 2025

		f	%	f	%	f	%
Patient Trust							
1	Satisfied	36	49,5	27	14,1	63	63,6
2	Dissatisfied	20	7,1	16	29,3	36	36,4
Patient Satisfaction							
1	Satisfied	34	40,4	26	20,2	60	60,6
2	Dissatisfied	22	16,2	17	23,2	39	39,4
Total		56	56,6	43	43,4	99	100,0

The cross-tabulation results (Table 1) showed that the majority of the outpatients who were satisfied with the services had strong loyalty. Notably, 49.5% of patients who trusted the hospital the most reported being loyal, compared to only 14.1% of those who trusted the hospital less ($p = 0.003$). This implies a large statistical impact of trust on patient loyalty. Similarly, contentment significantly affected loyalty: 40.4% of satisfied patients were loyal, while 20.2% of dissatisfied patients were loyal ($p = 0.012$). These data show that trust and satisfaction are important predictors of outpatient loyalty. The results underline the importance of the development of patient trust and the guarantee of service satisfaction as critical methods for improving patient retention and encouraging long-term involvement with hospital services.

The Effect of Trust on Outpatient Loyalty

The findings of the Chi-square test found a significant link between patient satisfaction and patient loyalty ($p = 0.012 < 0.05$) which means that the higher the level of patient happiness, the higher the loyalty of outpatients at Sundari Hospital. This result is in line with the research of Murhawati that the dimensions of empathy ($p = 0.026$) and responsiveness ($p = 0.005$) have a substantial effect on patient loyalty by enhancing patient satisfaction [14]. Patient satisfaction is a measure of the congruence between the services rendered and the patient's expectations. In health care, satisfaction is determined by the quality of interaction with health care experts, the effectiveness of therapy, the responsiveness of staff, and the hospital environment [15]. Dissatisfaction in one part of the service might influence patients' opinion of the whole service quality and lead to low patients' loyalty. On the other hand, a high level of satisfaction causes patients to come back to utilize the same healthcare service and give positive recommendations to others, in the end contributing to the sustainability and competitiveness of the institution [16].

Satisfaction is a person's feeling level after comparing the perceived performance with the expectations. Kotler stated that loyalty is a customer's commitment to repurchase or reuse a product or service continuously [3]. In the context of healthcare, happy patients are likely to stay with hospitals for a long time and act as indirect promoters of the hospitals sharing their positive experiences with their relatives and communities. Therefore, patient satisfaction is a strategic basis in creating loyalty and trust, and improving the continuous relationship between patients and healthcare providers [17]. Quality healthcare services, effective communication, transparent information, and a pleasant service atmosphere are significant

variables for improving patient satisfaction. Hospitals that are able to continuously meet requirements and expectations of patients can reduce patient uncertainty, anxiety and risk perceptions hence enhancing their loyalty to the services given [18].

The findings of this study reveal that patient satisfaction is an important element in outpatient loyalty. So it is important that the management of Sundari Hospital focuses on enhancing patient happiness. The service quality is improved by improving staff response, improving empathy in patient engagement, giving clear and transparent information, and improving the comfort of service facilities. The hospital also needs to carry out regular patient satisfaction surveys with a view of identifying areas of service that need improvement and to make sure that the requirements of the patients are best addressed. The implementation of patient-centered care is intended to improve patient's good experiences, the number of repeat visits, the strength of word-of-mouth, as well as the hospital's image and competitiveness.

The Effect of Patient Satisfaction on Outpatient Loyalty

The findings of the Chi-square analysis revealed that there was a significant association between patient satisfaction and outpatient loyalty ($p = 0.012 < 0.05$). Patient satisfaction is an evaluation of the match between expectations and the service received during the healthcare process [19]. Dissatisfaction at one stage of the service can create a negative perception of the overall patient experience and reduce the overall level of satisfaction [18]. In an increasingly competitive healthcare environment, patient satisfaction is an important factor determining patient loyalty [20]. Satisfied patients tend to return to use the same healthcare service and recommend it to their families and the community, thus supporting the long-term sustainability of the hospital [21].

Patient satisfaction is an indicator of how well expectations and service obtained during the health care process are matched [19]. Any dissatisfaction at any point in the service might lead to a bad view of the total patient experience and reduced overall satisfaction. Patient satisfaction is a key determinant of patient loyalty in an increasingly competitive health care market. Satisfied patients are likely to revisit the same healthcare service and suggest it to the family and community, therefore promoting the long-term viability of the hospital. Satisfaction is the amount of a person's feeling after comparing the performance received with their expectations, whereas loyalty is the commitment of a customer to keep using a product or service on an ongoing basis [23]. Satisfied patients in healthcare are likely to keep long-term ties with hospitals and act as advocates by sharing positive experiences with others [24]. Also, patient satisfaction leads to reduced psychological stress, uncertainty and anxiety in the process of healthcare. On the other hand, a poor service experience can decrease patient trust and decrease intention to return [25]. Therefore, to boost satisfaction and loyalty of outpatients, the quality of service, effective communication, transparency of information and comfortable service environment should be improved [26].

The results of this study indicate that the administration of Sundari Hospital should concentrate on enhancing patient satisfaction so as to boost the loyalty of the outpatients. The service quality can be enhanced mainly in terms of empathy, responsiveness of workers, clear communication and comfort of the service environment. Surveys and feedback methods should be used regularly to evaluate patient satisfaction and to know the areas of service that require improvement. Also, the training on service excellence for both healthcare and non-healthcare professionals should be strengthened to create a more favorable service experience. The hospital can raise the number of repeat visits by keeping the patient satisfaction level steady. This will also boost the word of mouth recommendation, improve the hospital's image and generate a competitive advantage that can be used to promote the long-term sustainability of healthcare services.

4. Conclusion

The results of this study show that trust and patient satisfaction significantly influence outpatient loyalty in Sundari General Hospital in 2025 with p-value 0.003 and 0.012 correspondingly. Patients who trust are more confident in the trustworthiness, integrity and service consistency of the hospital, which results in repeat business and positive recommendations. Likewise, patient satisfaction is mainly determined by subjective elements (e.g., empathy, friendliness, emotional engagement) and objective criteria (e.g., service speed, procedural accuracy, facility completeness) and greatly impacts loyalty.

The findings suggest that hospitals need to develop ways to build patient trust and provide high quality, patient-centered services in order to achieve long-term patient engagement and recurrent use. To enhance satisfaction, maintain trust and bolster patient loyalty, healthcare professionals must focus on clear communication, transparency and a friendly environment. The findings demonstrate the strategic necessity of integrating service quality, trust and happiness to promote sustained outpatient retention and increase overall institutional performance.

5. References

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