

Analysis of Healthcare Quality with Patient Satisfaction and Loyalty in Outpatient Care: A Systematic Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

The quality of health services is one of the important factors that affect the level of patient satisfaction and loyalty, especially in outpatient services. High patient satisfaction can increase the patient's trust and inclination to return to health services and recommend them to others. Therefore, a comprehensive study is needed on the relationship between the quality of health services and outpatient satisfaction and loyalty. This study aims to analyze the relationship between the quality of health services and outpatient satisfaction and loyalty through the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach. This study uses the Systematic Literature Review method by searching scientific articles obtained from various databases such as Google Scholar, PubMed, ScienceDirect. The article selection process is carried out based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria that have been set, including articles that discuss the quality of health services, patient satisfaction, and outpatient loyalty, and are published within a certain time frame. The results of the study showed that the quality of health services has a positive and significant relationship with outpatient satisfaction. The dimensions of service quality that most often affect patient satisfaction include reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and physical evidence (tangibles). Improving service quality in various quality dimensions can increase patient satisfaction which ultimately encourages patient loyalty to health care facilities. These findings can be the basis for health facility managers in designing strategies to improve service quality that are oriented to the needs and expectations of patients.

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INTRODUCTION

The quality of health services is one of the important indicators in assessing the success of health service delivery, especially in outpatient services which are the main door for interaction between patients and health facilities. The increasing public demand for fast, safe, effective, and patient-oriented services encourages health facilities to continue to improve the quality of their services. In an era of increasingly fierce competition, the quality of service not only affects clinical outcomes, but also determines patients' perception of the services received (Hamdan, 2020).

Outpatient services have a strategic role in the health care system because most patients access services through this unit for the first time. The quality of outpatient services is influenced by various factors, such as

the competence of health workers, speed of service, ease of administration, effective communication, physical facilities, and the ability of hospitals to meet the needs and expectations of patients. When the quality of service provided meets or exceeds the patient's expectations, the level of patient satisfaction will increase (Marpaung, 2025).

Patient satisfaction is the main indicator that is often used to evaluate the quality of health services. Satisfaction arises when patients compare expectations before receiving services with real experiences gained during the health care process. Patients who feel satisfied tend to have a positive perception of the hospital, increase trust in health workers, and have a tendency to return to using the same services in the future (Olesen, 2022).

In addition to satisfaction, patient loyalty is an increasingly important aspect in the management of modern healthcare facilities. Patient loyalty reflects a patient's commitment to continue to use a particular healthcare service on an ongoing basis and recommends it to others. Loyalty not only provides economic benefits for hospitals through increased repeat visits, but also strengthens the image and competitiveness of health service organizations (Pradita, 2025).

Various studies show that the quality of health services has a significant relationship with patient satisfaction. The dimension of service quality that is often used in the evaluation of health services is the SERVQUAL model which includes tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. These five dimensions have been proven to contribute to shaping patients' perceptions of the quality of service received (Rahmat, 2024).

Furthermore, a number of studies have found that patient satisfaction plays a mediating variable between service quality and patient loyalty. This means that good service quality does not always directly generate loyalty, but first increases patient satisfaction which then encourages the formation of loyalty. This relationship shows that improving the quality of service is the main strategy in maintaining Patients and improving the sustainability of health services (Sinaga, 2026). In the context of outpatient services,

Factors such as wait times, ease of enrollment, quality of communication of healthcare workers, convenience of facilities, and accessibility of services are important determinants that affect patient satisfaction and loyalty. Outpatients generally have high expectations of service efficiency because they do not undergo treatment for a long time like inpatients. Therefore, service quality management in outpatient units is a priority for many hospitals (Wati, 2026).

The development of information technology has also changed patients' expectations of health services. The implementation of digital systems such as online registration, electronic medical records, telemedicine, and application-based information services has become part of efforts to improve service quality. Recent studies show that e-service quality contributes to increasing patient satisfaction and loyalty because it provides convenience, speed, and efficiency in accessing health services (Wulandari, 2024).

Although many studies have been conducted on the quality of service, satisfaction, and patient loyalty, the results of the available studies still show variations in the factors that influence and the strength of the relationship between these variables. Differences in the characteristics of health facilities, community culture, health financing systems, and research methods used lead to the need for a more comprehensive synthesis of scientific evidence to obtain a complete picture of the relationship between the quality of health services and outpatient satisfaction and loyalty (Yadav, 2026).

Based on this description, a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) is needed to identify, analyze, and synthesize research results that discuss the relationship between health service quality and outpatient satisfaction and loyalty. The results of this study are expected to provide a scientific basis for policy makers and management of health facilities in designing strategies to improve the quality of services oriented towards patient satisfaction and loyalty so that they are able to Improving the quality of health services in a sustainable manner.

METHOD

This study is a systematic review that refers to the guidelines of Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA). The purpose of this study is to identify, evaluate, and systematically synthesize scientific findings related to health service quality, patient satisfaction, and outpatient loyalty. Library searches are carried out through several electronic databases, including Google Scholar and Pubmed to capture articles published in 2021 to April 2026. The article selection process is carried out through several stages, namely: identification and filtering based on titles and abstracts, followed by an assessment of the feasibility of full-text articles based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. All stages of selection were documented using the PRISMA flowchart. The keywords used in the search were health service quality, patient satisfaction, and outpatient loyalty, and were published in a certain time frame. The inclusion criteria in this study include: 1) articles on the results of empirical research on health service quality, patient satisfaction, and outpatient loyalty, 2) research that discusses hospital outpatient services, 3) articles in Indonesian or English, 4) published in peer-reviewed journals and relevant to the research focus. The exclusion criteria include articles that are not in the context of hospital services. Articles that passed the selection were then analyzed descriptively and synthesized narratively.

RESULTS

The process of selecting articles in this study follows the systematic flow described in the following PRISMA diagram. This diagram shows the stages of identification, screening, eligibility assessment, and final selection of articles included in the systematic review. Out of a total of 1,230 articles identified, 8 articles were found to meet the criteria and were included in the final analysis.

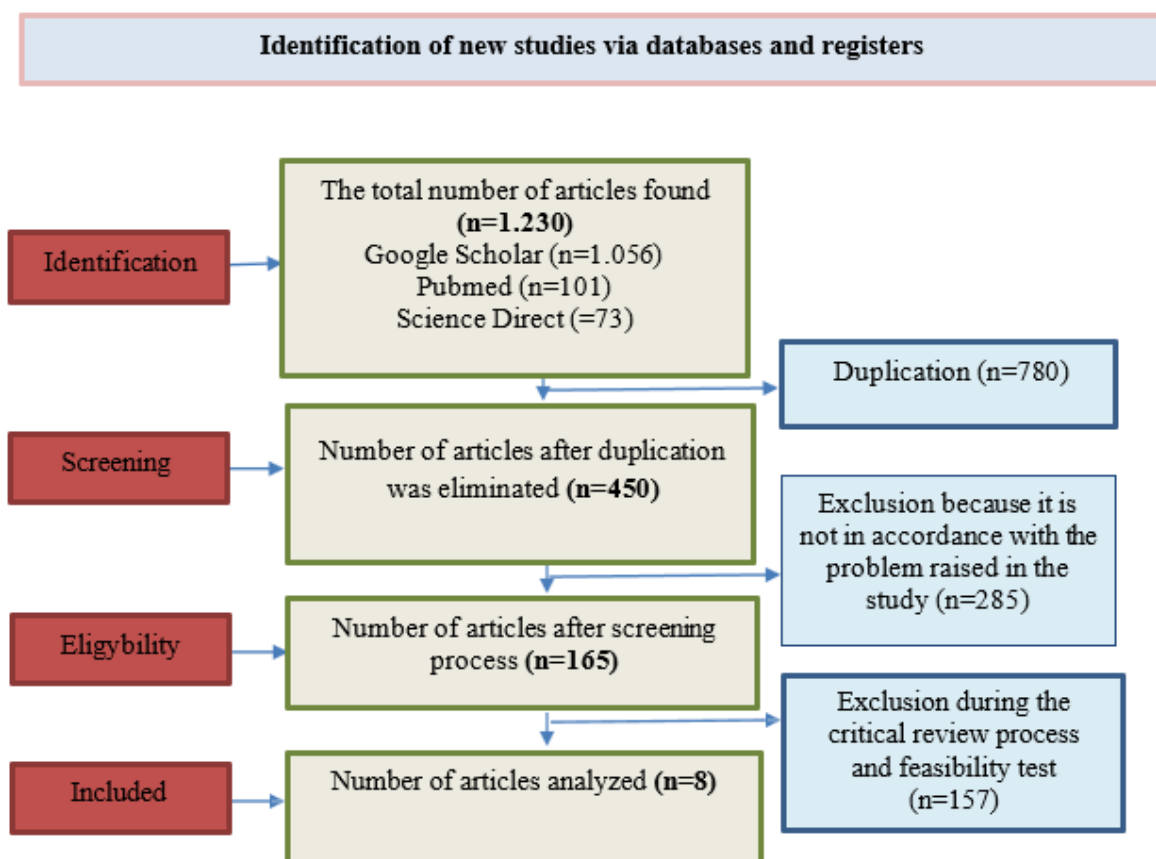


Figure 1. PRISMA (Search and Screening Strategy) of literature review

Table 1. Article Results

No	Author & Year	Research Objectives	Method	Research Results
1	Nguyen and al. (2021)	Analyze quality relationships service, satisfaction, and loyalty of hospital patients in Vietnam.	Kuantitatif, cross-sectional, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).	The quality of service has a significant effect on patient satisfaction and loyalty. Satisfaction has been proven to mediate the relationship between service quality and patient loyalty.
2	Isa Gül, Helvacioğlu, & Saracli (2023)	Knowing the influence of quality service to patient satisfaction and loyalty in outpatient pharmacy services in Turkey.	Quantitative, survey, SEM.	The quality of service has a direct influence on patient satisfaction and indirectly increases loyalty through patient satisfaction.
3	Swathi, Barkur, & Same (2023)	Assessing the influence of health service quality on patient satisfaction and service outcomes.	Quantitative, survey cross-sectional.	The dimensions of service quality such as <i>reliability</i> and <i>responsiveness</i> have a significant effect on patient satisfaction. High satisfaction increases trust and the intention to return to treatment.
4	São Paulo and al. (2023)	To find out the influence of the dimension of service quality on outpatient satisfaction.	Kuantitatif, cross-sectional.	Tangible, <i>reliability</i> , <i>responsiveness</i> , <i>assurance</i> , and <i>Empathy</i> has a positive effect on outpatient satisfaction.
5	Doddy & Squirting (2023)	Analyzing the influence of quality service to loyalty through patient satisfaction.	Quantitative, survey.	Patient satisfaction has been shown to be an intervening variable that strengthens quality relationships service with patient loyalty.
6	Razzaq and al. (2024)	Analyzing the influence of quality service to patient loyalty through patient relationship management mediation.	Quantitative, SEM.	The quality of service has a significant effect on patient loyalty. Loyalty increases through satisfaction of the patient's relationship with the hospital and a good image of the hospital.
7	Cahyanti (2024)	To find out the influence of trust and satisfaction on outpatient loyalty.	Kuantitatif, cross-sectional.	Patient satisfaction and trust have a positive influence on patient loyalty. Satisfied patients are more likely to make repeat visits.
8	Setyaningrum, Sariatmi, & Arso (2024)	Measuring Patient satisfaction with the quality of outpatient services based on model Donabedian.	Descriptive quantitative.	The quality of service in terms of structure, process, and outcome is related to the level of outpatient satisfaction. Satisfaction is an important indicator in the formation of patient loyalty.

Based on eight journals reviewed, it was found that the quality of health services has a significant relationship with outpatient satisfaction. The dimensions of service quality that are most often influential are reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. In addition, most studies show that patient satisfaction plays a mediating variable between service quality and patient loyalty. Patients who are satisfied with hospital services tend to do revisits, recommend hospitals to others, and maintain the use of health services at the same facility. The results of the study also showed that additional factors such as patient trust, hospital image, patient relationship management, and patient experience can strengthen patient loyalty. Therefore, continuous improvement of the quality of health services is the main strategy in increasing outpatient satisfaction and loyalty.

DISCUSSION

Based on the results of a review of various journals, it was found that the quality of health services has a significant relationship with patient satisfaction, which in turn affects the loyalty of outpatients. The quality of service is one of the main indicators in assessing the success of health services because patients not only assess the results of treatment, but also the experience while receiving services.

1. The Relationship between Service Quality and Outpatient Satisfaction

The majority of studies show that the dimensions of service quality consisting of tangible (physical evidence), reliability (reliability), responsiveness (responsiveness), assurance (guarantee), and empathy (empathy) have a positive effect on patient satisfaction. The SERVQUAL model is still the most widely used framework to measure patients' perceptions of the quality of health services (Ferreira, 2023).

Outpatients tend to be satisfied if they get fast service, competent health workers, clear communication, and a comfortable and clean facility environment. In addition, short waiting times and ease of administration are also important factors that affect patient satisfaction levels (Harahap, 2021). The findings of Ferreira et al. (2023) show that the quality of medical services, communication between health workers and patients, and the ability of health workers to provide information are the dominant factors that determine patient satisfaction. High satisfaction will increase positive perception of health care facilities.

2. Patient Satisfaction as a Loyalty Mediator

The results of the study show that patient satisfaction plays a role as a mediating variable between service quality and patient loyalty. Satisfied patients tend to have a desire to return to the same health services when they need services in the future. In addition, they are also more willing to recommend health facilities to their families and relatives (Setyaningrum, 2024). Patient loyalty is not only reflected in revisit intention, but also in patient trust in health institutions and a commitment to continue using services even though there are alternative health facilities. Therefore, patient satisfaction is a strategic factor in maintaining the sustainability of health service organizations (Subagja, 2023).

3. Factors Affecting Patient Loyalty

Pelawinta (2021) explained several factors that have been consistently found to affect outpatient loyalty including:

1. Quality Service Energy health, especially the competence of doctors and nurses.
2. Empathy and good interpersonal communication.
3. Fast service and short lead time.
4. Ease of access to services and administrative systems.
5. Convenience Facilities and service environment.
6. Patient safety and implementation of service quality standards.

Recent research also shows that the application of digital technologies such as online registration, telemedicine, and integrated health information systems can improve the patient experience so that it has a positive impact on satisfaction and loyalty.

4. Implications for Outpatient Services

The findings of this systematic literature review show that improving the quality of health services needs to be carried out in a sustainable manner through a patient-centered care approach. Hospitals and health care facilities must focus on the needs and expectations of patients by improving the competence of health workers, improving the administrative service system, minimizing waiting times, and improving the quality of communication between health workers and patients (Ramadhan, 2023). With the improvement of service quality, patient satisfaction will increase and ultimately form patient loyalty. This loyalty can provide long-term benefits in the form of increased repeat visits, word-of-mouth recommendations, and improved image and competitiveness of health facilities.

CONCLUSION

The quality of health services is the main factor that affects the satisfaction and loyalty of outpatients. Improving the quality of service in various quality dimensions can increase patient satisfaction which ultimately encourages patient loyalty to health service facilities. These findings can be the basis for health facility managers in designing strategies to improve service quality that are oriented to the needs and expectations of patients.

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