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FACULTY OF ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCE AND POLICY STUDIES

PATIENT'S PERCEPTION TOWARDS SERVICE QUALITY IN
LUYANG HEALTH CLINIC.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In Malaysia, the demand for better quality in health service continues to rise due to several factors such as the growing population, shift of population distribution from rural to urban areas, increase of consumer awareness on health and the rationalization of the healthcare service industry in the country. So, these changes forced the health services to improve their service provided.

Malaysia has started to focus on the healthcare service industry, so that there is a need for the healthcare service quality to be evaluated in order to make it more competitive. Demanding for better quality in healthcare services create a competitive environment among public and private health service industry. Most of the public or consumer chose the better quality of products or services. Due to higher expectations from the consumer, these two sectors compete in order to serve better quality to the consumer because quality is important as it become the determinant of the two sectors to gain success and to sustain long in the sectors.

There are many research conducted on the health service quality where most of the studies are focusing on the patient perceptions and expectations on the service quality. However, there is less number of studies on the service quality in the health clinic where most of the studies conducted on the hospital. There are

currently 2836 health clinic in Malaysia that give health services in every town and village. In Sabah itself 135 health clinics provided while in Kota Kinabalu there are six health clinics. (Ministry of Health, 2010).

The biggest challenge faced by the healthcare service is to define and measure the service quality provided. The term of “service” is defined as performance that consist four characteristics which are intangibility, heterogeneity, inseparability and perish ability. While, the term of “quality” is the comparison of physical appearances such as colour and package of the product with the present standards of the product (Parasuraman et. al, 1985).

In order to measure the service quality, the researchers most commonly used SERVQUAL model which was developed by Parasuraman et al, 1985, 1988 (Irfan and Ijaz, 2011). The service quality would be measured in its responsiveness, reliability, empathy, tangible and assurance.

Moreover, patients’ perception was experience from the past treatment which this will contribute to their willingness to recommend the healthcare institutions to other people. Besides, the patients’ perception is correlated with their satisfaction. As the waiting long time influence the patients’ satisfaction towards the public healthcare institutions.