The Correlation between Process and Physical Evidence toward Patient Satisfaction among Private Hospitals in Medan

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Abstract

The use of hospital facilities may greatly improve services to the visiting patients. The standard of good services will lead to positive patient satisfaction resulting in growing patient visit rate. Normally, patients will evaluate the process and physical evidence provided by the hospital. They will assess the actual and the preferred services, as well as the money and time they have spent to get healthcare services from the hospital. If patient satisfaction toward the hospital services is good, the hospital can compete with other hospital in terms of service provision. Regarding this issue, the present study aimed to investigate the correlation between process and physical evidence toward patient satisfaction in private hospital in Medan. It was a quatitative study using cross sectional design with the total number of population was 6.051. Through performing accidental sampling technique, 100 patients were included as samples. The data of this study was collected by administering questionnaire. Data analysis using Chi Square showed that there was a correlation between process and patient satisfaction ($p=0,000;p<0.005$). It was also found that there was a signifiant correlation between physical evidence and patient satisfaction ($p=0,000;p<0.005$). Therefore, it is concluded that good process and physical evidence will result in good patient satisfaction. Consequently, the rate of patient visit will also increase. This study suggests to hospital management to improve the process and physical evidence of hospital services to the patients to meet patient satisfaction.

Keyword: process, physical evidence, patient satisfacti

INTRODUCTION

Presently, globalism has increased competitions in almost all sectors in life, including health sector. Each hospital attempts to be better than its competitors. It is necessary for the management of the hospital to thoroughly pay attention on the growth and progress of the hospital in facing the competitive era. Otherwise, the hospital might be loss in the competition.

As the result of globalism, particularly due to the growing number of hospitals in the society which results in the more competition, hospitals need to be ready to face more competitors in various areas of healthcare. Profile of Indonesian Health (2014) showed that the number of hospitals in Indonesia, either general hospital or specialty hospital was significantly growing in last five years. In 2009, there were approximately 1.523 hospitals which increased 58.1% to 2.408 hospitals in 2014 (Ministry of Health, 2014).

In order to face that competition, hospital management needs to think creatively and innovatively how to offer customers, in this case is patients, the strengths of the hospital, to improve services. Hospital needs to use those strengths to provide optimal services not only to the patients, visitors, but also to community around the hospital (Arifin in Sabran, 2014). This might be through better quality of services, for instance to the inpatient, sustainably, so that the patients as customers might be satisfied with the services provided by the hospital. Thus, hospital management, particularly marketing management should always thoroughly supervise all areas in marketing, one of which is physical evidence, so that the hospital can meet all the change and complexity of patient satisfaction (Aniza, 2015).

Physical evidence is hospital ability to proof its existence to the external parties, in terms of physical environment appearance, human resources, and communication media. Developing

physical evidence can be a strategy that can be done by the hospital to improve hospital services which eventually will also increase community health rate.

Marketing plays a vital role for the development of the hospital. It is to introduce and to promote the hospital to the society, to inform people the facilities and services in the hospital, to create and maintain hospital image in the society. Therefore, optimal utility of hospital resources is important not only to bring good services and positive satisfaction to the patients but also to improve the income of the hospital (Aniza, 2015).

In planning marketing program, a manager has to intergrate the internal ability of the hospital and external market place. Decisions that are taken, particularly in terms of marketing mix, i.e. 7Ps (*Product, Price, Place, Promotion, People, Process, and Physical Evidence*) need to be more responsive to the needs in the market (Aniza, 2015).

Hospital needs to provide services that meet patients' expectation or beyond the expectation, so that patients as the costumers will have positive attitudes toward hospital services (Supriyanto, 2012).

METHOD

This study employed correlational study with cross sectional approach. The independent variable was elements of marketing mix, while the dependent variable was patient satisfaction.

This study was conducted in outpatient department of Sari Mutiara General Hospital in Medan. The sample was the outpatients at Sari Mutiara General Hospital. Accidental sampling technique was performed in selecting the samples. The total number of sample included in the study was calculated by performing lameshow formula. Therefore, 100

outpatients were selected with the inclusion criteria were: a) the age range of the patients was between 18 to 60 years old; b) the respondent received medical treatment in the outpatient department for >2 times in a month; c) during data collection, the patient was in full conscious condition to response; d) patient could communicate well.

In the process of data collection, a set of questionnaire was administered to the respondents. Beforehand, the respondents were asked to fill informed concent. After that, the data was calculated and analysed by using Chi Square.

RESULTS

Based on the data analysis, it was obtained that the majority of the respondent was female (63%) and the age ranged between 41-60 years old (52%). Table 1 illustrates the distribution and characteristic of the respondents in the study.

Table 1. Characteristic Distribution of Respondents

Characteristic		n	%
Sex	Male	37	37
	Female	63	63
Age	18-40 years	48	48
	41-60 years	52	52

This study found that there was a significant correlation between *process* and patient satisfaction ($p=0.000<0.05$) which can be seen in Table 2.

Table 2. The Correlation between *process* and patient satisfaction

process	Patient Satisfaction				Total	<i>P</i>	
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied				
	n	%	n	%			
insufficient	1	11	7	7	18	18	0,000
Good	1	10	64	64	74	74	
sufficient	10	0	8	8	8	8	

This study found that there was a significant correlation between *physical evidence* and patient satisfaction ($p=0.000<0.05$) which can be seen in Table 3.

Table 3. The Correlation between Physical Evidence and Patient Satisfaction

Physical Evidence	Patient Satisfaction				Total	<i>P</i>	
	Satisfied		Not Satisfied				
	n	%	n	%	n		%
	Insufficient	0	0	0	0		0
Sufficient	18	18	30	30	48	48	
Good	3	3	49	49	52	52	

DISCUSSION

a. The Correlation between Process and Patient Satisfaction

Based on the result of the present study, it was obtained that there was a significant correlation between clinical and non-clinical staff in hospital and patient satisfaction, with p value= 0.000. It was supported by the result obtained from the questionnaire in which the majority of the respondents,

i.e. 70% reported “agree” to the statement “patient was served effectively and efficiently based on the queue number”, with 61% patients perceived that they were “satisfied”.

Process to receive good services from getting in until out from the hospital is important to the patients. If the perception of the patients toward the process or procedures in the hospital is good, they might be satisfied to the overall services in Outpatient Department at Sari Mutiara General Hospital. Generally, the services that are evaluated by the patients are the administrative process, service process, and service waiting duration. If patients perceive that they can get the medical service shortly after they register, easy registration process, systematical procedures performed by the doctor and nurses, they may give positive perceptions toward the hospital service performance. On the other hand, if the patients’ perceptions of the process or procedure are negative, they will not be satisfied with the hospital service performance in Outpatient Department at Sari Mutiara General Hospital.

This study is in line to the study of Sareong (2013) about the factors correlated to patient satisfaction and found that process had a correlation with patient satisfaction in Primary Health Center Rantepao, North Toraja, with p value= 0.026.

The result of this study is also in line to Sani (2012) about the correlation of marketing mix strategy to patient satisfaction, in which 76.9% of the respondents perceived that process

factor was sufficient and had correlation with patient satisfaction in Inpatient Department at Faisal Islamic Hospital, Makasar, with p value = $0.014 < 0.05$.

Moreover, the result obtained from the study is in accordance with the theory proposed by Lupiyoadi (2009), stating that process is combination of all activities, generally consists of procedure, schedule, mechanism, and routine activities. It provides services to patients as the costumers of the hospital. Operational steps of particular service can give facts or evidences to patients so that they can evaluate the performance of the hospital through assessing those facts or evidences.

Thus, it may be concluded that there is a correlation between process factor and patient satisfaction. Duration needed for a patient to get service will affect patient satisfaction toward hospital performance in providing services to the community.

b. The Correlation between Physical Evidence and Patient Satisfaction

The result of data analysis showed that there was a significant correlation between physical evidence and patient satisfaction with p value = 0.000. It was proven by the result from the questionnaire finding that the majority of the respondents, i.e. 71% reported “agree” to the statement that “parking area of the hospital is sufficient”, with 56% of the respondents perceived that they perceived to be “satisfied”. Another result of questionnaire also showed that the majority of the respondents, i.e. 66%, reported that

they “agree” to the statement that “waiting room in the polyclinic is convenient”, and 47% of the respondents perceived to be “satisfied”.

If patients’ perception of the physical evidence is good, patients will incline to feel satisfied to the physical environment appearance and supplementary facilities in Outpatient Department at Sari Mutiara General Hospital. This positive perception might be because the patients evaluated that the rooms, seats, waiting room in administration unit, waiting room in the polyclinic, waiting room in the pharmacy were convenient, clean. Besides, the good condition of air conditioner, clean wash rooms may also be evidences that the hospital provides good environment for the patients and visitors in order to bring health services that are oriented to the needs of patients.

This study is also in accordance with the study conducted by Riswardani (2013) about the effect of facilities, costs and promotion to patient satisfaction. It was found that facilities significantly influenced patient satisfaction in inpatient department at PKU Muhammadiyah Hospital, in Karanganyar, with p value was 0.006.

The present study is also in line to the study conducted by Sani (2012) about the effect of marketing mix strategy to patient satisfaction in which 80% of the respondents reported that physical evidence was relatively good and it had correlation to patient satisfaction in inpatient department at Faisal Islamic

Hospital, Makassar, with $p=0.001 < p=0.05$.

The result of the present study is also supported by the argument of Reznikoff (1986 in Muhofi, 2013) about the assessment of patient satisfaction. This study included vital room facilities which closely related to the need of patients as individuals who will receive healthcare services, including the convenience in waiting room.

Based on the theory and result of the study, it can be concluded that there is significant correlation between physical evidence and patient satisfaction. The availability, cleanliness, and convenience of the facilities and complementary infrastructures in the hospital will bring convenience and satisfaction among patients in the hospital.

CONCLUSION

The present study that was conducted in inpatient room found that there was a significant correlation between process and physical evidence factors with patient satisfaction. Therefore, it is concluded that factors in marketing mix play role in patient satisfaction.

It is suggested that hospital management should improve marketing program, particularly hospital promotion. Besides, it is necessary for the management to consistently monitor complaints and expectations of the patients related to healthcare services in hospital. It is also suggested to maintain the performance of clinical and non

clinical staffs in providing services to patients.

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