



EVALUATION OF INPATIENT SATISFACTION WITH NURSING SERVICES AT PURUK CAHU REGIONAL GENERAL HOSPITAL

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Abstract

Patient satisfaction is a critical indicator for assessing the quality of nursing services in hospitals, particularly in general surgery wards, where high-quality services can enhance recovery and reduce complications. In Indonesia, research on patient satisfaction in general surgery wards is limited, while patient visitation rates continue to rise annually. Therefore, understanding the factors influencing patient satisfaction is essential for improving nursing services. This study aims to evaluate the inpatient satisfaction levels with nursing services in the general surgery ward of Puruk Cahu Regional General Hospital. The research design is a descriptive quantitative study using a cross-sectional approach, involving all patients hospitalized in the general surgery ward during the study period. Data collection was conducted using a questionnaire adapted from the five Servqual dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. The data analysis technique used is univariate descriptive to understand the distribution of patient satisfaction levels. The results show that the assurance and empathy dimensions have the highest satisfaction levels, while tangibles received the lowest scores, indicating a need for improvement in the hospital's physical facilities. Overall, most patients are satisfied with the services provided, but there is still a need for improvements in certain aspects to enhance the patient experience. In conclusion, patient satisfaction with nursing services in the general surgery ward of Puruk Cahu Regional General Hospital is generally good, with a need for improvement in the tangibles and communication dimensions. These findings are expected to serve as a foundation for hospital management to enhance the quality of nursing services through facility improvements and enhanced communication skills of the nursing staff.

Keywords: General Surgery Ward, Nursing Services, Patient Satisfaction

Introduction

Patient satisfaction is a critical indicator in assessing the quality of healthcare services in hospitals. The level of patient satisfaction with nursing services, particularly in general surgery wards, plays a vital role in evaluating the overall patient experience and the quality of care provided. High-quality nursing care not only accelerates patient recovery but also reduces the risk of complications and expedites discharge. Conversely, inadequate services can lead to dissatisfaction, increased risks of complications, and prolonged hospital stays (1). To be considered satisfactory, patient satisfaction must generally meet a minimum standard of 80% (2).

Research on patient satisfaction in Indonesia, especially regarding nursing services in general surgery wards, remains limited. This is concerning, given the increasing number of admissions and inpatient visits to general surgery wards annually (3). This growth highlights the increasing demand for intensive care, making the quality of nursing services a crucial factor in maintaining patient

satisfaction. As the number of patients requiring care rises, the risk of declining service quality may emerge if hospital management fails to implement necessary improvements.

Patient satisfaction is influenced not only by the quality of medical care but also by other factors such as nurse-patient communication, the availability of medical information, and the responsiveness to patient needs. A study by Smith et al. revealed that effective communication between nurses and patients, particularly in general surgery wards, significantly improves patient satisfaction. Patients tend to feel more comfortable and satisfied when they receive clear information and attentive care from healthcare professionals (4). Thus, evaluating patient satisfaction with nursing services in general surgery wards is essential for identifying strengths and weaknesses in existing service systems. This evaluation can serve as a basis for formulating effective improvement strategies, ultimately enhancing care quality and patient satisfaction.

Low patient satisfaction can have far-reaching impacts, not only affecting individual patient experiences but also potentially harming the hospital's reputation. Dissatisfied patients are more likely to share negative experiences, whether through word-of-mouth or social media, which can significantly diminish public trust in the hospital (5). Furthermore, dissatisfaction can affect patient loyalty; patients who are unhappy with the services provided are less likely to return to the same hospital for future care (6). This could reduce patient visits in the long term, ultimately impacting hospital revenue and operations.

Additionally, low patient satisfaction can increase the workload of medical staff, particularly nurses. Continuous complaints from dissatisfied patients can lead to stress and burnout among nurses (7). When nursing staff experience decreased morale due to high workloads and excessive patient demands, the quality of care they provide tends to decline. This can create a negative cycle, where patient dissatisfaction contributes to staff underperformance, further reducing patient satisfaction.

While extensive research has explored various factors influencing patient satisfaction, there remains a significant gap between theory and practice. Theoretically, patient satisfaction models emphasize factors such as communication, empathy, and quick responses to patient needs (8). However, in practice, many hospitals struggle to consistently implement these standards. For example, Li et al. found that while nurses acknowledge the importance of effective communication, barriers such as limited training and time constraints hinder the implementation of good communication practices (9).

Kim et al. highlighted that despite efforts by hospitals to improve nursing service quality through training programs, these initiatives often lack sustainability and adequate evaluation (10). This underscores the need for a more holistic and sustainable approach to bridging the gap between theory and practice in nursing services in general surgery wards. A holistic approach may include continuous evaluation of patient satisfaction and nursing performance, ongoing training, and improving hospital facilities to support better care.

According to the SERVQUAL model, five primary dimensions influence patient satisfaction: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (11). Preliminary findings at Puruk Cahu General Hospital revealed that the tangibles dimension was the weakest aspect. As a hospital with a Type C accreditation, its physical infrastructure and facilities fail to meet expected standards, significantly contributing to low patient satisfaction levels. Limited medical equipment, poor environmental cleanliness, and inadequate inpatient room comfort were identified as key factors affecting negative perceptions of service quality. Addressing these infrastructural shortcomings is a critical challenge that must be overcome to improve patient satisfaction.

Beyond tangibles, other factors influencing patient satisfaction in general surgery wards include the quality of communication and empathy from nurses, responsiveness to patient needs, and the availability of clear medical information. For example, Gonzalez et al. showed that patient satisfaction is highly influenced by the quality of communication and empathy demonstrated by nurses (12).

Similarly, Martinez et al. emphasized the importance of responsiveness to patient needs and the accessibility of medical information for patients and their families (13). These factors play a significant role in shaping patients' positive perceptions of the nursing care they receive.

Research in Indonesia by Wijaya and Suryani revealed that in general surgery wards, factors such as nurses' technical skills, attitudes and behaviors, and the hospital's physical environment are critical elements affecting patient satisfaction (14). This research highlights the importance of continuous training for nurses, not only in technical skills but also in communication and empathy. Additionally, improving hospital facilities, such as cleanliness and the comfort of inpatient rooms, is essential to enhance patient satisfaction.

Preliminary studies conducted at Puruk Cahu General Hospital indicate that inpatient satisfaction levels with nursing services in the general surgery ward are moderate. Approximately 45% of patients reported being satisfied, 35% moderately satisfied, and 20% dissatisfied with the services provided. Common complaints include ineffective communication between nurses and patients and slow responses to patient needs. Furthermore, the hospital's suboptimal physical conditions significantly influence patients' negative perceptions of the care they receive.

To address these issues, this study aims to evaluate inpatient satisfaction with nursing services in the general surgery ward at Puruk Cahu General Hospital. By identifying factors influencing patient satisfaction, particularly regarding the hospital's physical dimensions, this research seeks to provide actionable recommendations for improvement. The findings are expected to contribute significantly to enhancing the quality of nursing services in hospitals, improving both patient experiences and the hospital's overall reputation.

Method

The research was conducted at Puruk Cahu Regional General Hospital from October 1 to October 31, 2024. The study targeted patients undergoing inpatient care in the General Surgery Ward of Puruk Cahu Regional General Hospital. The research employed a descriptive quantitative approach with a descriptive-analytical design. A total of 47 participants were involved in the study. Data collection was carried out using a questionnaire. Data analysis utilized univariate descriptive analysis to provide an overview of the measurements for the five dimensions of patient satisfaction levels.

Results

Table 1. Dimensions of Satisfaction Levels

Dimensi Tingkat Kepuasan	frequency	%
Tangibles Dimension		
Fairly satisfied	4	9.1
Satisfied	25	56.8
Very Satisfied	15	34.1
Reliability Dimension		
Fairly satisfied	0	0
Satisfied	18	40.0
Very Satisfied	26	59.1
Responsiveness Dimension		
Fairly satisfied	4	9.1
Satisfied	17	38.6
Very Satisfied	23	52.3
Assurance Dimension		
Fairly satisfied	3	6.8
Satisfied	15	34.1

Very Satisfied	26	59.1
Empathy Dimension		
Fairly satisfied	4	9.1
Satisfied	13	29.5
Very Satisfied	27	61.4

Discussion

Frequency Distribution Based on the Tangibles Dimension

Based on the table, 56.8% of respondents were satisfied with this dimension, 34.1% were very satisfied, and 9.1% were only somewhat satisfied. The tangibles dimension includes physical elements within the hospital, such as cleanliness, comfort of inpatient rooms, availability of medical equipment, and other supporting facilities. A well-maintained physical environment and comprehensive facilities can provide a positive experience for patients during their treatment period [10].

A study by Wibowo et al. [11] highlights that the tangibles dimension significantly influences patients' perceptions of the overall quality of hospital services. Patients feel more comfortable and secure when the facilities provided meet the expected standards, particularly in general surgery wards that require ready-to-use medical equipment and a hygienic environment. At Puruk Cahu General Hospital, the physical facilities still require improvement, as some complaints from respondents who were only somewhat satisfied suggest inadequacies in infrastructure or limited medical equipment, consistent with the hospital's status as a type C facility.

Research by Pratama and Haryanto [12] indicates that suboptimal hospital infrastructure can reduce patient satisfaction, especially in inpatient settings. Patients expect clean, comfortable rooms equipped with adequate facilities to support recovery. Puruk Cahu General Hospital must address these physical shortcomings to enhance patient satisfaction levels and meet higher service standards.

Frequency Distribution Based on the Reliability Dimension

According to the table, 59.1% of respondents were very satisfied with the reliability of services, while 40% were satisfied. The reliability dimension encompasses the ability of nurses to provide consistent and dependable services, including timeliness and meeting patient expectations consistently. Rachmawati et al. [13] identified reliability as a critical factor influencing patient perceptions of service quality, especially in hospital inpatient settings.

High reliability increases patient trust in the services provided, fostering a sense of comfort during treatment. Patients are more satisfied when nurses can consistently meet their needs and demonstrate adequate skills and knowledge in providing care. Hakim [14] found that reliable services enhance patient satisfaction, particularly when nurses respond quickly and appropriately to patients' complaints and requests.

At Puruk Cahu General Hospital, reliability in nursing services plays a crucial role in building trust between patients and healthcare providers. When patients perceive nurses as dependable, they feel safer and more comfortable, positively impacting satisfaction levels. However, to maintain this reliability, ongoing training for nurses is essential, particularly in time management and accuracy in addressing patients' needs. Research by Widiastuti and Utami [15] also notes that consistent reliability reduces patient stress, ultimately contributing to higher satisfaction levels.

Improving reliability should remain a priority for the hospital to achieve optimal service standards and provide a positive experience for patients. As a type C hospital, maintaining reliability requires effective resource management and enhancing nurses' skills to deliver accurate and responsive care.

Frequency Distribution Based on the Responsiveness Dimension

From the table, the majority of respondents were very satisfied with the responsiveness of services (52.3%), while 38.6% were satisfied, and 9.1% were somewhat satisfied. The responsiveness dimension refers to the readiness of healthcare workers, especially nurses, to respond promptly and effectively to patients' needs and complaints. High responsiveness in nursing services enhances overall patient satisfaction as patients feel attended to and cared for [16].

Research by Lestari and Rahayu [17] found that high responsiveness from nurses reflects hospital service quality that values patient needs. Patients who feel their concerns are heard and needs promptly addressed tend to have a positive impression of the services received. This finding aligns with Prasetya's [18] study, which shows that responsiveness is one of the most anticipated dimensions by patients, particularly in intensive care settings like general surgery wards.

At Puruk Cahu General Hospital, responsiveness demonstrates the hospital's commitment to delivering services that address patient needs promptly, despite the resource limitations typical of a type C hospital. To increase the percentage of patients who are very satisfied, it is crucial for the hospital to enhance both the quantity and capacity of its nursing staff to reduce response times to patient needs. Additionally, communication training for nurses in managing urgent patient situations can improve patients' perceptions of the services provided.

By maintaining good responsiveness, Puruk Cahu General Hospital can bolster its reputation and public trust in the services offered. Responsiveness not only contributes to increased patient satisfaction but also creates a more conducive and efficient environment for patient care [19].

Frequency Distribution Based on the Assurance Dimension

Based on the table, the majority of respondents felt very satisfied with the assurance provided, accounting for 59.1%, while 34.1% felt satisfied, and 6.8% were moderately satisfied. The assurance dimension includes aspects related to the sense of safety and trust instilled by healthcare providers, such as skills, knowledge, and the ability of nurses to deliver reliable care (20). Assurance plays a crucial role in building patients' trust in the services received.

According to Kurniawati et al. (21), patients are more likely to feel satisfied when they trust that healthcare providers possess adequate competencies and knowledge. This confidence significantly contributes to patients' sense of safety during treatment, particularly in general surgical wards where specialized attention and skills are essential.

In Puruk Cahu Regional General Hospital, the assurance provided is reinforced by the professionalism of healthcare providers who ensure that medical procedures are carried out according to established protocols and regulations. Dewi and Kusuma (22) found that when healthcare providers demonstrate professionalism and competence, patients tend to give positive evaluations of the services, even in resource-limited settings such as those often encountered in type C hospitals.

However, some respondents who were only moderately satisfied might have experienced communication barriers or inadequate explanations of medical procedures. Rahayu (23) highlighted that a lack of clear communication from healthcare providers could negatively impact patients' perceptions of assurance. Therefore, efforts to enhance assurance can be made by providing communication training for healthcare providers to ensure clear and detailed information is conveyed to patients, ultimately improving overall patient satisfaction.

Frequency Distribution Based on the Empathy Dimension

The table shows that the majority of respondents were very satisfied with the empathy displayed, accounting for 61.4%, followed by 29.5% who were satisfied, and 9.1% who were moderately satisfied. The empathy dimension refers to the ability of healthcare providers to

demonstrate care and concern for patients' emotional needs, such as listening to complaints, providing support, and responding attentively to patient needs (24).

Research indicates that empathy from healthcare providers is critical in fostering positive relationships between patients and nurses, significantly impacting patient satisfaction (25). Patients who feel cared for are more likely to feel comfortable and trust that healthcare providers are genuinely concerned about their well-being, thereby enhancing their overall experience during treatment. According to Putri and Sari (26), genuine attention from healthcare providers can help patients feel more relaxed, which supports their recovery process.

At Puruk Cahu Regional General Hospital, nurses in the general surgical ward strive to demonstrate empathy in every aspect of patient care. Although time constraints and heavy workloads often pose challenges, nurses are expected to maintain an empathetic attitude and sensitivity to patient needs to achieve higher satisfaction levels. Santoso et al. (27) revealed that nurses who offer extra attention in listening to and understanding patient complaints can create positive experiences for patients, even in resource-constrained hospital settings.

Empathy from healthcare providers also serves as a vital indicator for increasing patient trust in the services provided, particularly in type C hospitals with limited resources. By showing genuine care, healthcare providers can enhance overall service quality and create a more satisfying care experience for patients.

Conclusion

The survey results indicate that respondents provided positive evaluations of service quality, particularly in the aspects of reliability, responsiveness, and assurance. This suggests that the services were consistently delivered, nurses were responsive to patient needs, and patients felt confident in the quality of care received. However, it should be noted that the tangibles dimension of service received a lower satisfaction level. This aspect requires further attention to enhance overall service quality.

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