

Conceptualizing the Role of Patient Satisfaction in the Relation Between Services Quality and Patient Loyalty in Jordan Public Hospitals

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Abstract

The aim of this study to empirically validate of role of patient satisfaction in the relation between health services quality and staff performance and patient loyalty. A total of 357 patients from government hospitals in Jordan have needed to answer the questionnaires. The collect data will be analysed with Structure Equation Modelling (SEM). The proposed model that represents the study model in health procedures that dealing with patients will helps health managers and planners to improve the levels of treatment and health services in MOH hospitals in Jordan and the researcher recommends to conducts further studies to extend this model to health system.

Key Words:

Patient Satisfaction, Patient loyalty, Services Quality

1. Introduction

Our health care is not only the treatment we receive from hospitals and physicians to patients for all of us, but it is also an important area of life for all people, whether they are patients or not. A substantial part of our lives are occupied by health care, our primary source of social status for employment and survival. Since health care plays a vital role in the lives of many people, the degree of patient commitment to the services it provides and the concerns

of concern must be unified in every step of the process. Hospitals and health care are thus important components of every well-ordered and compassionate community, and would inevitably be beneficiaries of social resources. Not only for patients but even for the community at large, they should be places of protection. There is no distinct word in healthcare settings to describe the core definition of loyal patient. The definition of loyalty is therefore largely adapted or taken from other fields, such as business, marketing, banking, insurance or any general service industry. But currently, the need and belief to know the characteristics of patient loyalty in healthcare is growing. Previous research on patient loyalty is primarily directed at healthcare benefit earning, expenditure management and customer development.

Customer satisfaction and loyalty represent a top priority of the company's success and profit. Satisfaction does not automatically lead to loyalty it needs a step by step process. Steps are described as customers going through different phases such as awareness, exploration, expansion, commitment, and dissolution. (Arantola 2000.) Customer loyalty can be considered to be a by-product of customer satisfaction. The satisfaction of business customer leads to customer loyalty (Fornell 1992.) Customer loyalty will increase significantly when satisfaction accomplishes at a certain level and at the same time customer loyalty will decline automatically if the satisfaction level drops to a certain point. Moreover, highly satisfied customers are tending to be more loyal than the customers who are merely satisfied. Overall, it is clear that there is a significant positive relationship between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. Customer loyalty leads to an increase in both sales and profitability (Chi, 2005).

Since this study will assess the relation between services quality and customer satisfaction therefor its argues in previous studies on the quality of health services and the loyalty of health organizations reflect the strong relationship between these two principles (Hardeep 2008, Sungjin 2005, Michele 2006, Gray 2004, Blizzard, 2002). Loyal customers are also very important for the success of organizations because of their positive word of mouth and their patronage (Hamid, Ebrahimpour, Roghanian & Gheysari, 2013). Whereas Reichheld and Detrick (2003) argued those corporations and their loyal customers share values. Kumar and Shah (2006), distinguished loyalty in two respects: behavioural and attitudinal, while Lam, Shankar, Erramilli, & Murthy (2004) suggested repurchase expectations and references as loyalty dimensions.

Loyalty of behaviour, it refers to the purchase characteristics of the purchaser. Buyers consistently buy from a specific company because of the lack of access to other alternatives (Jacoby and Chestnut, 1978). In the same way, (Curtis, 2009) assessed behavioural loyalty, as the buyer's patronage behaviour. Attitudinal loyalty on the other hand was seen as a pure form of loyalty. Attitudinal loyalty is a positive feeling towards the brand (Curtis 2009; Dekimpe, Steenkamp, Mellens & Vanden, 1997)

2. Literature Review

Patient loyalty is a critical outcome for hospitals (Bendapudi, Berry, Frey, Parish, & Rayburn, 2006; Platonova et al., 2008). It is suggested that patient loyalty is positively associated with patient health outcomes and hospital financial outcomes. In the marketing literature, loyalty has been shown to increase retention (Yi & Jeon, 2003) and profits (Prentice, 2013). Loyalty is an essential component of any relationship. In industry, loyalty has been described as the strength of the relationship between a customer's relative attitude and repeat patronage (Dick & Basu, 1994). More clearly stated, customer loyalty is "a deeply held commitment to rebuy or repatriate a preferred product or service consistently in the future, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to call switching behaviour" (Oliver, 1997, p. 392).

The significance of understanding long-term relationships and customer retention is a common topic in the marketing literature (Grant & Schlesinger, 1995; Payne & Rickard, 1997; F. F. Reichheld & Schefter). Customer retention is a common topic in the marketing literature (Grant & Schlesinger, 1995; Payne & Rickard, 1997; F. F. Reichheld & Schefter, 2000). Therefore, understanding the construct of loyalty is invaluable to researchers and practitioners. The concept of patient loyalty is the adaptation of "customer loyalty" addressed within the scope of general business administration, into the health sector (Bayin & Onder, 2015).

2.1 Services Quality

The SERVQUAL model developed by Parasuraman et al. (1985) has led to the realization of many successes in several institutions and sectors, despite the diversity of services and customer needs. The SERVQUAL has flexibility, which makes it possible to be modified by the researcher according to the nature of the institution without changing its five-dimensional structure (Ali & Raza, 2017; Anbari & Tabaraie, 2013) which are Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, and Empathy. Several researchers have suggested a number of dimensions to assess the quality of services or products, and all the dimensions came from the main five dimensions of quality

of services or products. The dimension of quality product is about the degree of achieving the productivity in the best way and based on the criteria set according to the customer's needs. As stated by Dang et al. (2013), there are four criteria in the dimensions related to social and physical environment, supplier and service policy (El- Jardali et al., 2014).

2.2 Customer Satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is a common term in numerous fields including marketing and finance (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Yi & Natarajan, 2018). Customer satisfaction is referred to the application of some procedures to bridge the gap that exists between the needs and expectations of a client and available products and services (Linqvist Leonardsen et al., 2016; Sadeh, 2017; Xesfingi & Vozikis, 2016). According to Parasuraman et al. (1985), customer satisfaction results from the application of quality services. Many researchers discussed about the customer satisfaction and attempted to improve its definition. Most of them considered customer satisfaction as specific situation for the appraisal of the interpretation from customer opinion safer purchase to describe the customer's level of satisfaction (Izogo & Ogba, 2015; Yi & Natarajan, 2018).

Satisfaction influences patient recommendations positively (Dang et al., 2013; McCall et al., 2016). As stated by Swies et al. (2017), customer satisfaction refers to attaining the provision needed by the customer. Satisfaction is a situation that occurs as a result of the customer's relationship with the organization over a period of time (Izogo & Ogba, 2015). According to Maria Stock et al. (2017), satisfaction is the consumers' assessment of a product or service in respect of whether their expectations and needs are met with regards to those products or services. Satisfaction is considered as a positive and emotional state determined through the assessment of all facets of the customer's relationship with the organization (Al- Abri, R., Al-Balushi, 2014). The major focus of an organization is customer satisfaction since it reflects the nature of services of products produced for the customers (Lagrosen & Lagrosen, 2016). Customer satisfaction is an evaluation procedure between the anticipated and the real occurrence. It is also the inspiration of the action and production procedure for the loyalty of consumer behaviour (El-Tohamy et al., 2015). Customer satisfaction refers to an accrued practice of a consumer's purchase experiences (Linqvist Leonardsen et al., 2016). For example, healthcare sector comprise certain different proportions to provide its clear characteristics (Anbari & Tabaraie, 2013), Previous studies on customer satisfaction have indicated that differences exist between expectations and gain of the customer (El-Tohamy et al., 2015; Khan & Beyazit, 2013; Xesfingi & Vozikis, 2016).

Patient satisfaction is not having a clearly concept, mostly satisfaction is defined by different individuals as a consequence of varying backgrounds and experiences (Fathi & Al, 2008). Also patients' satisfaction and health market have focus Category examines to how the organization can determine the most requirements, needs, expectations, and preferences of customers or patient and markets. In addition, it examined how the organization builds relationships with customers or patient and determines the key factors that lead to customer acquisition, satisfaction, loyalty, retention, business expansion and sustainability (Hertz, 2006).

2.3 Customer Loyalty

Loyalty is established over a history of time from an identical record of consultation and sometimes even outstanding client's expectations. Bove & Johnson (2006) proposition is one such definition of the client's loyalty. The estimation of loyalty in this study includes the degree to which a client can explore repurchasing behaviour from a service where the client would possess a constructive attitudinal nature towards the provider and reflects on the exploitation with this provider when a requirement of the service exists (The Kheng, Mahamad, Ramayah, & Mosahab, 2010). Aliman Wan & Nor Mohamad, (2016) argued that the health care service quality has a positive relationship with consumer's satisfaction and the expansion of consumes loyalty. Customer satisfaction leads to the growth of customer loyalty, where by the patients select to seek communication or treatment at the same non-public provider.

Customer loyalty is already catching in the seventies of the 20th century. Loyalty has been identified with repeated purchases, later this provision of another and began to look more broadly. Glinkskienė, Kvedaraitė and Kvedaras (2010) Gudynaitė argue that marketing theory of loyalty has long been seen as repeating of a certain brand, product or service purchase that was described as a constant repetitive action by the buyer. In recent years, changes in the definition of loyalty, a debate is growing about the attachment to mark the importance of loyalty, so significant is not only the act but also a psychological reason behind this action Glinkskienė, Kvedaraitė, Kvedaras (2010).

2.4 The Conceptual Framework

Based on the past experimental literature review, a research framework is established to investigate the relationships between Health Services Quality, consumer's satisfaction, and consumer's loyalty, as displayed below in Fig. 1.

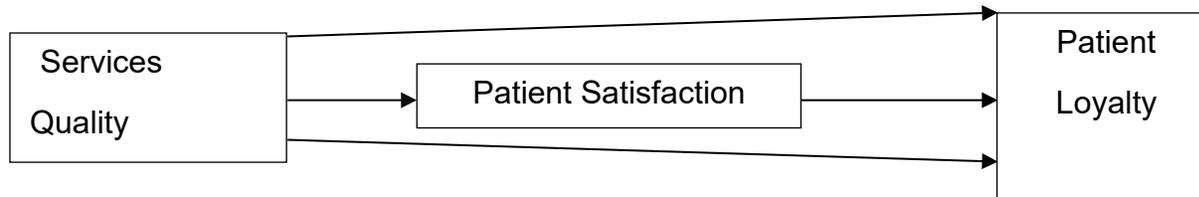


Fig. 1 Services Quality and Patient Satisfaction

According to the framework that given in figure.1 the influenced the work of this research is the to measurement the relationship of services quality and patient satisfaction that impact on patient' loyalty. Several researches have supported the relationships between the variables of, service quality, and patient' loyalty by mediating of patient satisfaction as found in previous studies (Parasurman et al. 1988; Amin, 2019; Kesuma et al, 2013; Pathak, 2017; Baba, 2017; Lestariningsih, Hadiyati and Astuti, 2018; AL-Mhasnah et al, 2018).

2.5 Services Quality and Patient Loyalty

Previous studies on the quality of health services and the loyalty of health organizations reflect the strong relationship between these two principles (Hardeep 2008, Sungjin 2005, Michele 2006, Gray 2004, Blizzard, 2002). Loyal customers are also very important for the success of organizations because of their positive word of mouth and their patronage (Hamid, Ebrahimpour, Roghanian & Gheysari, 2013).

2.6 Patient Satisfaction and Patient Loyalty

Based on Coyne (1986), there are two critical thresholds affecting the link between customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. On the high side, when satisfaction reaches a certain level, loyalty increases dramatically, at the same time satisfaction declined to a certain point, loyalty dropped equally dramatically (Oliva, Oliver & MacMillan 1992.) The customer is link to a business success. Customer satisfaction and loyalty should be incorporated into the long-term goal of a business. Customer satisfaction is a key element for every organization wishing to increase customer loyalty and create a better business achievement. The role of satisfaction in loyalty largely indicates that the former is a key determinant of the latter (Dick & Basu 1994.).

3. Conclusion

Based on the model researcher build this will support a significant contribution to the body of knowledge in the relation between health services quality and patient satisfaction that impact on patient loyalty. This model also emphasizes the importance of patient satisfaction role in the relation between health services quality and patient loyalty that help public hospitals in Jordan to respond more in relation with patients' needs. In other hand this model will assist health managers and planers to develop the health system. This model still needs to be extended in future studies to include other factors that have impact on patient satisfaction and patient loyalty. It's also recommended to examine this model in privet hospital in Jordan and make comparative statics between public hospitals and privet on the level of health services. The patients need to take protection such as insurance or takaful (2019a, 2019b, 2017, 2012(a), 2012(b) and 2012(c)). There are many types of protection even though in business, life, house, accident, vehicles, fire, flood and others (Azhar et.al., 2017). But in getting health quality services in hospital can give better services if the patients can choose many protections to cover their life and accident by using takaful or insurance.

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