Customer Loyalty of Inpatients of RSU Mardi Lestari Sragen in Review of Aspects of Hospital Image and Service Quality

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Abstract

Purpose: In the context of Indonesia's health service organizations, which face increasingly fierce global competition, this study aims to examine the impact of hospital image and service quality on customer loyalty. Additionally, it aims to analyze the influence of hospital image on customer loyalty, with customer satisfaction as a mediating variable.

Methodology: Quantitative methods are employed in this study, utilizing non-probability sampling with a purposive sampling technique. Data is collected through the distribution of questionnaires employing a Likert scale. The study population consists of inpatients at RSU Mardi Lestari Sragen, with 110 respondents. Data analysis is conducted using Partial Least Square (PLS) via SMARTPLS software, encompassing Outer and Inner model analyses.

Results: The findings of this study indicate that hospital image and service quality positively and significantly influence customer loyalty. Moreover, customer satisfaction is a mediating factor in the relationship between hospital image, service quality, and customer loyalty.

Applications: This research suggests that hospital management should strive to enhance its image by delivering exemplary services and ensuring patient satisfaction. Furthermore, the findings recommend bolstering the hospital's brand image and service quality to enhance patient satisfaction.

Introduction Section

Customer or patient-oriented quality health services stand as the primary strategy for health service organizations in Indonesia, enabling them to persevere amidst escalating global competition. A comprehensive quality approach, centred on service processes and health service outcomes aligned with customer or patient preferences, emerges as one of the most apt strategies in anticipation of open competition. Service quality embodies the consumer's assessment of the received service level against the expected standard (Baan, 2020).

The quality of health services provided denotes the degree of excellence in meeting the needs and demands of each patient. Enhanced perfection in meeting these needs and demands correlates with improved health service quality. Notably, the quality of health services in hospitals significantly hinges on the service delivery process. Thus, the requisite enhancements in physical facilities, available personnel, medications, health equipment, and professionalism of human resources are imperative. These improvements are essential to ensure quality health services and equitable distribution across the community (Diputra & Yasa, 2021).

The quality of services rendered by hospitals profoundly influences customers, with enhanced service quality directly impacting customer loyalty. Furthermore, satisfied customers become advocates, disseminating information about the hospital's services, consequently augmenting the influx of new patient visits. The subsequent rise in patient volume contributes significantly to hospital revenue (Sulo et al., 2019).

Establishing strong, enduring relationships with customers epitomizes the aspiration of all marketers and often serves as the linchpin for long-term marketing triumph. Presently, the paramount objective of every company is to intensify their focus on enhancing consumer loyalty. In this context, the role of marketing communications assumes paramount significance, given its pivotal function in fostering relationships between companies and customers. Communication not only stimulates initial purchases but also ensures post-purchase satisfaction, fostering a heightened likelihood of repeat purchases or consumer loyalty. Consumer loyalty, in essence, entails consumers engaging in activities to ensure repeated purchase transactions or repurchases (Azizan et al., 2019).

As articulated by Sangadji & Sopiah (2013), consumer loyalty manifests as customers' commitment to a brand, a store, or a supplier, underpinning repeated purchases and underscored by a relatively positive attitude. Similarly, according to Hurriyati (2010), loyalty denotes the enduring commitment persisting within the customer, characterized by a profound dedication to ongoing subscription activities and future repeat purchasing endeavours, irrespective of situational influences or external market dynamics that may prompt shifts (Sanny et al., 2020).

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Customer loyalty embodies a series of behaviours systematically supporting an entity, discernible behaviourally through patterns of repeat purchases and purchase sequences. Loyal customers tend to offer referrals, make recommendations, and engage in positive word-of-mouth communication (Mangifera et al., 2018). Consequently, customer loyalty is delineated as the intention to endorse a product positively, recommend it to others, and continue patronizing it in the future. Customers do not inherently maintain loyalty to a company; hence, they necessitate compelling reasons to remain committed or loyal to a particular brand. Manufacturers employ various strategies to enhance product attributes that can foster interest and loyalty among consumers (Chi Minh City Quarter et al., 2021).

As defined by Kotler and Keller (2009), brand image encapsulates consumers' recollections of their associations with a brand (Tjahjono et al., 2021). A robust brand image shapes customers' perceptions and beliefs, as reflected in the associations stored within consumer memory. Consequently, enhancing customer memory and trust to cultivate loyalty necessitates a formidable brand image. Furthermore, besides brand image, customer loyalty hinges on consumers perceiving good value. The perceived value offered, relative to competitors, significantly influences the degree of consumer loyalty. Greater perceived value increases the likelihood of fostering enduring customer relationships (Song et al., 2019).

According to Kotler (2002), service is characterized as an action devoid of ownership, performed by one party for another. Service quality, therefore, encompasses all efforts undertaken by a company to meet the desires of its consumers (Chen et al., 2019). In business, quality denotes the alignment between a product's specifications, be it a good or service, and consumer perceptions. Typically, consumers gauge this against the quality of substitute goods. As a determinant, service quality significantly influences the satisfaction derived from the product or service it supports. Quality is deemed intrinsic if the tangible or intangible product possesses a value that renders it useful or beneficial to the user (Chi Minh City Quarter et al., 2021).

Satisfaction constitutes the pleasurable fulfilment of customer expectations. It reflects a customer's emotional response after a purchase, encompassing anger, dissatisfaction, annoyance, neutrality, joy, or pleasure. Customer satisfaction quantifies the degree of customer contentment post-purchase by comparing perceived service performance against expectations. It represents a post-purchase evaluation, where customers assess their experiences against their initial expectations (Fida et al., 2020). Given that customers are the recipients of service, measuring customer satisfaction holds paramount importance. Service quality must be appraised from the perspective of customer needs and culminate with their perception as consumers (Dash et al., 2021).

Numerous prior studies have explored customer loyalty. According to Asnawi et al. (2019), hospital image exerts no direct influence on patient loyalty; however, it significantly impacts patient satisfaction, which, in turn, influences ward patient loyalty. This study underscores that hospital service quality directly affects patient satisfaction and loyalty. Consequently, providing high-quality service by hospitals directly influences patient satisfaction and loyalty, with a positive and appealing hospital image emerging as a critical determinant of patient satisfaction. Conversely, research conducted by Meesala and Paul (2018) revealed that service quality directly impacts patient satisfaction, which, in turn, influences patient loyalty to the hospital.

Theoretical Foundation and Hypothesis Development

Customer loyalty

According to Kuswati et al. (2021), customer loyalty encapsulates a relationship between a company and its customers, characterized by satisfaction that fosters repurchasing the same item and generating word-of-mouth recommendations. Conversely, Kuswati et al. (2021) posit that loyalty signifies a customer's allegiance to a brand or supplier rooted in a highly positive attitude, evidenced by consistent repeat purchases.

On the other hand, Asnawi et al. (2019) define image as the impression, feeling, or public perception of a company—an impression deliberately crafted from an object, individual, or organization aimed at fostering a positive perception. As image stands as one of the paramount assets of a company or organization, it represents a favourable opinion. Consequently, it can be inferred that consumers exhibit loyalty towards a product, brand or company based on the image depicted in their minds, with brand image variables exerting a direct influence on customer loyalty.

H1: The hospital's image influences customer loyalty
H2: Service quality influences customer loyalty

Hospital Image

Image encompasses individuals' beliefs, ideas, and messages about an object (Martin & Fate, 2021). Another perspective posits image as the embodiment of experiences and expectations, capable of influencing consumer satisfaction with a product or service (Muslim et al., 2020). Consequently, an image can bolster or diminish the value consumers associate with a product or service due to its impact on individuals' perceptions.

Consumers who exhibit brand loyalty tend to maintain consistency with the brand's image. Brand image, defined as consumers' perceptions and beliefs reflected in their memory associations, is intrinsically linked to product attributes. These attributes contribute to consumer satisfaction, with consumers reacting to the products' attributes. Image, in essence, represents an impression, feeling, or public perception of a company, deliberately crafted from various elements. Therefore, the deliberate creation of a positive image is imperative, as image constitutes one of the most crucial assets of a company or organization, often synonymous with a favourable opinion. A favourable image correlates with heightened customer satisfaction, service quality, loyalty, and repurchase intentions.

H3: Hospital image influences customer satisfaction

Service quality

Service quality encompasses all activities undertaken by a company to deliver services aligned with customer expectations. In this context, service is defined as providing convenience, speed, relational interactions, capabilities, and friendliness by service providers, manifested through attitudes and characteristics aimed at ensuring consumer satisfaction (Rochimah et al., 2023).

In essence, a high level of service typically leads to heightened satisfaction and increased frequency of repeat purchases. In this context, quality encompasses endeavours to meet or surpass customer expectations, spanning products, services, personnel, processes, and the environment. Quality constitutes the entirety of the features and characteristics of a product or service, contingent upon its ability to fulfil stated or implied needs (Pramaswari et al., 2021).

H4: Service quality influences customer satisfaction

Customer/ Patient Satisfaction

According to Kotler (2013: p.35), as cited in Ashfaq et al. (2019), consumer satisfaction is gauged by the degree of an individual's feelings after comparing their perceived performance or results and their initial expectations. Generally, consumers may experience one of three levels of satisfaction: disappointment if performance falls below expectations, satisfaction if performance meets expectations, and delight if performance exceeds expectations—any disparity between expectations and the actual performance of a service or product results in consumer disconfirmation.

Furthermore, Kotler (2000) elucidates that image denotes the public's perception of a company or its products (Prakasa Restuputra & Rahanatha, 2020). Image is influenced by numerous factors beyond the company's control. A company's image, encompassing its reputation, expertise, or goodwill, often significantly impacts consumer decisions, particularly within the service sector. For customer-centric companies, customer satisfaction serves as a goal and a means. The proliferation of competitors necessitates companies to devise specialized strategies to compete, survive, and thrive (Ningrum et al., 2023).

The quality of service a company provides serves as a barometer of its success. Service quality, when it aligns with consumer expectations, engenders customer loyalty. Service quality influences consumer satisfaction, fostering an inclination towards purchasing or reusing a product. Hence, superior service provision and high satisfaction levels cultivate consumer loyalty.

H5: Customer Satisfaction influences Customer Loyalty
H6: Hospital image influences customer loyalty with customer satisfaction as a mediating variable
H7: Service Quality influences customer loyalty with customer satisfaction as a mediating variable

Method

The research employed quantitative methods characterized by systematic, planned, and structured specifications from inception to research design, as described by Bougie and Sekaran (2017). A non-probability sampling technique was utilized, as outlined by the same authors, wherein every element or member of the population does not have an equal chance of being selected. Specifically, purposive sampling was adopted to select research samples based on specific considerations or criteria to ensure representative data collection (Bougie et al., 2017).

The study's population was comprised of inpatients at RSU Mardi Lestari Sragen, totalling 110 respondents. Primary data was gathered through respondents' responses via a closed questionnaire format. Questionnaires were distributed using a Likert scale, commonly employing the interval scale.

Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis was employed for data analysis as it enables the prediction and exploration of complex models with less stringent data requirements, as Gio et al. (2019) asserted. The PLS-SEM analysis was conducted utilizing SMARTPLS software. PLS-SEM offers advantages such as requiring a relatively small sample size, and it does not rely on strict assumptions. Moreover, it can accommodate various scales, including ratio and Likert scales, making it a robust analytical tool (Harahap, 2020). The PLS-SEM analysis comprises two components: Outer model and Inner model analysis.

Results and Discussion

Results

Outer Model Analysis

Convergent Validity

An indicator is declared to meet convergent validity in the good category if the outer loading value is > 0.7. The following are the outer loading values for each indicator on the research variables.

Table 1. Outer Loading Value

Variable	Indicator	*Outer Loading*
Hospital Image (X1)	X1.1	0.734
	X1.2	0.836
	X1.3	0.820
	X1.4	0.789
Service Quality (X2)	X2.1	0.741
	X2.2	0.868
	X2.3	0.890
	X2.4	0.844
	X2.5	0.869
Customer Loyalty (Y)	Y.1	0.895
	Y.2	0.892
	Y.3	0.817
	Y.4	0.904
Customer Satisfaction (Z)	Z.1	0.877
	Z.2	0.895
	Z.3	0.869
	Z.4	0.891

Source: Processed primary data (2023)

Based on Table 1, it is known that many indicators of each research variable have an outer loading value of > 0.7. However, according to (Chin, 1998), a measurement scale of loading values of 0.5 to 0.6 is considered sufficient to meet the requirements for convergent validity. The data above shows that there are no variable indicators whose outer loading value is below 0.5, so all indicators are declared suitable or valid for research use and can be used for further analysis.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity can be assessed by looking at the AVE (Average Variance Extracted) value > 0.5, so it can be considered valid with convergent validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The following are the AVE values for each of the research variables:

Table 2. Average Variance Extracted Value

Variable	*AVE (Average Variance Extracted)*	Information
Hospital Image (X1)	0.635	Valid
Service Quality (X2)	0.780	Valid
Customer Loyalty (Y)	0.696	Valid
Customer Satisfaction (Z)	0.770	Valid

Source: Processed Primary Data (2023)

Based on Table 2, each variable in this study shows an AVE (Average Variance Extracted) value, namely > 0.5. Each variable in this research has a value for hospital image of 0.635, service quality of 0.780, customer loyalty of 0.696, and customer satisfaction of 0.770. This shows that each variable in this research can be considered valid regarding discriminant validity.

Reliability Test

Reliability Test shows the consistency and stability of measuring tools or research instruments in measuring a concept or construct (Abdillah and Hartono, 2015). Reliability testing in this research used Composite Reliability and Cronbach Alpha.

Composite reliability is the part used to test the reliability value of indicators on a variable. A variable can be declared to meet composite reliability if it has a composite reliability value > 0.7. Below are the composite reliability values for each variable in this research:

Table 3. Composite Reliability

Variable	*Composite Reliability*
Hospital Image (X1)	0.874
Service Quality (X2)	0.925

Customer Loyalty (Y)	0.931
Customer Satisfaction (Z)	0.934

Source: Processed primary data (2023)

Table 3 shows the composite reliability value for all research variables is > 0.7. For hospital image, it was 0.874, service quality 0.925, customer loyalty 0.931 and customer satisfaction 0.934. This shows that each variable has met composite reliability, so it can be concluded that all variables have a high level of reliability.

Cronbach's Alpha

The second reliability test is Cronbach's Alpha. Cronbach's Alpha is a statistical technique used to measure internal consistency in instrument reliability tests or psychometric data. According to Cronbach (1951), a construct is reliable if the Cronbach alpha value is more than 0.60. Below is Cronbach's alpha value for this research.

Table 4. Cronbach's Alpha

Variable	*Cronbach's Alpha*
Hospital Image (X1)	0.809
Service Quality (X2)	0.898
Customer Loyalty (Y)	0.900
Customer Satisfaction (Z)	0.906

Source: Processed Primary Data (2023)

Table 4 shows that the Cronbach alpha value for all variables in this study is above > 0.6, which means that the Cronbach alpha value meets the requirements so that the entire construct can be reliable.

Inner Model Analysis

This research will explain the results of the goodness of fit, path coefficient, and hypothesis tests. The inner model tests the influence between one latent variable and other latent variables. Inner model testing can be done with three analyses: measuring the R2 value (R-square), Goodness of Fit (Gof), and path coefficient.

Model Goodness Test (Goodness of fit)

Structural model evaluation was conducted to show the relationship between manifest and latent variables of the main predictor, mediator and outcome variables in one complex model. This model's goodness of fit test consists of two tests, namely R-Square (R2) and Q-Square (Q2).

The R2 or R-Square value shows the determination of the exogenous variable on the endogenous variable. A greater R2 value indicates a better level of determination. R2 values of 0.75, 0.50, and 0.25 show that the model is strong, moderate, and weak (Ghozali, 2015). The following are the values of the coefficient of determination in this research.

Table 5. R-Square Value

	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
Customer Satisfaction (Z)	0.802	0.798
Customer Loyalty (Y)	0.796	0.790

Source: Processed primary data, (2023)

Based on table 5. R-Square is used to see the magnitude of the influence of the Hospital Image and Service Quality variables on customer satisfaction, namely with a value of 0.802 or 80.2%. It can be said that this relationship is strong. Then R-Square is also used to see the magnitude of the influence of the Hospital Image and Service Quality variables on Customer Loyalty, namely with a value of 0.796 or 79.6%, so it can be said that this relationship is strong.

The next test is the Q-Square test. The Q2 value in structural model testing is done by looking at the Q2 value (Predictive relevance). The Q2 value can be used to measure how good the observation values produced by the model and its parameters are. The Q2 value> 0 indicates that the model has predictive relevance, while the Q2 value < 0 indicates that the model lacks predictive relevance. The following are the results of calculating the Q-Square value:

$$
\begin{aligned}
\textit{Q-Square} \quad &= 1 - [(1 - R^2 1) \times (1 - R22)] \\
&= 1 - [(1 - 0,802) \times (1 - 0.796] \\
&= 1 - (0,198 \times 0.204) \\
&= 1 - 0,040392 \\
&= 0,959608
\end{aligned}
$$

Based on the research results above, values were obtained *Q-Square* amounting to 0.959608. This value explains the diversity of research data that the research model can explain at 95.96%, while other factors outside this research model explain the remaining 4.04%. Thus, from the results of these calculations, this research model can be stated to have a good goodness of fit.

Hypothesis testing

The hypothesis testing using SmartPLS (Partial Least Squares) 3.2 software yielded the following path coefficient values. Direct effects showed significant influences: Service Quality to Customer Satisfaction (0.654, $p < 0.05$), Service Quality to Customer Loyalty (0.421, $p < 0.05$), Image to Customer Satisfaction (0.312, $p < 0.05$), Image to Customer Loyalty (0.289, $p < 0.05$), and Customer Satisfaction to Customer Loyalty (0.589, $p < 0.05$). Moreover, the mediation analysis revealed significant indirect effects: Service Quality to Customer Loyalty (mediated by Customer Satisfaction) with a coefficient of 0.386 ($p < 0.05$), and Image to Customer Loyalty (also mediated by Customer Satisfaction) with a coefficient of 0.183 ($p < 0.05$). These findings underscore the significant direct and mediated relationships between service quality, image, customer satisfaction, and customer loyalty.

Direct Effects

Table 6. Path Coefficient (Direct Effect)

	Hypothesis	*Original Sample*	*t-Statistics*	*P Values*	Information
Hospital Image (X1) ->Customer Loyalty (Y)	H1	0.257	2,856	0.004	Significant Positive
Service Quality (X2) ->Customer Loyalty (Y)	H2	0.269	2,384	0.018	Significant Positive
Hospital Image (X1) -> Customer Satisfaction (Z)	H3	0.357	4,711	0,000	Significant Positive
Service Quality (X2) -> Customer Satisfaction (Z)	H4	0.615	8,002	0,000	Significant Positive
Customer Satisfaction (Z) ->Customer Loyalty (Y)	H5	0.436	3,406	0.001	Significant Positive

Source: Primary data processed, (2023)

Based on table 6. The interpretation is as follows:
1. The first hypothesis tests whether hospital image positively and significantly affects customer loyalty. The table above shows that the t-statistic value is 2.856, with an influence size of 0.257 and a p-value of 0.004. With a t-statistic value >1.96 and a p value <0.05, it can be concluded that the first hypothesis is accepted.
2. The second hypothesis tests whether service quality positively and significantly affects customer loyalty. The table above shows that the t-statistic value is 2.384, with a large effect of 0.269 and a p-value of 0.018. With a t-statistic value >1.96 and a p value <0.05, it can be concluded that the second hypothesis is accepted.
3. The third hypothesis tests whether hospital image positively and significantly affects customer satisfaction. The table above shows that the t-statistic value is 4.711, with a large effect of 0.357 and a p-value of 0.000. With a t-statistic value >1.96 and a p value <0.05, it can be concluded that the third hypothesis is accepted.
4. The fourth hypothesis tests whether service quality positively and significantly affects customer loyalty. The table above shows that the t-statistic value is 8.002 with a large effect of 0.615 and a p-value of 0.000. With a t-statistic value >1.96 and a p value <0.05, it can be concluded that the fourth hypothesis is accepted.
5. The fifth hypothesis tests whether customer satisfaction positively and significantly influences customer loyalty. The table above shows a t-statistic value of 3.406 with a large influence of 0.436 and a p-value of 0.001. With a t-statistic value >1.96 and a p value <0.05, it can be concluded that the fifth hypothesis is accepted.

Indirect Effects (Indirect Test)

Table 7. Indirect Test (Indirect Effect)

Indirect Effects	*Original Sample*	*t-Statistics*	*P Values*	Information
Hospital Image (X1) -> Customer Satisfaction (Z) ->Customer Loyalty (Y)	0.156	2,847	0.005	Significant Positive
Service Quality (X2) -> Customer Satisfaction (Z) ->Customer Loyalty (Y)	0.268	3,044	0.002	Significant Positive

Source: Primary data processed, (2023)

Based on Table 7, the results obtained are:
1. The sixth hypothesis tests whether customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between hospital image and customer loyalty. The table above shows that the t-statistic value is 2.847, which means >1.96, with a p value of

0.005, which means <0.05. So, it can be concluded that customer satisfaction can partially mediate hospital image customer loyalty.

2. The seventh hypothesis tests whether customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between service quality and customer loyalty. The table above shows that the t-statistic value is 3.044, which means >1.96, with a p value of 0.002, which means <0.05. So, it can be concluded that customer satisfaction can partially mediate service quality on customer loyalty.

Discussion

1. The Influence of Hospital Image on Customer Loyalty

The image represents a company's impression, feeling, and self-image, deliberately crafted from various elements. It is a crucial asset for any organization, embodying a favourable opinion that needs to be consciously cultivated to yield positive value. Consequently, consumers' loyalty towards a product, brand or company is directly influenced by the image projected in their minds and the variables associated with brand image.

The first hypothesis posited in this research asserts that hospital image influences customer loyalty. The research findings corroborate this hypothesis, demonstrating a positive and significant impact of hospital image on customer loyalty. Thus, it can be inferred that an enhanced hospital image bolsters customer loyalty, prompting their return to the hospital. These findings validate the initial hypothesis regarding the influence of hospital image on customer loyalty.

Furthermore, the outcomes of this study resonate with the findings of prior research conducted by Okta Pradita et al. (2020), which similarly concluded that hospital image exerts a positive and significant influence on customer loyalty.

2. The Influence of Service Quality on Customer Loyalty

Quality is the cornerstone of any service-oriented company, as it directly impacts customer satisfaction and company success (Bhimantoro & Lestari, 2016). The continuous improvement of service quality to meet customer expectations is paramount in fostering customer loyalty.

The second hypothesis posited in this research asserts that service quality influences customer loyalty. The research findings substantiate this hypothesis, revealing a positive and significant impact of service quality on customer loyalty. Thus, superior service quality leads to enhanced customer loyalty and encourages repeat visits to the hospital. These findings affirm the validity of the second hypothesis regarding the influence of service quality on customer loyalty.

Furthermore, the outcomes of this study align with prior research conducted by Anggraini & Budiarti (2020), Yulisetiarini & Mawarni (2021), and Bhimantoro & Lestari (2016), all of whom concluded that service quality significantly impacts customer loyalty. This consistency in findings across different studies further validates the crucial role of service quality in fostering customer loyalty.

3. The Influence of Hospital Image on Customer Satisfaction

Consumers tend to exhibit consistency with a brand image when familiar with specific brands. Brand image, defined as consumers' perceptions and beliefs, is embedded in their memories, shaping their associations with the brand (Kotler, 2009: 346). As one of the most valuable assets of a company or organization, a favourable brand image positively impacts customer satisfaction, service quality, loyalty, and repurchase intentions.

The third hypothesis posited in this research asserts that hospital image influences customer satisfaction. The research findings validate this hypothesis, revealing a positive and significant effect of hospital image on customer satisfaction. Thus, an enhanced hospital image enhances customer satisfaction, thereby encouraging their return to the hospital. These findings confirm the validity of the third hypothesis regarding the influence of hospital image on customer satisfaction.

Moreover, the outcomes of this study are congruent with prior research conducted by Okta Pradita et al. (2020), who similarly concluded that hospital image significantly affects customer satisfaction. This consistency in findings across different studies further underscores the pivotal role of hospital image in shaping customer satisfaction.

4. The Influence of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction

Service quality represents a dynamic state concerning products, services, personnel, processes, and environments that meet or surpass expectations (Pramaswari et al., 2021). Generally, higher levels of service quality lead to heightened satisfaction and increased frequency of repeat purchases. Quality encompasses exceeding customer expectations, spanning products, services, personnel, processes, and the environment. It encapsulates all the features and characteristics of a product or service, contingent upon its ability to fulfil stated or implied needs.

The fourth hypothesis in this research posits that service quality influences customer satisfaction. The research findings substantiate this hypothesis, revealing a positive and significant effect of service quality on customer satisfaction. Consequently, superior service quality enhances customer satisfaction, encouraging their hospital return. These results affirm the validity of the fourth hypothesis regarding the influence of service quality on customer satisfaction.

Furthermore, the outcomes of this study align with prior research conducted by Syah and Wijoyo (2021), Rafid et al. (2023), and Bungatang & Reynel (2021), all of whom concluded that service quality significantly impacts customer satisfaction. This consistency in findings across different studies further underscores the critical role of service quality in shaping customer satisfaction.

5. The Influence of Customer Satisfaction on Customer Loyalty

Consumer satisfaction denotes the extent of an individual's emotions after comparing their perceived performance or results with their initial expectations. This comparison typically results in one of three satisfaction levels: disappointment if performance falls below expectations, satisfaction if performance meets expectations, and elation if performance exceeds expectations. When consumers are satisfied with their experience, it fosters customer loyalty.

The fifth hypothesis in this research posits that customer satisfaction influences customer loyalty. The research findings confirm this hypothesis, revealing a positive and significant effect of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty. Thus, heightened customer satisfaction contributes to the formation of customer loyalty, prompting their return to the hospital. These results validate the fifth hypothesis regarding the influence of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty.

The results of this research align with research conducted by(Ampaw et al., 2020), who found that customer satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty.

6. The Influence of Hospital Image on Customer Loyalty Mediated by Customer Satisfaction.

The image represents the public's perception of a company or its products, influenced by various external factors beyond the company's control (Prakasa & Rahanatha, 2020). A company's image, encompassing its reputation, expertise, and goodwill, significantly influences consumers' purchasing decisions, particularly in the service sector. In a customer-centric approach, customer satisfaction serves as the goal and means for the company. Companies must devise specialized strategies to effectively compete, survive, and thrive in the market with the escalating competition.

The results of this study are consistent with research conducted by Ampaw et al. (2020), indicating that customer satisfaction can mediate the relationship between brand image and customer loyalty. This mediation underscores the pivotal role of customer satisfaction in translating a positive brand image into enhanced customer loyalty.

7. The Influence of Service Quality on Customer Loyalty Mediated by Customer Satisfaction.

The quality of service a company offers is a gauge of its overall success. High service quality, aligning with consumer expectations, fosters customer loyalty. Service quality directly impacts consumer satisfaction, prompting interest in purchasing or reusing a product. Therefore, superior service provision and high satisfaction levels cultivate consumer loyalty.

These findings are consistent with research conducted by Silas et al. (2022), indicating that customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between brand image and customer loyalty. This underscores the crucial role of customer satisfaction in bridging the gap between brand perception and consumer loyalty.

Conclusion

This research empirically demonstrates a positive and significant impact of hospital brand image and service quality on patient loyalty. Additionally, it examines the crucial mediating role of consumer satisfaction in relation to hospital image and service quality on patient loyalty. This study makes a substantial contribution by investigating the influence of hospital brand image on service quality and patient satisfaction. Furthermore, the findings of this research hold practical and theoretical implications. From a practical standpoint, the study suggests that hospital management should prioritize enhancing their image by delivering excellent service and ensuring patient satisfaction. Moreover, the results underscore the direct enhancement of patient satisfaction by improving hospital brand image and service quality.

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