

## ORIGINAL ARTICLE

### Patient perception of junior interns' professionalism in teaching hospital

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#### ABSTRACT

A doctor's professionalism consists of clinical competence, communication skills, ethical and legal understanding, accountability, altruism, excellence, and humanism, of which the seven pillars of professionalism are applied at the professional level. This research aimed to describe patient perceptions of the professionalism of junior interns at Dustira Teaching Hospital. Data collection occurred in November-December 2022. This research utilized a quantitative approach, employing a descriptive research method with a cross-sectional design. The study results, which included patient characteristics such as age, sex, education level, and length of stay based on the seven pillars, showed the following outcomes: clinical ability (97.6%), communication skills (95.4%), understanding of ethics and law (92%), accountability (94.8%), altruism (90.8%), and excellence (94.4%) all fell within the very good category. In contrast, the aspect of humanism (66.2%) was only rated as quite good. Researchers suggest that institutions and junior interns should re-evaluate the learning and application of the professionalism among junior interns. While aspects of humanism are generally considered positive, there is still room for improvement. Therefore, further learning and re-evaluation regarding the professionalism aspect of humanism can be beneficial.

**Keyword:** Junior Intern, patient, professionalism.

Received: 2024-10-03, Revised: 2024-10-19 Accepted: 2024-10-28, Published: 2024-10-31.

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How to cite :

Taufan, A., Grace, A. and Nugraha, B.A. (2024) "Patient perception of junior interns' professionalism in teaching hospital", Acta Medical and Health Sciences, 3(2),p75-83.

Doi: <https://doi.org/10.35990/amhs.v3n2.p75-83>

## INTRODUCTION

Professionalism is an act of behavior that is characteristic of a profession or a professional person. Professionalism can fuel one's journey to continually improve performance and refine one's skills over time. Professionalism is considered an attitude in conjunction with behaviour. Thus, professionalism is a skill that can be practiced and learned over time.<sup>1-3</sup>

A doctor is is a medical school graduate, skilled in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. The journey to becoming a doctor is long and rigorous, starting with becoming a medical student and progressing to being a coassistant. All the knowledge and skills obtained throughout the learning process will eventually be evaluated in order to earn their medical degree.<sup>4</sup>

After transitioning from medical student to coassistant, the learning process significantly changes. Unlike undergraduate studies, which primarily take place on campus, junior interns gain practical experience in a variety of settings, including main teaching hospitals, affiliated institutions, and puskesmas (community health centers).<sup>5</sup>

## METHODS AND SUBJECT

This study used a quantitative approach with a descriptive research method with a cross-sectional design to assess patients' perceptions of the professionalism of co-assistants at Teaching Hospital Dustira. The questionnaire responses were evaluated using a Likert scale, which included options for Strongly Disagree (STS), Disagree (TS), Somewhat Disagree (KS), Agree (S), and Strongly Agree (SS). Each answer had a value based on the scoring pattern. The data was presented in the form of a table with percentages. This research This study received ethical approval and research permission from Teaching Hospital Dustira

No. Etik.RSD/136/XI/2022 on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2022.

### Inclusion Criteria

Patients receiving treatment at Dustira Hospital who voluntarily agreed to participate in the study.

### Exclusion Criteria

Patients who were in the incompetent category.

### Sampling Method

The research sample was drawn using a simple random sampling methodology, which means that each item in the population had the same opportunity and probability of being chosen in the sample based on random numbers.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A total of 72 patients participated in the study, as determined by the sample size calculation. Data collection and results preparation were carried out from November 2022 to December 2022. There were four inpatient rooms that were used as research locations, which had been determined by the Dustira Hospital Ethics Commission. The implementation of the research started with introductions, obtaining approval to become research respondents, and filling out the questionnaire.

### Frequency Distribution of Patient Characteristics

Differences in the age of patients can affect perceptions of co-assistants; if age is accompanied by length of treatment, the longer the treatment, the more often patients meet with junior interns. Patients' perceptions of junior interns are not significantly different based on gender, as this perception is determined by duration of stay. In addition, based on the level of education, patients with higher levels of education demonstrate a more sophisticated understanding of professional standards.

### Characteristics of patients in the Teaching Hospital Dustira Treatment Rooms.

Characteristics	(N=72)	Percentage (%)
<b>Age</b>		
17-25 years	19	26,39%
26 -35 years	14	19,44%
36-45 years	7	9,72%
46-55 years	21	29,17%
56-65 years	9	12,50%
>65 years	2	2,78%
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	28	38,90%
Female	44	61,10%
<b>Education</b>		
SD	21	29,17%
SMP	13	18,06%
SMA/SMK/STM	30	41,67%
S1	8	11,11%
<b>Length of treatment</b>		
<7 hari	68	94,44%
>7 hari	4	5,56%

### Distribution of Patient Perceptions of Junior Interns' Clinical Competence

Table 1 indicates that junior interns' clinical competence was rated as "very good," with an average score of 4.9 across all statements, falling within the 4.21-5.0 range.

The results of this study differ from those of research conducted by

Nurlina et al. in Bandung, which reported that clinical competence was still lacking. This discrepancy was attributed to the application of learning methods during tutorials at the undergraduate level, which hindered junior interns' mastery of clinical competence. Therefore, the learning process at the undergraduate stage needs to be re-evaluated.

**Table 1.** Perception of Junior Interns' Clinical Competence

No	Statement	STS		TS		KS		S		SS		Mean
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1	The Junior Intern is skilled in taking anamnesis (ask complaints) to patients.	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	8	11,1	64	88,9	4,9
2	Skilled Junior Intern perform services or examinations of patients	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	10	13,9	62	86,1	4,9
3	Skilled Junior Intern identify the types of disease and plan their management	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	9	12,5	63	87,5	4,9
4	Junior Intern treat patients in a directed and thorough manner	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	9	12,5	63	87,5	4,9
Mean		0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	9	12,5	63	87,5	4,9
Criteria											Very Good	

**Description of Patient Perception of Junior Interns' Good Communication Skills**

Table 2 indicates that junior interns'

communication skills were rated as "very good," with an average score of 4.77 across all statements, falling within the 4.21-5.0 range.

**Table 2.** Distribution of Patient Perception of Junior Interns' Good Communication Skills

No	Statement	STS		TS		KS		S		SS		Mean
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1	The Junior Intern carefully listens and answers the patient's complaints.	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	15	20,8	57	79,2	4,79
2	Junior Intern provide easy-to-understand, clear, and simple communication during treatment for patients and their families.	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	18	25,0	54	75,0	4,75
3	Junior Intern informs the patient's latest state of affairs to the patient and the patient's family.	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	17	23,6	55	76,4	4,76
4	Junior Intern provide counseling, information, and education to patients quite clearly, and not to beat around the bush.	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	17	23,6	55	76,4	4,76
5	Junior Intern encourage patients to ask questions and not interrupt the patient.	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	15	20,8	57	79,2	4,79
<b>Mean</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0,0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0,0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0,0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>22,8</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>77,2</b>	<b>4,77</b>
											<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Very Good</b>

The results of this study are in line with the research of Nurlina et al., which showed that junior interns were able to communicate well with patients. Medical students at Unjani Faculty of Medicine acquire foundational knowledge and communication skills in their first semester, and each subsequent system block provides opportunities to refine these abilities. As a result, junior interns are well-prepared to apply these skills effectively in clinical settings.<sup>12</sup>

**Description of the Perception Distribution of Ethics and Legal Understandings for Junior Interns**

Distribution of data analysis results Table 3 shows that Junior Interns

understanding of ethics and law is in very good criteria because the average value of all statements is 4.77 in the interval 4.21-5,0.

Based on the results of the research, the aspect of understanding ethics and law is categorized as very good because patients' responses strongly agree with three of the statements; the highest is found in statement number 11, namely junior interns were able to examine patients by paying attention to norms (62.5%). This statement is supported by the research results of Purwanti et al. Patients' healing can be accelerated with a moral, ethical, and professional approach because ethics and morals are closely related to health services.<sup>11</sup>

**Table 3.** Frequency Distribution of Ethics and Legal Understanding

No	Statement	STS		TS		KS		S		SS		Mean
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1	Junior Intern treats patients as people with the same level (not condescending).	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	29	40,3	43	59,7	4,60
2	Junior Intern pays attention to the norm while doing inspection.	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	27	37,5	45	62,5	4,63
3	The Junior Intern explains the advantages and disadvantages of the patient's chosen treatment decision	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	30	41,7	42	58,3	4,58
Mean		0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	29	39,8	43	60,2	4,60
Criteria												Very Good

### Distribution of Patient Perception of Junior Interns' Accountability

The distribution of the research results in Table 4 shows that the respondents' statements are in the "Very Good" category because the average value of all statements is 4.74 in the interval 4.21-5.0. The results of this study are in line with research conducted by Nurlina et al., which shows that the accountability of junior interns can be said to be good. In practically every block, students at the

Unjani Faculty of Medicine learn about medical skills. They are prepared to take responsibility for managing cases or diseases presented by patients. In addition, at the undergraduate stage, students gain knowledge about aspects of bioethics, legal informed consent, confidentiality, and medical records. This comprehensive training equips students to assume responsibility for patient care, ultimately leading to positive patient perceptions of their accountability as junior interns.

**Table 4.** Frequency Distribution of Patient Perception of Junior Interns Accountability

No	Statement	STS		TS		KS		S		SS		Mean
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1	Junior Intern treats patients precisely and thoroughly.	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	15	20,8	57	79,2	4,79
2	Co-Assistant maintains cleanliness and comfort in the patient area.	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	21	29,2	51	70,8	4,71
3	Junior Intern maintains patient confidentiality	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	20	27,8	52	72,2	4,72
Mean		0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	19	25,9	53	74,1	4,74
Criteria												Very Good

**Distribution of Patient Perception of Junior Interns' Altruism**

The distribution of the research results in Table 5 shows that the

respondents' statements are in the "Very Good" category because the average value of all statements is 4.54 in the interval 4.21-5.0.

**Table 5. Frequency Distribution of Patient Perception of Junior Interns' Altruism**

No	Statement	STS		TS		KS		S		SS		Mean
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1	Junior Intern puts the interests of his patients before his own.	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	27	37.5	45	62.5	4.63
2	Junior Intern carries out examinations and services in a calm and unhurried manner.	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	25	34.7	47	65.3	4.65
3	Junior Intern give patients the opportunity to get a second opinion.	0	0	0	0	10	13.9	30	41.7	32	44.4	4.31
4	Co-Assistant respects decisions made by patients.	0	0	0	0	0	0.0	32	44.4	40	55.6	4.56
Mean		0	0.0	0	0.0	3	3.5	29	39.6	41	56.9	4.54
Criteria											Very Good	

The results of Lumbantobing's research in Jakarta state that the advantage of having an altruistic attitude is that patients will get physical and psychological health, as well as cognitive. In addition, altruism can encourage junior interns to continue to do good so that this cycle will continue. At the Unjani Faculty of Medicine, students and junior interns have received PBHL module learning through both the direct curriculum and the hidden curriculum, effectively training them to prioritize patients' interests.

**Distribution of Patient Perception of Junior Interns' Excellence**

The distribution of the research results in Table 6 shows that the respondents' statements are in the "Very

Good" category because the average value of all statements is 4.72 in the interval 4.21-5.0.

Based on the table, it can be concluded that the results of this study are in line with the results of previous research by Iffadah et al., which demonstrated the strong performance of junior interns. Junior interns at the Unjani Faculty of Medicine can carry out examinations without hesitation and can answer questions from patients because they have gained knowledge at the undergraduate level. In addition, students are required to participate in Off-Campus Learning (PLK) in accordance with the ongoing block, which will provide hands-on opportunities to interact with the community, further enhancing their clinical skills and professional development.<sup>39</sup>

**Table 6.** Frequency Distribution of Patient Perception of Junior Interns' Excellence

No	Statement	STS		TS		KS		S		SS		Mean
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1	Junior Interns do not hesitate when they take action on patients.	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	20	27,8	52	72,2	4,72
2	Junior Interns pay attention to clinical educators or colleagues when taking action on patients.	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	19	26,4	53	73,6	4,74
3	Junior Interns can answer questions posed by patients.	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	21	29,2	51	70,8	4,71
	Mean	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	20	27,8	52	72,2	4,72
		Criteria										Very Good

### Frequency Distribution of Patient Perception of Junior Interns' Excellence

The distribution of the research results in the table shows that the respondents' statements are in the "fairly good" category because the average value of all statements is 3.31 in the interval 2.61-3.40.

According to the results of the research above, it is inversely proportional to the results of Iffadah et al. In this study, the humanism aspect of Junior Intern at Unisba was already in the good category. However, the results of the above research are supported by Binteriawati et al., who stated that cultural competence in Indonesia has not been well developed. Cultural competence is a way for someone to be aware of sensations, thoughts, and their environment without being

influenced by things that they should not. Students at the Unjani Faculty of Medicine should have received cultural competence material in the second semester as part of the PBHL module group discussion of cultural competence situations. However, this approach appears to be insufficient in significantly enhancing students' sensitivity toward cultural competence. Therefore, exposure to cultural competence is needed in the medical curriculum. To enhance cultural competence, the following strategies are recommended: (a) involving patients' families, (b) utilizing translators or spokespersons, (c) forming culturally diverse groups of junior interns, and (d) studying, familiarizing oneself with, and deeply understanding cultural diversity.

**Table 7.** Frequency Distribution of Humanism Perception

No	Statement	STS		TS		KS		S		SS		Mean
		N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	
1	Junior Intern greets patients in a friendly and warm manner.	3	4,2	9	12,5	41	56,9	6	8,3	13	18,1	3,24
2	Junior Intern introduces himself and obtains permission before conducting a history or examination.	5	6,9	7	9,7	34	47,2	10	13,9	16	22,2	3,34
3	Junior Intern shows respect, and courtesy towards patients and families.	2	2,8	4	5,6	38	52,8	11	15,3	17	23,6	3,51
4	Junior Intern is well-groomed, neat, and polite.	3	4,2	11	15,3	27	37,5	18	25,0	11	15,3	3,15
	Mean	3	4,5	8	10,8	35	48,6	11	15,6	14	19,8	3,31
		Criteria										Good Enough

## CONCLUSION

Based on research conducted on 72 respondents regarding patient perceptions of the professionalism of junior interns at Teaching Hospital Dustira, the results revealed several key findings. The majority of patients were aged 46–55 years, accounting for 21 individuals (29.17%). In terms of gender, there were 44 women (61.10%). Regarding the length of stay, the majority of patients were treated for < 7 days, accounting for 68 people (94.44%). In terms of the level of education, it was found that the majority of patients with SMA/SMK/STM education were 30 people (41.67%).

The overall patient perception of the professionalism of junior interns at Teaching Hospital Dustira is very positive, with 90.2% rating it as "very good." When analyzed across the seven pillars of professionalism, the results are as follows: Clinical competence was rated "very good" at 97.6%; communication skills were also "very good" at 95.4%; ethics and legal understanding received a "very good" rating of 92%; accountability was rated "very good" at 94.8%; altruism achieved a "very good" rating of 90.8%; excellence was rated "very good" at 94.4%. However, humanism was rated "quite good" at 66.2%.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Acknowledgments to the professionals who contributed to this research, as well as to the Teaching Hospital Dustira for providing the opportunity to serve as a research site.

## DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest in all parties involved both with patients and other parties in this study.

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