

A Conceptual Framework of Service Quality and Patient Loyalty in Muslim Friendly Healthcare

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Abstract—The purpose of this research is to investigate equalize of service quality in friendly Muslim hospitals and establish a conceptual framework that shows the relationship between service quality, patient satisfaction and loyalty. This research is founded on a comprehensive study of current literature on quality of hospital care, patient satisfaction, and patient loyalty. Important reviews of these literature studies have resulted in the determination and interpretation of service quality dimensions and the development of a relationship between service quality, patient satisfaction and patient loyalty. This paper determined five main aspects through which patients service quality in Muslim friendly hospitals. These five areas are tangibles, empathy, assurance, reliability and responsiveness. The framework indicates a direct link between quality of care, patient satisfaction and patient loyalty. Although many studies have been carried out on the standard of hospital services, neither of them would do project all the possible dimensions to calculate the same in a friendly hospital in Malaysia. The SERVQUAL Model adopted by this study determines all the potential dimensions of service quality in Muslim friendly healthcare.

Keywords—service quality, patient satisfaction, patient loyalty

I. INTRODUCTION

THE growth in Muslims' information and awareness of the need to comply by the Shari'ah and also the improvement in buying power and lifestyle changes among Muslims worldwide have had a major impact on the idea of hospitality

services in the healthcare industry. Malaysia is an Islamic country and Islam is considered as an official religion, because Muslims are the majority population and the country is a member of Organization of Islamic Countries (OIC) since 1969 [1]. [2] KPJ Healthcare Berhad is one of the largest private groups in Malaysia, which have earned an increasing profit and revenue for third quarter financial year 2019 (3Q2019). It is a private healthcare service provider in Malaysia that offers treatment and surgeries in Islamic medical care in different areas such as cardiac, orthopedic, oncology, cosmetic and reconstructive.

Service quality has now become a concern for most healthcare sectors and has become increasingly common in relation to patient satisfaction. It is supported by [3] Muslim friendly hospital has become a highly competitive and rapidly growing industry worldwide. To enhance competition, they need to apply multiply of service quality such as reduce waiting times, process modern equipment, visually appealing facilities and smart and polite front line staff and so on. Most studies have a direct relationship between the service quality and patient loyalty in hospital [4]. In the views of [5], many researchers are studying SERVQUAL model, a service quality tool created by [6] in certain sectors or regions to evaluate the customers' satisfaction. It is widely used by different sector such as Islamic financial services [7] travel and tourism [8], retail management [9], mobile phone [10], and eco tourism [11] are included. Although there are many academic researches about SERVQUAL Model, but there are lack of academic researches that measure patients loyalty in the healthcare industry especially in the Muslim friendly private hospital using SERVQUAL Model.

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Service quality has been one of the huge fields of market analysis and many studies have been carried out on the healthcare service quality. Thus, this paper makes the awareness of service quality contexts in a systematic and structured way that affects the loyalty of patients, especially in Muslim friendly hospital. Based on our extensive literature review, no studies had been conducted to show the service quality among patients in Muslim friendly hospital. Therefore the objective of this study is to identify all possible dimensions through patients evaluate or service quality in Islamic medical care practice, especially in Muslim friendly hospital. It has also tried to adopt SERVQUAL model to assess the relationship between service quality and patients loyalty in Muslim friendly hospital. Thus, healthcare industry can improve their competitive advantage through service quality to achieve patients' loyalty. This study reviews whether implementation of service quality has a positive influence toward patient loyalty.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

A. Concept of Muslim Friendly Hospital

Medical center are institutions that provide medical services in the form of hospitals, ambulances and emergency services. Today, Muslims' cultural practices based on holistic Islamic teachings have influenced the cultural beliefs and spiritual values of Muslim physicians, which have also influenced the satisfaction and commitment of patients to hospital treatment through a variety of medical, care evaluations and practices. Muslim friendly hospital is where the hospital's medical services are in accordance with the principles of Shari'ah or Islamic teachings. Muslim friendly is a term that denotes the availability of facilities and services cater specifically to Muslim needs. Muslim has specific need to be fulfilled in terms of their religious obligation (ibadah). Among those are needs, to perform their daily prayers, halal food and gender based services. to perform their daily prayers, halal food, and gender-based services.

Many hospitals or doctors' facilities are halal-secured, meaning that they provide halal service and have Muslim amenities such as prayer rooms, Qiblat, ablution, surah yasin, etc. KPJ Berhad offers a wide variety range of Muslim-friendly services along with a prayer room and broadcasting the prayer call, funeral planning if desired, and halal food is prepared to patients and is provided in the cafeteria. The hospital also accepts demands from female doctors and nurses for female patients. Therefore, it shows the industry is rapidly expanding towards the nation's development. In line with these objectives, the medical industry should enhance the service quality offered to meet customer needs and reduce operating costs.

Therefore, religious convictions and sharia-compliant facilities are essential components in choosing a country for Islamic medical services. For Muslim patients, awareness of Islamic values and the hospital's efforts to instill a Muslim-friendly culture are critical when providing medical care and health facilities [1]; [12] may influence their intention to return to the Muslim friendly hospital for medical. For instance, Islam commands both genders (male and female) to dress modestly to ensure respect in accordance with social expectations. If the required Islamic medical services are not provided, it will not satisfy Muslim patients. We recommend that medical specialists, qualified nurses and Islamic medical facilities may have an impact on the satisfaction of Muslim medical tourists and their loyalty to potential medical treatment.

TABLE I. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MUSLIM FRIENDLY, SHARIAH COMPLIANCE AND CONVENTIONAL HOSPITAL

Main Criteria /Types of Private Hospital	Muslim Friendly	Shariah Compliance	Conventional
Separation of male and female ward	x	x	x
Islamic dressing code by staff	x	x	
Prayer infrastructures for Muslim patients	x	x	x
Quiet environment during prayer for Muslim patients	x	x	

Knowledgeable about Islamic principles	x	x	
Halal medicines	x	x	
Halal food	x	x	
Providing operation theatre garments that are decent and cover Aurat.	x	x	
Islamic Financial (buying and selling transaction)		x	
Job Scope		x	
Standard Requirements		x	
Human resource department (staff adapt Islamic core value)		x	
Prohibited from performing abortion	x	x	
Work process (comply to shariah)			

B. Service Quality

Economic conditions around the world shape people's expectations of quality of service and lifestyle. Service quality is a research area in which a great amount of experts have contributed to the constructing and verifying of theoretical models, the production of service quality scales, the implementation of quality services in various sectors such as tourism, environmentally friendly-tourism, medical care, financing and hospitality. Service gap model is created by [6]. A series of contradictions between the expectations and perceptions of service customers were identified on the basis of this model. These gaps can be a difficulty for service to deliver high-quality services to consumers. Gap 1 is the discrepancy between customer expectations and management beliefs. Gap 2 is the discrepancy between management expectations and service performance. Gap 3 is the discrepancy between the specifications of service against delivery of service. Gap 4 is the difference between the service delivery and the external communication of the services delivered to consumers. Gap 5 is the discrepancy between customer expectations and service delivery perception [13].

According to [14], SERVQUAL Model is used to assess the gap between business expectations of clients and actual customer experience. Customer

expectations are continuing to rise nowadays, yet the business is not performing to the level expected by clients. This has widened the gap between the real services provided and the expectations of the clients. From the previous study by [14] indicates there is a large gap between customer expectations for service delivered using the SERVQUAL model after review.

TABLE II. LIST OF STUDIES THAT HAVE USED SERVQUAL DIMENSIONS FOR SERVICE QUALITY IN HOSPITAL

Dimension	Studies
Tangible	Zeithaml, V. A., Berry, L. L., & Parasuraman, 1996; Talib, Azam and Rahman, 2015; Umath and Marwah, 2015; Tripathi and Siddiqui, 2018
Empathy	Zeithaml, V. A., Berry, L. L., & Parasuraman, 1996; Talib, Azam and Rahman, 2015; Umath and Marwah, 2015; Tripathi and Siddiqui, 2018
Assurance	Zeithaml, V. A., Berry, L. L., & Parasuraman, 1996; Talib, Azam and Rahman, 2015; Umath and Marwah, 2015; Tripathi and Siddiqui, 2018
Reliability	Zeithaml, V. A., Berry, L. L., & Parasuraman, 1996; Talib, Azam and Rahman, 2015; Umath and Marwah, 2015; Tripathi and Siddiqui, 2018
Responsiveness	Zeithaml, V. A., Berry, L. L., & Parasuraman, 1996; Talib, Azam and Rahman, 2015; Umath and Marwah, 2015; Tripathi and Siddiqui, 2018

SERVQUAL scale was developed by [6] to quantify service quality across five dimensions such as tangible, empathy, assurance, reliability and responsiveness. Those five measurements have been used by several researchers to measure the quality of service in healthcare organizations, both public and private [13]; [15-18]. Although this scale was widely used in conventional hospital to measure the quality of service, it remains silent about the Muslim friendly hospital in Malaysia. SERVQUAL model adopted in this study by Parasuraman discusses all possible variables of service quality in Muslim friendly hospital.

III. THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SERVICE QUALITY, PATIENT SATISFACTION AND PATIENT LOYALTY

[16] research in India private healthcare system. They objectively studied and confirmed a model that developed an indirect relationship between service quality and patient loyalty through their satisfaction level. [19] performed

an academic study to create relations in service settings between buildings such as quality performance, satisfaction and loyalty based on demographics such as gender, age and marital status. They found direct consistency, gender, age, and marital status influences as well as satisfaction on loyalty. This research also supported a hypothesis showing indirect effects on patient satisfaction from service quality. Based on this paper, service quality and patient satisfaction play mediating role with the effect of service quality on patients' loyalty. Through recognizing advantages and disadvantages in service quality, providers may allocate resources to programs and eventually improve the quality of their service. [20] tested the hypothesis of Parasuraman et al., SERVQUAL variables using data collected from 40 different private hospitals and identified that patient satisfaction towards patient loyalty has both a direct and an indirect impact on the service quality. This paper supports that the indirect impact of the service quality on patient loyalty measured by patient satisfaction is greater than the direct impact. Similarly, [21] reported and validated a positive relationship between service quality and customer loyalty. [22] analyzed the relationship among the dimensions of service quality and patient satisfaction and discovered that the dimensions of responsiveness had a strong influence on the desire of the patient to return to hospital. It is because the hospital personnel who work with attentive and have their own initiatives to work quickly responsive and appropriate to meet the wishes of the patient needs can lead to loyalty.

IV. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

This study's research methodology indicated that the SERVQUAL model increases patient satisfaction in a Muslim friendly hospital. Figure 1 below illustrates the study context to investigate the relationship between service quality (tangible, empathy, assurance, reliability and responsiveness) and patient loyalty. It is also believed that this regulation affects the quality of service and patient loyalty rates in a sector.

Consequently, in Malaysian Muslim friendly hospital, the relationship of service quality on patient loyalty is based on extensive analysis of existing literature on the quality of hospital service, patient satisfaction and loyalty. The following study hypotheses were developed:

H1: There is a positive and direct significant relationship between service quality and patient loyalty in Muslim friendly hospital.

The above hypotheses have been set up for testing. These hypotheses will be indicated by H1 on the basis of a numbering system. This hypothesis statement style is selected due to the nature of SEM methods to respond to hypotheses.



Figure 1. Research Framework

V. RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

In response to a questionnaire, the hypotheses will be tested using data collection with measurement variables obtained from respondents. The researcher may test the hypotheses using SEM. The objective of this research is to examine the relationship between service quality and patient satisfaction for a Muslim friendly hospital.

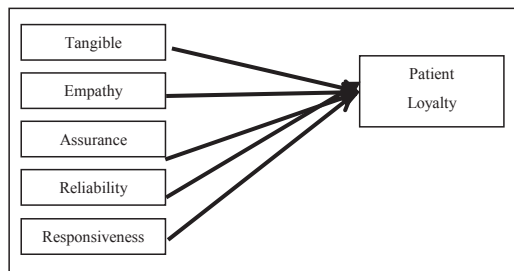


Figure 2. Research Model

VI. CONCLUSION

Referred to past research, critical success factors were determined for effective implementation. However, non previous research had tried

to examine the relationships between service quality and patient loyalty, specifically in Muslim friendly hospital. This SERVQUAL model supports service quality and patient loyalty in Muslim-friendly hospital, which is the views of earlier researchers on the relationship between service quality and patient satisfaction, as well as the mediating role of patient satisfaction related with service quality on patient loyalty. Service quality will help improve patient satisfaction and spread positive awareness, improving Muslim friendly hospital's credibility and profitability. This research was intended to provide valid and reliable service quality constructs and patient loyalty measures for instrument and structural relationship model. A conceptual model was presented to investigate the relationship between service quality and patient satisfaction in the Malaysian Muslim friendly hospital. Research hypotheses are being established on the basis of the proposed model and a previous analysis. The next step of this research is to develop a questionnaire that will be used in the Muslim friendly hospital in Malaysia to collect data from pilot studies.

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