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RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Influence of Hospital Service Factors, Quality of Hospitals, And Quality of Medical Personnel on Patients Intentions for Treatment in Singapore for Hospital Policies in Indonesia and Hospitals in Singapore with International Standards

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Abstract

Health is a community need. Competition for health services by hospitals, especially private ones, both in Indonesia and abroad, has even become a promising business at this time. Hospital services and professional medical personnel in Singapore have increased every year following the development of health problems and medical technology. This has led Singapore Hospitals to implement promotion of care for Indonesian patients and an increase in Indonesian patients who receive recommendations for treatment in Singapore. The causative factor is the patient's perception of hospital services, the quality of the hospital, and the quality of medical personnel. The results showed that the perception of hospital services was not the cause for a person to go to Singapore for treatment, but the determining factors were hospital services, hospital quality and quality of medical personnel.

Keywords: hospital services, hospital quality, quality of medical personnel

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1 | PRELIMINARY

The times, lifestyles and technology cause various kinds of health problems in humans. World life expectancy continues to improve (WHO, 2017). In the 2007-2017 period, countries with a life expectancy above 80 years increased from 15 to 29 countries. Death rates due to cardiovascular disease fell by 14%, deaths from cancer fell by 11%

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(WHO, 2017). These conditions provide hope for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (Sustainable Development Agendas / SDGs).

Based on data from the Indonesian Health Profile in 2020, the percentage of Indonesians who have health complaints is 56.51% or around 109 million people (Indonesian Doctors Association, 2020). From the Indonesian Health Profile data in 2020, patients who were hospitalized based on 10 major diseases were 733,654 people and outpatients based on 10 major diseases were 1,976,157 people (Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia, 2020). In connection with this, there has been an interesting phenomenon in the last 5 years, namely the number of patients from Indonesia who went for treatment abroad (Grehenson, 2020). International Medical Travel in 2019 has published the number of Indonesian patients seeking treatment in Singapore in 2019, which is 586,200 people. Furthermore, of the 309 patients who went to Singapore, 45% of them only did a check-up and the rest handled special or special treatment (www.singaporemeditravel.com, 2019).

The number of private hospitals or clinics that exist in Indonesia and even some international standard hospitals. Both private and government-owned hospitals are trying to get as many patients as possible by improving their services. The services provided by Indonesian hospitals are still not optimal compared to services provided by hospitals abroad, especially Singapore. Hospitals in Indonesia should be able to imitate hospitals in neighboring countries such as Singapore or Malaysia. Hospitals in both countries are able to combine hospital services with patient tour packages (Sitonga, 2005).

In choosing treatment abroad, most Indonesian people choose Singapore. Based on 2019 data, around 65% of the number of international patients or from outside Singapore at Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH) and National University Hospital (NUH) came from Indonesia (data from TTSH and NUH Hospitals, 2019). That number increased 45% compared to 2018. At the National University Hospital (NUH), in 2019 there were around 96,000 international patients, and 49% were Indonesian patients. Tan Tock Seng Hospital (TTSH) and National

University Hospital (NUH) NUH are the hospitals owned by the Singapore government. Judging by the percentage, it can be concluded that in the last few years there has been an increase in the number of Indonesian patients visiting Singapore.

Apart from the hospital being considered by the patient, another factor that the patient takes into consideration is the quality of the medical personnel. The aspect of quality of service also affects the intention of a patient to seek treatment or choose a hospital. Patients will always compare or ask other people's recommendations for treatment instructions.

Therefore, this study discusses the influence of the driving factors for treatment of Indonesian patients, namely perceptions related to the quality of hospital services and the quality of medical personnel with the intention to seek treatment at a hospital in Singapore.

2 | RESEARCH METHODS

Quantitative research, survey research approach aims to analyze the determinants that make patients go to Singapore for treatment. The population of this study were patients residing in Surabaya and Malang who had received medical treatment in Singapore. Samples were taken as many as 100 patients. The research instrument is a questionnaire. The preparation of this questionnaire is a number of indicators represented by several questions on a Likert scale. To complete the data (supplementary of data) used interviews from several sources. The technique used is the snowball sampling technique, namely by determining a small sample, then this sample is asked to select its friends to be the sample (Sugiyono, 2007). The test of the data instrument is a test of validity and reliability. Test the validity of the product moment correlation coefficients and the Cronbach alpha reliability test. Regression data analysis technique.

3 | RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The measurement model and all indicators are considered valid and reliable. This hypothesis testing

uses a significance level of 5% or 0.05. Data processing using regression resulted in the Regression Equation Model

$$Y = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 X_1 + \alpha_2 X_2 + \alpha_3 X_3$$

Y is defined as the intention to seek treatment

X1 = perception of hospital services

X2 = perception of hospital quality

X3 = perception of the quality of medical personnel

The hypothesis developed was that the better the perception of hospital services, the quality of hospitals and the quality of medical personnel, the higher the intention to seek treatment in Singapore. The measurement model and indicators used are considered valid and reliable. Table 1

Hypothesis testing specifically resulted in the corrected item-total correlation between perceptions of hospital services, perceptions of hospital quality and perceptions of quality of medical personnel.

3.1 | Perceived Aspects of Hospital Services

Most of the respondents on average think that hospital services in Singapore affect their intention to seek treatment in Singapore. Although the effect is small compared to respondents' perceptions of the quality of the hospital and the quality of medical personnel (mean $r = 0.423$ Sig = 0.098). This is different from the research conducted by (Abraham 2015) that the quality of service (reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, tangible) simultaneously and partially has a positive and significant effect on patient satisfaction.

The impact is positive but small compared to the quality of hospitals and the quality of medical personnel. This means that they can continue to seek treatment at Indonesian hospitals if hospital services in Indonesia are considered to be as good as hospitals in Singapore considering distance and cost. Although geographically Singapore is close to Indonesia. This study supports Milne's (2010) research that patients seek and use medical services, including the distance and proximity of the location of treatment facilities from the patient's residence, ethnicity, age, and education level. Patients tend to choose a treatment

location that is close to the place of residence to overcome their health problems, especially if the patient is in an emergency case. Cockcroft, and Anderson (2012) in their research that cost is also a factor that determines patient choices in seeking and using medical services. This small effect means that patients may choose to seek treatment in Indonesia rather than abroad. This is because, the proximity of the location and the costs estimated by the patient are cheaper and do not require additional costs, such as; the cost of tickets and accommodation, the patient must also prepare documents, such as a passport and, most importantly, when leaving for abroad, the patient's condition must be healthy enough to travel.

In general, it can be concluded that the hospital service factor in Singapore has a very small and significant effect on the intention to seek treatment at Singapore.

3.2 | Perceived Aspects of Hospital Quality

The mean total correlation ($r = 0.659$. Sig. = 0.012) shows that the perception of hospital quality has a significant effect on the patient's intention to seek treatment in Singapore. Sophisticated and modern hospital facilities and technology are the dominant factors for patients choosing to seek treatment in Singapore with the choice of hospitals in Singapore. The hospital quality package includes better services provided to patients; package health services; treatment of patients is done faster; cheaper costs; better friendliness or skills of medical personnel; and lastly is a recommendation from a domestic doctor.

The patient's perception of the quality of the hospital has an impact on the patient's intention to seek treatment abroad. The biggest correlation of these indicators is institutional trust, which is trust in medical institutions or systems and doctors in general who are influenced by the media and social institutions, such as hospitals. (Camacho, Dugan, Balkrishnan, 2002). A patient's trust in a doctor will also affect his confidence in the hospital, health program plans, and doctors who work in the medical institution.

The quality of hospitals in Singapore is correlated with indicators of openness to open and informative patient medical information which will make it easier

TABLE 1: Model Relationship Test Results

Hypothesis	Hypothesis Statement	Sig. Mean α		
		ρ	R	
H1	The better the perception of the services of a hospital, the higher the intention to seek treatment in Singapore	.098	0.423	0.4635
H2	The better the perception of the quality of a hospital, the higher the intention to seek treatment in Singapore	.012	0.659	0.7879
H3	The better the perception of the quality of medical personnel from a hospital, the higher the intensity for treatment in Singapore.	.007	0.916	0.9240

Source: primary data processed, 2020

for patients to know the choice of hospital for their treatment. The professionalism of doctors on duty at the hospital through medical appointments will make it easier for patients to consult at hospitals in Singapore.

3.3 | Perceived Aspects of the Quality of Medical Personnel

The mean total correlation ($r = 0.916$, Sig. 0.007) shows that the quality factor of medical personnel in Singapore has the largest significant effect compared to the perception of hospital services and the quality of hospitals on the intention to seek treatment in Singapore. Some of the respondents thought that the reason for the patient to go to Singapore was due to the ability and quality of the medical personnel. Even Indonesian doctors who recommend their patients to undergo treatment in Singapore.

Indonesian medical personnel are less able to build good relationships between their patients. Meanwhile, to build trust between patients and communication between patients and medical personnel can affect the level of patient satisfaction and interest in treatment. The quality of medical personnel in Indonesia is often underestimated. This is evidenced by the existence of malpractice in Indonesia.

The results of this study indicate that the quality of medical personnel is the dominant factor that causes people to seek treatment in Singapore. Patient trust in the ability of doctors in Singapore to cope with patient diseases, patients believe in the accuracy of

the diagnosis given by foreign doctors, transparency of diagnosis results by foreign doctors, patients need excellent service; and patients feel better treated abroad sooner.

The results of this initial survey and the results of the correlation test showed that the perception factor of the quality of medical personnel had a significantly greater effect than the perception of hospital services and hospital quality. Respondents stated that the patient went to Singapore for several reasons, namely; medical facilities in these countries are more sophisticated, modern and more complete. Medical personnel, both doctors and nurses, are friendly, polite, professional and motivate patients. However, the most prominent reason among patients who decide to seek treatment abroad is the belief that doctors in Singapore are better in terms of competence and service.

The quality of medical personnel greatly influences the patient's intention to seek treatment abroad, one of the indicators is interpersonal trust, which is trust in a health provider, such as in a doctor that is built through repeated interactions where there is an expectation about the behavior of a trusted person who can be tested from time to time. , personal experiences and individual personalities are the basis of interpersonal trust, (Pearson and Raeke, 2000). This means that the patient's trust in doctors with professional expertise. This study supports the research of Hall, Dugan, Zheng (2012), that trust is a patient's willingness to seek medical services, express sensitive information to doctors, submit

medication to doctors, and willingness to follow doctor recommendations.⁴ Trust in doctors as a truster (patient) optimist in a vulnerable condition where the truster (patient) trusts the trustee (doctor) to pay attention to the interests of the truster (patient). In the research of Pearson and Raeke (2000) that trust is the main element in the patient-doctor interpersonal relationship, which includes a set of patient beliefs or expectations that the doctor will act to solve the patient's medical problems. Patients who have high trust in doctors in general will also trust a doctor when they first meet (Hall, Ca-macho, Dugan, and Balkrishnan, 2002a). This is because, at the start of a patient-physician relationship, interpersonal beliefs are based on common system features and the patient's general attitude toward the doctor more generally (Mechanic and Schlesinger, 1996).

In Indonesia, the quality of doctors is low because the service is often unsatisfactory, and doctors do not want to cooperate with other colleagues. In fact, medical treatment for patients must be done together. Meanwhile, dr. Eric Halim Sumampow, who serves as Chair of the Infection Control Committee and Resident Specialist of Internal Medicine at the Columbia Asia Hospital in Medan also said that the health service system was less effective. Doctors are still working in several hospitals which causes the services provided by doctors to patients are not optimal because doctors are not focused and are even late in treating patients due to situational factors. This research supports the statement of the former Chairman of the Indonesian Doctors Association Board of Directors that the attitude of doctors has not put the interests of patients as top priority. In addition, the doctor's ability to communicate and the doctor's willingness to explain to patients or their families is still weak (Kartono Mohamad, 2020). As an expert in community medicine, namely Dr. dr. Herqutanto, MPH, MARS, that the communication problem of doctors in Indonesia has triggered a large number of patients to seek medical treatment abroad.

The triggering factor for patients to seek medical treatment is because in Indonesia the ratio of the number of doctors is not equal or not equal to the number of patients treated by doctors (1:52). The

number of patients is more than the number of doctors. every 1 doctor handles 52 patients (Surabaya General Hospital, 2020). The large number of patients treated by 1 doctor in Indonesia has an impact on the doctor's performance that is not optimal in providing services to patients. Where this condition can cause doctors to experience burnout. Burnout is a feeling of fatigue due to demands that are too burdensome for one's energy and abilities where excessive workload causes doctors to feel emotional tension while serving patients (Freudenberger, 2010) also explains that doctors who experience burnout initially have a full commitment and are highly dedicated to serving patients. However, due to tired conditions due to demands that are too burdensome for energy and ability, it causes doctors to tend to experience burnout (Mengel, Holleman, and Fields, 2012).

Another indicator of the patient's perception of the quality of doctors in Singapore is the accuracy and speed of medical personnel in Singapore which is considered to save patients time and money. from the level of education. Respondents, most of whom have tertiary education, have an awareness of the importance of the quality and professionalism of their medical personnel and their rights as patients. The driving factor for the desire of Indonesian patients is influenced by the professionalism and quality of Singaporean medical personnel. Usually Indonesian patients make treatment in Singapore as a second opinion or to have their health checked.

3.4 | Managerial Policies For Hospitals In Singapore

1. Hospitals in Singapore should pay attention to the aspects of hospital services, especially in the aspect of the location of the hospital. Location considerations determine the patient's choice of treatment in Singapore. As a competition, many international standard hospitals have been established in Indonesia.

2. Hospitals in Singapore further improve and develop the quality of medical personnel continuously following the development of increasingly modern technology. This is because the quality factor of

medical personnel in patient handling affects a patient's intention to seek treatment. Even Singapore has been famous for its professional and reliable medical personnel. Maintain loyalty and trust in the quality of medical personnel in Singapore.

3. Singapore hospitals are expected to pay attention to aspects of service quality, especially on the tangible aspect, so that hospitals in Singapore can attract the intentions of Indonesian patients in the midst of competition with hospitals in Indonesia.

4. Singapore must pay attention and continue to develop the quality of its hospital services in terms of tangibles. Because this is a weakness of the quality of service provided by hospitals in Singapore.

3.5 | Managerial Policies For Hospitals In Indonesia

1. Hospitals in Indonesia should pay attention to and improve hospital services, because Indonesia has strategic opportunities in the location of hospitals, especially during an emergency. This is a strength that can be taken from weakness

hospital services in Singapore.

2. Hospitals in Indonesia need to improve, develop, improve and provide qualified medical personnel both medically and the optimal service they provide, especially in the field of patient management to increase the trust of medical personnel to patients, intensive communication between doctors and patients, cooperation between doctors is very necessary to treat the patient. This is because the quality factor of medical personnel affects a patient's intention to seek treatment abroad. If in Indonesia it is able to provide qualified medical personnel who are even able to accept foreign medical personnel and patients from foreign nationals, then Indonesian hospitals can recruit patients who have been seeking treatment abroad for treatment at home and recruit patients from foreign nationals to seek treatment in Indonesia.

3. Hospitals in Indonesia increase the tangible factor because it is one of the opportunities for hospitals in

Indonesia to re-recruit their patients, to reduce the patient's intention to seek treatment abroad, especially Singapore.

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