

Customer Satisfaction in Malaysian Public Healthcare Services

Wan Zulia Zafini Wan Zulkifli^{1,*}, Norshahrizan Nordin^{1,2,3}, Ehab Akhtam Kassab¹

¹Faculty of Business & Communication, Universiti Malaysia Perlis (UniMAP), Perlis, Malaysia

²Healthcare Management – Special Interest Group (HEM – SIG)

³Management of Technology – Special Interest Group (MoTEM – SIG)

ABSTRACT

In this paper, the need and expectation from customer satisfaction in healthcare system in Malaysia has become more pressing due to enlarging demand for public healthcare services and changing societal, economic and culture requirements. This resolution is driven by the goals set under Ministry of Health (MOH, 2023), Malaysia faces more notable challenges and barriers in its healthcare services, which is closely linked to all states issue. The customer satisfaction in healthcare services is heterogeneously tied to the relationship of social support and communication factors. Therefore, developing persistence healthcare systems capable of confronting unpredicted challenges and barriers, such as pandemics and emergency cases, extensive collocations approach that takes into account these multifaceted factors. This paper intentions to introduce a conceptual framework concentrated around social support and communication factors in the context of healthcare satisfaction in Malaysia. This framework highlights the significant of robust social support systems and effective communication resilience in ensuring healthcare service satisfaction. This study clarifies on critical determinants of healthcare service satisfaction, corresponding with the goals set under Ministry of Health (MOH, 2023). It emphasizes the urgent need and demands for healthcare system improvements, cross-sector collaboration, societal, economic and cultural alignment to productively address these multifaceted challenges and barriers, and ensure customer satisfaction of public healthcare services for all. The study employs a quantitative methodology approach, utilizing the self-questionnaires to collect data from healthcare customers randomly. The responses will be comprehensively analyzed using SPSS and Smart-PLS software to resolve dormant variables relationships. By undertaking this substantial study, we target to contribute to the accomplish of customer satisfaction and the overall quality of public healthcare services in Malaysia.

Keywords: Social support, communication, customer satisfaction.

1. INTRODUCTION

Health is progressively considered fundamental to human well-being and foundation of satisfaction societies, cultural and economies. The healthcare platform as uppermost priority for all nations, Malaysia and others countries, and its consequence extends beyond the well-being of society population; that influence the continuous functioning of daily life and stimulate overall societal health (WHO, 2022). However, the healthcare sector faces various unprecedented obstacles, such as rapid epidemiological transitions and also growing financial and regulatory pressures (Li *et al.*, 2022). Many countries were fully surprised in their health systems to preserve human populations during the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 crisis posing various challenges and barriers to global health, as well as other social, cultural, economic, and development aspects, and creating the most undermine conditions for global health in 2019 (Min *et al.*, 2020; Holst, 2020). Despite Malaysia facing transitioning into a post-COVID era, and its impact on healthcare system remains.

* Corresponding authors: wanzuliazafini@gmail.com

In addition, the expansion of public healthcare facilities by increasing of number of public hospitals in Malaysia from 144 units to 146 units in year 2017 till year 2021 respectively are shown in Figure 1 as below.

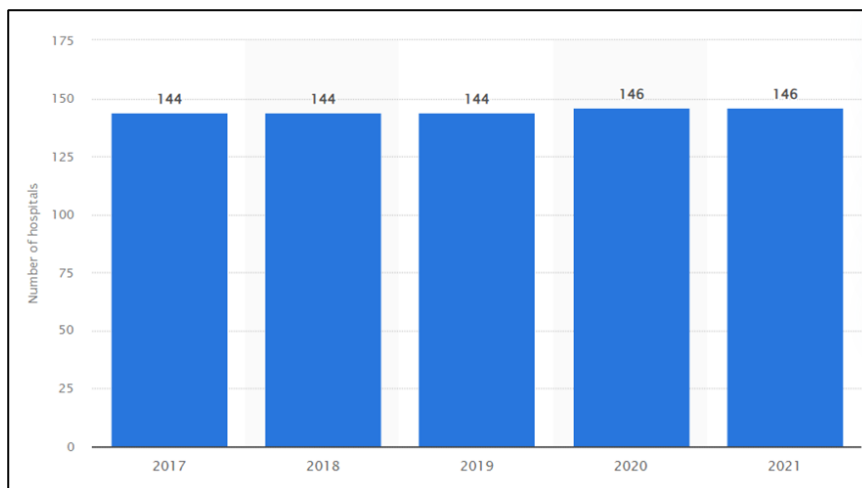


Figure 1. Number of public hospitals in Malaysia from 2017 to 2021.
Source: Statista Research Department (2023)

In conclusion, the customer satisfaction of healthcare services is heterogeneously linked to factors involved of social support and communication. Offering valuable insight that empower healthcare provider to maintain competitiveness that can deal with unforeseen challenges like as pandemics and emergency cases requires a comprehensive approach that considers all these factors. Therefore, this article intention is to examine these factors affecting of social support and communications towards satisfaction among customers in Malaysia that perform the general intentions of the research specific, this research had following objectives:

- i. To determine the relationship between social support and customer satisfaction in healthcare services.
- ii. To examine the relationship between communication and customer satisfaction in healthcare services.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THE HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Social Support

The social support is known as social network proves to be significant to healthcare services (Jorunn Drageset, 2021). Social support can be derived findings of emotional support, practical aids, social community, information and guidance. Thus, general support resource can influence on individual sense of consistency. Therefore, positive association among society in context of abilities, health and quality of life. In order to address health issues, perceived peer support (PPS) is strong connection formed between society for those have share similar experiences of illness and support care provided by patient family, friends, peers, healthcare professionals and other service providers (D. Evett, K. Hutchinson, M. Bierbaum *et al.*, 2021).

Social support is derived as a crucial variable influencing the customer satisfaction of healthcare services within the broader context of satisfaction experience. Particularly, during health crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, these social support association demonstrate instrumental in disseminating information, ensuring consent with public health rules and guidelines, and

supporting emotional and to individuals and also families group touched by the crises. Based on this supposed, we propose the following hypothesis as below:

H1: There is a significant relationship between social support and customer satisfaction in healthcare services.

2.2 Communication

Malaysia country is well known as for its diverse multi-ethnic groups including of the Bumiputera, constituting 61.7% of the population, Chinese at 20.8%, and Indians at 6.2%, which is presented each have their own distinct heritage, culture, and traditions. Patient will be dissatisfied with the public healthcare services if lack of listening to customer, challenging multicultural and multilingual in services.

Likewise, communication factors are a critical dimension of the study exploration, that strongly influence on customer satisfaction in healthcare services. Effective communication among healthcare providers and customers especially for those involved in pre-treatment, during treatment and post-treatment that will enhance overall satisfaction. Moreover, effective communication has potential to address customer satisfaction issue and ultimately contributing to improve quality of Malaysian healthcare systems. Consequently, we propose the following hypothesis as below:

H2: There is a significant relationship between communication and customer satisfaction in healthcare services.

2.3 Conceptual Framework

Based on the reviewed literature and the hypothesis that was proposed, a conceptual framework was introduced and developed to illustrate the integration between the variables in the research. Based on that framework consists two factors, social support (SS) and Communication (C) which are employed as the determinant of customer satisfaction in healthcare services. Figure 2 explains about the conceptual framework of the research.

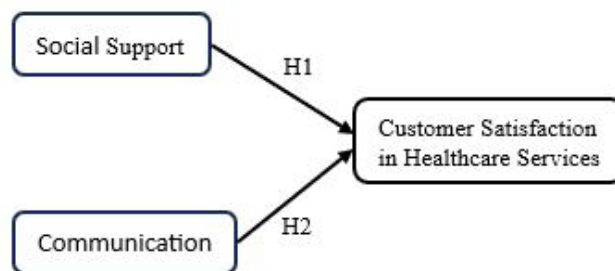


Figure 2. Conceptual framework.

Additionally, the conceptual framework above which has an alignment with past researchers' recommendations. As a result, this study is remarkable because of it has rationally provided a framework within the context of literature that will relief the public healthcare sector in accomplishing improved healthcare system and achieving customer satisfaction as influenced by past research and theories. Therefore, this paper intentions to provide a model that will help Malaysian governments improve and sustain in the public healthcare services.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The result and discussion part are presented a comprehensive analysis of the data collection, emphasizing significant perceptions into the relationship between social support and communication as a key indicator that influencing customer satisfaction in healthcare services.

3.1 Data Collection and Data Analysis

Data collection is crucial process that involves selecting a systematic approach to collect and gather accurate information in correspond with substantial standards to accomplish the study objectives. For this study, the researcher has chosen to distribute self-administered questionnaires, utilizing a quantitative methodology. In this study was employed 5 Likert-point scale as measured in questionnaires.

Table 1 Pilot test

No.	Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items	No. of Respondents
1	Social Support	0.788	10	30
2	Communication	0.908	10	30
3	Customer Satisfaction	0.882	12	30

4. CONCLUSION

This paper excavates into the complex connection of social support and communication in the context of healthcare services satisfaction, with a detailed focus on Malaysia. The study has marked the extreme significant of healthcare system within the global development landscape, impact on societal, economic, and cultural, mostly in the overcome of unprecedented challenges and barriers. The exploration of the Malaysian healthcare sector discloses a desperate need and demands to address health-related affected by enormous pandemic COVID-19; expansion of public hospital facilities was increased; rising cost and increasingly complex need of customers; and lack of listening to customer and challenging complexities of a multicultural and multilingual in context of plural society in Malaysia.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Special thanks to everyone who involve for the development of this colloquium manuscript. We would like to thank to all the respondents for those response throughout complete this survey.

REFERENCE

- [1] Holst, J. (2020). The world expects effective global health interventions: Can global health deliver?. *Global Public Health*, 15(9), 1396-1403.
- [2] Jorunn Drageset. (2021). Social Support. *Health Promotion in Health Care – Vital Theories and Research*. 137. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-63135-211>.
- [3] Li, Z., Shi, J., N., Wang, M., Jin, Y., & Zheng, Z. J. (2022). Temporal trends in the burden of non-communicable diseases in countries with the highest malaria burden, 1990-2019: Evaluating the double burden of non-communicable and communicable diseases in epidemiological transition. *Globalization and Health*, 18(1), 1-9.
- [4] Ministry of Health (MOH) 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023.

- [5] Min Y, Perucci F, UN/DESA policy brief #81: impact of COVID-19 on SDG progress : a statistical perspective; 2020
<https://www.un.org/development/desa/dpad/publication/un-desapolicy-brief-81-impact-of-covid-19-on-sdg-progress-a-statistical-perspective/>.
- [6] World Health Organization. (2023). Global Status Report on Physical Activity 2023: Country Profiles. World Health Organization.