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LITERATURE REVIEW: DETERMINANTS OF PATIENT LOYALTY IN USING HEALTH SERVICES

Sigit Eko Prasetyo*, Dyah Wiji Puspita Sari, Iwan Ardian, Muh. Abdurrouf

Faculty of Nursing Science, Universitas Islam Sultan Agung, Jl. Kaligawe Raya No.Km.4, Terboyo Kulon, Genuk, Semarang, Central Java 50112 Indonesia
sigiteko24@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Patient loyalty is an important indicator of the success of a healthcare facility. Building patient loyalty is not an easy task. Many factors influence a patient's decision to remain loyal to a healthcare facility. Objective: This study aims to identify and analyze various factors that influence patient loyalty in health services. Methods: This research uses a literature study approach by reviewing national and international articles published in the period 2020-2024. The articles selected were limited to scientific publications available in full-text format and freely accessible. Literature sources were obtained from three main databases, namely Google Scholar, PubMed, and SciSpace. The search strategy was carried out using keywords based on the PICO (Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcome) framework, such as "health services", "factors" and patient loyalty", resulting in 615 articles. The process of analyzing articles using PRISMA, searching and filtering journal articles began by identifying 615 articles from three main databases, Google Scholar (401 articles), PubMed (7 articles), and SciSpace (207 articles). At the initial stage, duplicate articles were eliminated, and the number of articles remaining after this screening was 107. In the screening process from this stage, 84 articles were excluded because they did not meet the predetermined criteria, so only 23 articles entered the next stage. At the eligibility stage, further selection was carried out by considering the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Of the 23 articles screened, 13 did not meet the criteria and were excluded from the selection process. In the end, only 10 articles met all the requirements and were included in the further review stage. Results: Analysis of the literature review patient loyalty in using health services is influenced by factors of service quality, price, communication, and trust.

Keywords: factors; health services; patient loyalty

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INTRODUCTION

In the era of globalization and increasingly fierce competition in the healthcare sector, patient loyalty is one of the important indicators of the success of a healthcare facility, such as a hospital, clinic, or health center. Patient loyalty not only reflects the level of satisfaction with the services provided, but also shows the ability of health facilities to maintain long-term relationships with their users. Loyal patients tend to use services repeatedly, provide recommendations to others, and remain loyal even though there are alternative health facilities (Habsy Laela Lisma, 2024). This makes patient loyalty a strategic asset that can improve the reputation and operational sustainability of a health institution. Building patient loyalty is no easy task. Many factors influence a patient's decision to remain loyal to a health facility. Some of the main factors often identified in the literature include service quality, competitive pricing, effective communication between medical personnel and patients, and trust built during the service process. Service quality, for example, is a key determinant of patient satisfaction as it includes aspects such as professionalism of medical personnel, completeness of facilities, and time efficiency in service delivery (Melenia Jesslyn et al., 2025). Meanwhile, fair and transparent pricing is also an important consideration for patients, especially in countries with health systems that are not fully supported by government subsidies. In addition, good communication between patients and healthcare providers can strengthen

interpersonal relationships, thereby increasing patient trust and satisfaction (Herman et al., 2022).

Differences in characteristics between health facilities, such as large hospitals, private clinics, or community health centers, also influence patient perceptions and loyalty. Larger facilities with advanced technology may be perceived as superior in terms of service quality compared to smaller facilities with limited resources (Rather et al., 2022). For some patients, convenience, proximity and affordability are reasons to remain loyal to a particular health facility (Silvia et al., 2024). Therefore, an in-depth understanding of the determinants of patient loyalty is essential for developing effective marketing and service management strategies (Olesen et al., 2022). In the midst of increasing competition among healthcare providers, understanding the factors that influence patient loyalty is crucial. Several previous studies identified that service quality, patient satisfaction, trust in medical personnel, price, and supporting facilities are the main determinants that shape loyalty (Liu et al., 2021). However, findings from various studies are still inconsistent, with some studies placing patient satisfaction as the dominant factor, while others found that trust has a stronger influence (Rather et al., 2022).

The development of health technologies such as telemedicine, electronic medical records, and online registration systems has influenced patient experience and loyalty (Cobelli et al., 2020). Patients now pay attention not only to medical aspects, but also to convenience, ease of access, and service efficiency. Therefore, healthcare institutions need to adapt to the changing expectations of patients to maintain their loyalty. This study aims to identify and analyze the various factors that influence patient loyalty in the healthcare context.

METHOD

This research used a literature study approach by reviewing national and international articles published in the period 2020-2024. The articles selected were limited to scientific publications available in full-text format and freely accessible to ensure readability and data validity. Literature sources were obtained from three major databases, namely Google Scholar, PubMed, and SciSpace, which have a high reputation in the field of health and service management. The search strategy was carried out using keywords based on the PICO (Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcome) framework, such as "health services", "factors" and patient loyalty", resulting in 615 articles. The process of analyzing articles using PRISMA, starting from initial identification through keyword searches, screening titles and abstracts to select relevant articles, full text evaluation to ensure suitability for research purposes, to checking for duplication to avoid bias. The data obtained from 300 articles were then analyzed narratively with a descriptive approach to identify the main factors that influence patient loyalty, resulting in 18 articles. All articles used in this review are open access and accessed in accordance with the license terms of each journal, with each article referenced with a DOI code to ensure transparency and accountability of the 10 journal articles. Through this approach, this study aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the factors that influence patient loyalty in healthcare, as well as the implications for management practices and marketing strategies in healthcare facilities.

RESULT

The process of searching and screening journal articles for the literature review began by identifying a total of 615 articles from three main databases, namely Google Scholar (401 articles), PubMed (7 articles), and SciSpace (207 articles). At the initial stage, articles that were detected as duplicates were eliminated, resulting in 107 articles remaining after this screening. Next, a screening process was carried out on the available articles. From this stage, 84 articles were excluded because they did not meet the predetermined criteria, so only 23

articles entered the next stage. At the eligibility stage, further selection was carried out by considering the inclusion and exclusion criteria. Of the 23 articles screened, 13 did not meet the criteria and were excluded from the selection process. In the end, only 10 articles fulfilled all the requirements and entered into the further review stage. These articles were then analyzed and reviewed in depth for the purpose of literature review. From the initial large number, this selection process ensured that only the most relevant and qualified articles were used in the study.

Table 1. Article Analysis

		Article A	Analysis		
Title	Author (Year)	Research Objectives	Research Type	Population/ Sample	Research Results
Factors Associated with Hospital Outpatient Loyalty	(Hana Khairun Nisa et al., 2023)	This study was conducted with the aim of knowing the factors associated with the loyalty of Outpatient Installation patients.	This study uses quantitative methods with a cross sectional approach.	165 respondents	The results showed that 62.4% of respondents were loyal to the Jampang Kulon Hospital Outpatient Installation. The chi-square test results show that the relationship between satisfaction with the variables of physical evidence, reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurance, ease of access, and transfer barriers with patient loyalty.
Determinants of patient behavioural loyalty on primary health centres: Evidence from a cross- sectional study in Indonesia	(Mardaleta et al., 2022)	The purpose of this study was to examine the effect of internal service factors (service providers, service processes, and service environment) on service quality and patient behavior loyalty at PHC Indonesia.	cross-sectional study	389 respondents	Our data show that two elements of internal service factors (service provider and service environment) have a positive and significant influence on PHC service quality with p<0.001 and p=0.021, respectively. Service quality has a positive and significant influence on patients' behavioral loyalty towards PHC (p=0.003). However, service quality did not serve as an intervening variable between internal service factors (service process, and service

Title	Author (Year)	Research Objectives	Research Type	Population/ Sample	Research Results
		·			environment) and patient behavioral loyalty, with p=0.091, p=0.230 and p=0.260, respectively.
Customer relationship management and patient satisfaction and loyalty in selected hospitals in Ghana	(Abekah- Nkrumah et al., 2021)	This paper aims to examine the effect of customer relationship management (CRM) on patient satisfaction and loyalty by controlling for other sociodemographic characteristics.	The analysis used descriptive statistics and regression through partial least squares-based structural equation modeling.	This study used a two-stage sampling process and a structured questionnaire to collect data from 788 patients from three health facilities (public, quasi-public, and private) in Greater Accra, Ghana.	The results show that CRM is significantly positively correlated with patient satisfaction and loyalty, and patient satisfaction is also significantly correlated with patient loyalty. In addition, the results show that introduction to education, ownership of a healthcare facility, health insurance status, and gender, have no significant impact on the relationship between CRM and patient satisfaction/loyalty, nor do they affect patient satisfaction and loyalty directly.
Factors influencing patient loyalty to outpatient medical services: an empirical analysis of the UAE's government healthcare system	(Dayan et al., 2022)	The purpose of this study is to uncover issues that hinder patient satisfaction and loyalty and identify factors that can improve customer retention by government hospitals in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). The mediating impact of outpatient satisfaction on service quality, word of mouth (WoM), hospital image, outpatient-physician relationship, and outpatient loyalty was tested.	The sample data used to test the hypotheses was drawn from a pool of patients served by government health institutions in Abu Dhabi. The questionnaire was administered to 418 participants using methods such as short message service, e-mail, and in-person delivery. The data was analyzed using SmartPLS 3.3.2 software.	418 respondents	The results show that service quality, WoM, and outpatient-physician relationship have a positive impact on outpatient satisfaction and indirectly affect outpatient loyalty; that hospital image has a positive impact on outpatient satisfaction and loyalty and has a partial mediating effect on loyalty; that waiting time satisfaction has no effect on outpatient satisfaction and has no moderating effect on the outpatient

Title	Author (Year)	Research Objectives	Research Type	Population/ Sample	Research Results
					satisfaction-loyalty relationship and that switching costs have a positive effect on loyalty but have no moderating effect on the outpatient satisfaction-loyalty relationship.
Factors influencing patient loyalty to outpatient medical services: an empirical analysis of the UAE's government healthcare system	(El Garem et al., 2024)	This paper examines the influence of perceived service quality, trust, perceived value, and perceived cost on patient satisfaction and loyalty and examines the moderating role of sociodemographic factors.	This research method combines a quantitative approach with advanced statistical analysis (PLS-SEM) to test the conceptual model.	462 respondents	The results show that trust, perceived value, and patient satisfaction have an important role in shaping patient loyalty, while patient satisfaction is shown to fully mediate patient-perceived service quality. The loyalty relationship was also shown to partially mediate the trust-loyalty relationship. However, the patient satisfaction-loyalty relationship was shown to be moderated only by the age factor.
Factors of the Revisit Intention of Patients in the Primary Health Care System in Argentina	(Pighin et al., 2022)		correlational, cross-sectional, and non- experimental study	407 respondents	The results showed that quality has a significant and positive effect of 0.721 (p-value: 0.000) on satisfaction. Hypothesis 1 is accepted. Quality has a significant and positive effect of 0.246 (p-value: 0.000) on trust. Hypothesis 2 is accepted. Quality has neither a positive nor significant effect on revisit intentions. Hypothesis 3 is not accepted. Satisfaction has a significant and positive effect of 0.239 (p-value: 0.001) on revisit intention.

Title	Author (Year)	Research Objectives	Research Type	Population/ Sample	Research Results
					Hypothesis 4 is accepted. Satisfaction has a significant and positive effect of 0.679 (p-value: 0.000) on trust. Hypothesis 5 is accepted. Trust has a significant and positive effect of 0.533 (p-value: 0.000) on revisit intention. Hypothesis 6 is accepted. The variables in the model explain 57.3% of revisit intentions
Ophthalmology Practice- Related Factors and Patient Loyalty: Mediating Role of Patient Satisfaction	(Almulhim et al., 2024) et	The current study aims to find factors associated with ophthalmology practice and patient loyalty and to analyze the mediating role of patient satisfaction in private ophthalmology services in various private centers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.	This study was quantitative, and data were collected by questionnaire. We used a pretested questionnaire divided into sections to assess factors related to ophthalmology practice, patient satisfaction, and patient loyalty. These factors were measured using a 5-point Likert scale, focusing on financial aspects, access to facilities, staff services, and ophthalmologist services. Next, the SmartPLS technique was used to extract the results using SmartPLS.	323 respondents	intentions. The results found that ophthalmologist services had a positive relationship with patient satisfaction ($\beta = 0.369$, $p = 0.000$) as well as patient loyalty ($\beta = 0.234$, $p = 0.004$), but there were some factors related to ophthalmology practice such as financial aspects, access and facilities, and staff services, which did not show a relationship with patient loyalty but had a positive relationship with patient satisfaction. Further analysis found that patient satisfaction as a mediator had a positive relationship between ophthalmology practice-related factors, namely, ophthalmologist services ($\beta = 0.228$, $P = 0.000$), financial aspects ($\beta = 0.102$, $p = 0.019$),

Title	Author (Year)	Research Objectives	Research Type	Population/ Sample	Research Results
		,			access and facilities $(\beta = 0.109, p = 0.000)$, and staff services $(\beta = 0.188, p = 0.000)$ with patient loyalty.
Examining the Factors Impacting Satisfaction and Loyalty in Innovative Personal Health Assistant Services for Hypertension Patients of a Private Hospital in Thailand	(Ongpattanakit, 2024)	The purpose of this study was to examine the factors influencing satisfaction and loyalty in an innovative personal health assistant service for hypertensive patients in a private hospital in Bangkok, Thailand	Research design, data and methodology: A conceptual framework consisting of six variables, reliability, trust, service quality, hospital image, satisfaction and loyalty, was designed to achieve the research objectives. A quantitative approach was applied to collect data from 500 respondents. Purposive sampling, stratified random sampling, and convenience sampling methods were used to reach the target respondents. The reliability of the questionnaire was verified by Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) and pilot testing before distribution to the target respondents. The data obtained were then analyzed by Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modeling	500 respondents	The results showed that loyalty is driven by satisfaction, while satisfaction is influenced by service quality, hospital image, and trust. Service quality plays an important role for hypertensive patients as it directly affects satisfaction and hospital image, and indirectly affects loyalty.

Title	Author (Year)	Research Objectives	Research Type	Population/ Sample	Research Results
		,	(SEM) statistical methods to test the hypotheses proposed for this study.		
Factors Affecting Patient Loyalty At The Pln Batam Employee Cooperative Health Clinic	(Iswara et al., 2021)	This study aims to determine the effect of facilities, services, and both simultaneously on patient loyalty at the Batam PLN cooperative health clinic.	This study uses a quantitative research design with a population and sample size of 148 patients visiting the PLN Employee Cooperative Health Clinic Batam City. The data analysis techniques used in this study are data quality test, classical assumption test, influence test, and hypothesis testing which will be assisted by the SPSS version 25 application.	148 respondents	The results showed that the facility variable had a positive and significant effect on patient loyalty at the Batam PLN employee cooperative health polyclinic. The more complete the facilities provided means that loyal patients will check themselves, service variables have a positive and significant effect on patient loyalty at the Batam PT PLN employee cooperative health clinic. The greater the opportunity for service indicators, the patient will be loyal to visit or control health, and service and facility variables simultaneously have a significant and positive effect on patient loyalty at the Batam PLN employee cooperative health clinic.
Determinants of Patient Loyalty to Inpatient Services fi RSUD Dr. RM. Djoelham Binjai	(Eric Winarno et al., 2024a)	This study aims to analyze the factors associated with patient decisions to reuse inpatient services at Dr. RM Hospital. Djoelham Binjai in 2024.	This study used a quantitative approach with a cross sectional design, with a total of 871 inpatients from January to March 2024. The study sample of 90 patients was selected using purposive sampling. Data analysis was	871 respondents	The results showed a significant relationship between several factors with the patient's decision to reuse inpatient services, namely service quality (p=0.000), service facilities (p=0.027), and patient loyalty (p=0.013). It is concluded that these factors play an important role in

Title	Author (Year)	Research Objectives	Research Type	Population/ Sample	Research Results
		J	carried out univariate and bivariate using the chi square test.	·	patient decisions.

DISCUSSION

Patient loyalty to healthcare services is influenced by various factors that are interrelated and shape the overall patient experience. Based on a literature review, some of the key factors that determine patient loyalty include service quality, price, communication, and trust (Issumi Maharani Tanjung et al., 2023; Hana Khairun Nisa et al., 2023). This discussion aims to outline how each of these factors contributes to patient loyalty, as well as the implications for health facility managers.

Service Quality as a Key Factor.

Service quality is one of the most dominant factors influencing patient loyalty. Research shows that patients tend to be loyal to health facilities that provide high-quality services, such as professionalism of medical personnel, ease of access, and time efficiency (Imran et al., 2021). Service quality includes not only technical aspects, such as medical diagnosis and treatment, but also non-technical aspects, such as staff friendliness, environmental cleanliness, and facility comfort (Mardaleta et al., 2022). Patients who are satisfied with the quality of service are likely to have a positive perception of the healthcare facility, which in turn increases their loyalty. However, it is important to note that service quality standards may vary between large hospitals, clinics, and health centers, so health facility managers need to adjust strategies based on their capacity and target patients (Issumi Maharani Tanjung et al., 2023; Abekah-Nkrumah et al., 2021).

Price as an Important Consideration

Healthcare pricing is also a critical factor influencing patient loyalty, especially in countries with healthcare systems that are not fully supported by government subsidies. Research shows that competitive and transparent pricing can increase patients' perceived value of healthcare services (Herman et al., 2022). While service quality remains a top priority, affordable prices are often the reason for patients to remain loyal to a particular facility (Mahmud, 2020). On the other hand, health facilities that set prices too high without providing significant added value risk losing patient loyalty. Therefore, health facility managers need to balance between service quality and price to ensure patient satisfaction (Pratiwi et al., 2024).

Effective Communication as a Relationship Booster

Effective communication between medical personnel and patients also plays an important role in building patient loyalty (Khairani et al., 2021). Clear, empathetic and responsive communication can increase patients' trust in health facilities. Good communication includes not only the delivery of medical information in an easy-to-understand manner, but also the ability of medical personnel to listen to patient complaints and needs. Patients who feel heard and valued tend to have a stronger emotional connection with the healthcare facility, which in turn increases their loyalty (Dayan et al., 2022; El Garem et al., 2024). In addition, effective communication can also reduce patients' uncertainty and anxiety during the service process (Mamesah et al., 2020; Melenia Jesslyn et al., 2025).

Trust as the Foundation of Loyalty

Trust is the main foundation of patient loyalty. Patients who have high trust in health facilities tend not to hesitate to use these services repeatedly or recommend them to others (Pighin et

al., 2022). Trust can be built through consistency in providing quality services, transparency in pricing, and honest and empathetic communication. In addition, the reputation of health facilities also affects the level of patient trust (Almulhim et al., 2024). Reputable health facilities, such as large hospitals with advanced technology, often have an easier time building trust than smaller facilities such as community health centers. However, with the right approach, puskesmas and clinics can also build trust through services that are personalized and close to the community (Habsy Laela Lisma, 2024).

Comparison between Health Facilities

Differences in characteristics between health facilities, such as hospitals, clinics and health centers, also affect patient loyalty. Large facilities such as hospitals are often considered superior in terms of service quality and medical technology, thus attracting patients with complex service needs (Ongpattanakit, 2024). However, clinics and health centers have advantages in terms of proximity, more affordable prices, and more personalized services. Patients often choose health facilities based on a combination of these factors, depending on their individual preferences and health conditions. Therefore, health facility managers need to understand the specific needs of their target patients to build loyalty (Silvia et al., 2024; Iswara et al., 2021).

Implications for Healthcare Management

The findings from this discussion have important implications for healthcare management. First, health facility managers need to focus on improving overall service quality, both from technical and non-technical aspects (Eric Winarno et al., 2024; Mardaleta et al., 2022; El-Gilany et al., 2023). Second, competitive and transparent pricing should be a priority to ensure accessibility of services for all levels of society (Hana Khairun Nisa et al., 2023; Abekah-Nkrumah et al., 2021; Almulhim et al., 2024). Third, communication training for medical personnel is essential to build strong interpersonal relationships with patients (Pighin et al., 2022; Ongpattanakit, 2024). Finally, health facility managers need to build reputation and trust through effective marketing and consistent service (Iswara et al., 2021; Mahmud, 2020).

CONCLUSION

Overall, patient loyalty in using healthcare services is influenced by a combination of factors such as service quality, price, communication, and trust. Each healthcare facility has unique challenges and opportunities in building patient loyalty, depending on their patient characteristics and targets. By understanding these factors, healthcare managers can develop more effective strategies to increase patient retention, encourage positive recommendations, and ensure continued use of services.

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