

Improving Oral and Dental Healthcare Quality Management to Enhance Patient Satisfaction in Hospitals: A Systematic Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

The quality of dental and oral health services is a crucial component in enhancing hospital service quality, as it directly impacts patient experience, trust, and satisfaction. Effective quality management is essential to ensure that services are safe, effective, timely, patient-oriented, and aligned with professional standards. This study aims to analyze and synthesize scientific evidence regarding the implementation of quality management in dental and oral health services and its impact on increasing patient satisfaction in hospitals. A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) design utilizing the PRISMA approach was employed. Literature was obtained through searches of scientific databases using keywords related to dental and oral health services, quality management, service quality, patient satisfaction, and hospitals. Selected articles consisted of quantitative studies addressing dental and oral health service quality and patient satisfaction, published within the researcher-defined timeframe, and available in full text. The selection process was based on inclusion and exclusion criteria; subsequently, data were extracted, assessed for methodological quality, and narratively synthesized. The synthesis indicates that improvements in dental and oral health service quality management are associated with increased patient satisfaction. Consistently contributing factors include service reliability, healthcare worker responsiveness, professional assurance and competence, empathy, effective communication, facility availability, environmental cleanliness, waiting times, and ease of access. Key strategies for enhancing patient experience include implementing quality standards, conducting periodic satisfaction evaluations, strengthening healthcare worker competence, and pursuing continuous improvement. In conclusion, integrated and patient-oriented quality management plays a vital role in boosting patient satisfaction with hospital-based dental and oral health services. Strengthening quality evaluation systems and continuous quality improvement efforts is essential to ensure the delivery of safe, effective, responsive, and patient-centered care.

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INTRODUCTION

Oral health is an integral part of overall health and plays a crucial role in supporting an individual's quality of life. Oral health issues impact not only chewing, speaking, and appearance but also a person's comfort, productivity, psychological well-being, and social interactions. Consequently, oral health services must be positioned as a vital component of the hospital healthcare system. Hospitals are expected not only to provide safe and effective clinical care but also to ensure that services are high-quality, responsive, patient-oriented, and capable of meeting patient expectations (Alamsyah, 2022).

Evolving public healthcare needs have driven a shift in the hospital service paradigm from a provider-oriented approach toward patient-centered care. In the context of oral health services, patients evaluate success based not only on the clinical outcomes of medical or dental procedures but also on their overall service experience. Factors such as ease of access, waiting times, facility comfort, staff friendliness, dentist communication, information clarity, attentiveness to patient needs, and service speed shape the patient's perception of service quality. Therefore, improving oral health service quality requires a comprehensive approach addressing both clinical and managerial aspects (Artamevia, 2023).

Healthcare quality management is a systematic approach aimed at ensuring that all service processes adhere to standards and deliver care that is safe, effective, efficient, patient-oriented, timely, and continuous. In hospital oral health services, quality management encompasses service planning, the implementation of standard operating procedures, workforce competence, facility and infrastructure management, patient safety, risk control, performance evaluation, complaint management, and patient satisfaction measurement. Thus, quality improvement cannot rely solely on enhancing the clinical skills of healthcare professionals; it also requires strengthening management systems capable of identifying service gaps and driving continuous improvement (Novianingrum, 2025).

Patient satisfaction is a key indicator for assessing the quality of healthcare services. Satisfaction arises when a patient's perception of the service received meets or exceeds their pre-service expectations. In the context of oral and dental healthcare, patient satisfaction is particularly significant because the treatment process often entails repeated interactions between the patient and the dentist or other healthcare professionals. Research by Alamsyah et al. (2022) demonstrated a link between the quality of oral and dental healthcare services and the satisfaction of BPJS patients at the Maridan Community Health Center (Puskesmas). The study indicated that the dimensions of tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy could be used to characterize patient perceptions of service quality (Nurhasanah, 2025).

The SERVQUAL approach—encompassing tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy—is a widely used framework for evaluating service quality from the patient's perspective. This approach is relevant to oral and dental services as it enables healthcare facilities to identify service aspects that meet patient expectations and those requiring improvement. A systematic literature review by Yanti and Supriatna (2023) regarding specialized dental hospitals showed that service quality, comprising the five SERVQUAL dimensions, is associated with patient satisfaction. These findings reinforce the importance of managing service quality as a strategy to enhance patient experience and satisfaction (Nuryanti, 2024).

Empirical evidence in Indonesia also indicates that the quality of oral and dental services is not always optimal. For instance, Artamevia et al. (2023) conducted a study on patient satisfaction regarding oral and dental service quality in independent practices run by dental therapists. Their results revealed variations in satisfaction levels across different service dimensions. This situation illustrates that service quality is a multidimensional construct; therefore, improving it requires the simultaneous evaluation of various service components. Consequently, healthcare facilities need quality measurement mechanisms capable of capturing the patient's experience holistically, rather than merely assessing the success of clinical procedures (Simanjuntak, 2024).

A literature review conducted by Simanjuntak et al. (2024) further reinforces the link between service quality and patient satisfaction in oral healthcare. The literature review examines research on oral healthcare services across both public and private sectors, emphasizing the importance of equitable service quality in supporting oral healthcare aimed at achieving universal health coverage. The findings indicate that service quality and patient satisfaction require attention in both public and private healthcare facilities. This demonstrates that improving oral healthcare quality is a strategic management agenda that transcends the ownership type of the healthcare facility (Yanti, 2023).

At the hospital level, research evidence also indicates a link between the quality of oral and dental care services and patient satisfaction. Nurhasanah et al. (2025) found a significant relationship between oral and dental health services and patient satisfaction levels at the Prima Medan Dental and Oral Hospital (RSGM). The study revealed that the majority of respondents rated the oral and dental services as "good," and most patients fell into the "satisfied" category. However, these results also underscore the importance of maintaining quality and conducting periodic patient satisfaction surveys as part of efforts to improve service quality (Denilson, 2025).

Although various studies have demonstrated a link between service quality and patient satisfaction, research findings still show variations regarding the most dominant factors across different healthcare facilities. Through a systematic literature review, Novianingrum et al. (2025) identified reliability, empathy, responsiveness, dentist communication, and the quality of clinical interactions as the primary determinants of dental patient satisfaction. Meanwhile, cost, waiting time, patient safety, and facilities served as supporting factors. These findings indicate that improving oral and dental health service quality requires a multidimensional approach that focuses not only on physical facilities but also on service processes and interpersonal relationships between healthcare professionals and patients (Artamevia, 2023).

Based on this overview, enhancing quality management in oral and dental health services is crucial for hospitals seeking to improve patient satisfaction. However, scientific evidence regarding the specific quality management components that contribute most significantly to patient satisfaction remains scattered across various studies characterized by differing facility types, methodologies, and indicators. Therefore, a systematic literature review is needed to identify, evaluate, and synthesize scientific evidence concerning strategies for improving oral and dental health service quality management and their relationship with patient satisfaction in hospitals. This systematic review aims to provide insights into the quality dimensions most consistently associated with patient satisfaction, the barriers and facilitators of quality improvement, and the managerial strategies hospitals can implement to sustainably enhance service quality and the patient experience. These findings can subsequently serve as a basis for developing evidence-based recommendations to improve the quality of oral and dental healthcare services.

METHOD

This study employs a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) design guided by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) 2020 statement to identify, select, evaluate, and synthesize research findings regarding quality management in oral and dental healthcare services and its relationship with patient satisfaction in hospitals. A systematic literature search was conducted across several electronic databases—SINTA, DOAJ, Pubmed, Google Scholar, and Garuda—covering the publication period of 2022–2026. The search strategy utilized combinations of keywords and Boolean operators, such as “dental health services” AND “service quality” AND “patient satisfaction,” “oral health services” AND “quality management” AND “patient satisfaction,” and “dental service quality” AND “hospital,” alongside Indonesian equivalents like “mutu pelayanan kesehatan gigi dan mulut” AND “kepuasan pasien” AND “rumah sakit.” Inclusion criteria comprised: (1) original research articles or systematic reviews relevant to the research focus; (2) articles published between 2022 and 2026; (3) availability in Indonesian or English; (4) discussion of the quality or quality management of oral and dental healthcare services; (5) measurement or discussion of patient satisfaction as an outcome; and (6) studies conducted in healthcare facilities—specifically hospitals, dental and oral hospitals, dental clinics, or health facilities offering dental and oral services. Articles were excluded if they consisted of opinions, editorials, letters to the editor, individual case reports, or duplicates; lacked full text; were irrelevant to the research variables; or failed to provide information regarding service quality and patient satisfaction. The use of keyword-based search strategies, duplicate removal, title and abstract screening, and full-text assessment represents standard procedure in healthcare SLRs.

The article selection process was carried out in stages following the four phases of PRISMA 2020: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. During the identification phase, all articles retrieved from the respective databases were compiled, and duplicates were removed. Subsequently, during the screening stage, titles and abstracts were examined against inclusion and exclusion criteria. Articles deemed relevant proceeded to the eligibility stage, where full texts were read to ensure alignment with the research question. Articles meeting all criteria were selected for the final synthesis and included in the PRISMA flow diagram. Data from the selected articles were extracted using a table covering author names, publication years, study countries/locations, research designs, sample sizes, respondent characteristics, types of healthcare facilities, quality management indicators, service quality dimensions, measurement instruments, patient satisfaction indicators, key findings, and study conclusions. Methodological quality was assessed using critical appraisal instruments tailored to each study's design, such as JBI Critical Appraisal Tools or other relevant checklists. The results were then analyzed using a narrative synthesis, grouping findings by key themes: service quality dimensions (tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy), quality management, healthcare worker competence, dentist-patient communication and relationships, waiting times, facilities, patient safety, and factors associated with patient satisfaction. This synthesis served to identify patterns linking improvements in oral healthcare quality management to increased patient satisfaction and to formulate evidence-based recommendations for service quality improvement strategies. A narrative synthesis approach has also been employed in previous systematic literature reviews (SLRs) concerning dental healthcare quality and patient satisfaction.

RESULTS

The findings reveal a fairly consistent pattern indicating that service quality—specifically responsiveness, assurance, empathy, reliability, and tangibles—is associated with patient satisfaction, although the strength of the influence of each dimension varies across facilities. Here is the prism diagram table.

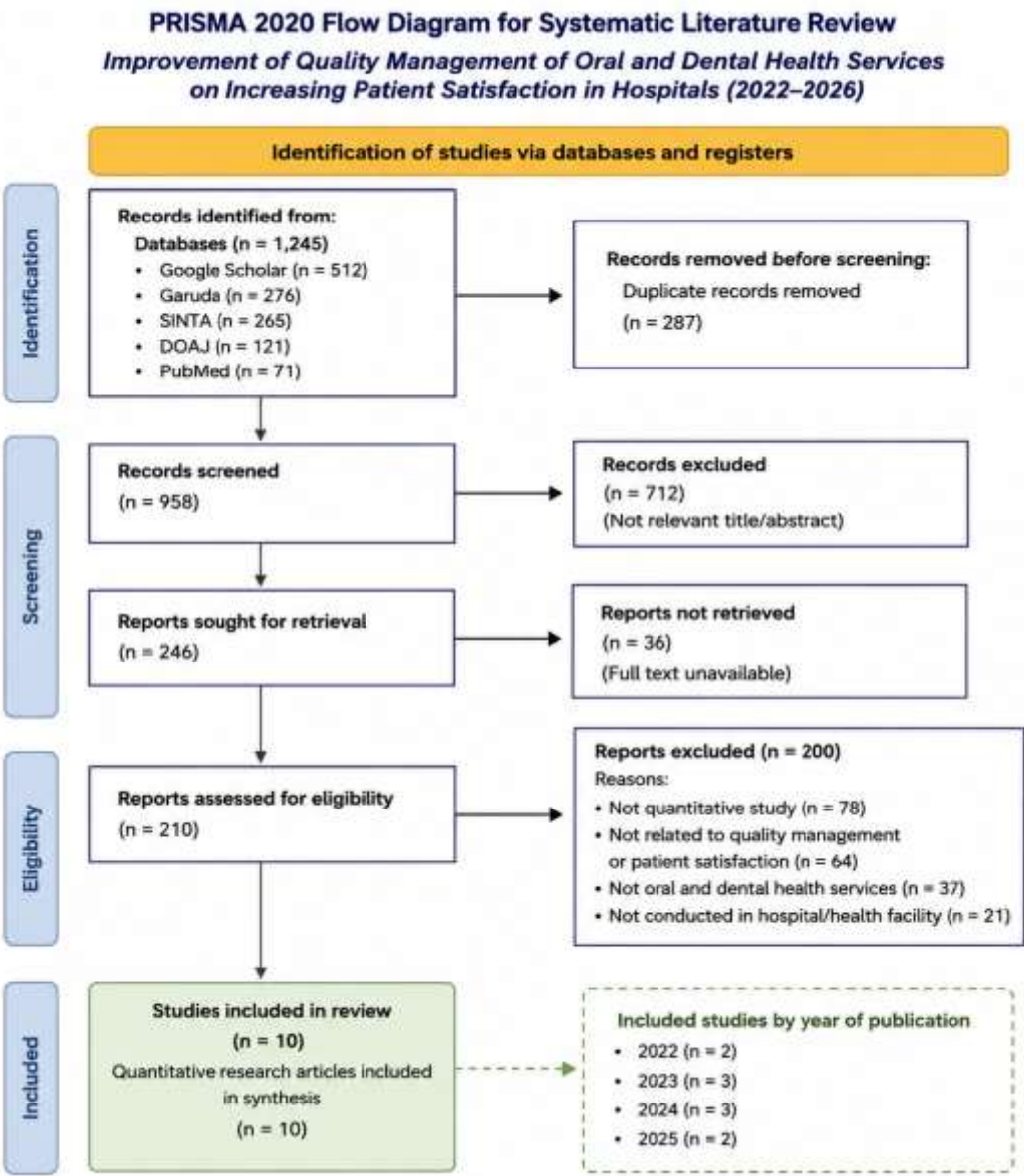


Figure 1. PRISMA Diagram

Table 1. Article Review Results

No.	Research & Year	Location/Facility	Method & Sample	Variables/Indicators	Main Findings
1	Astuti et al. (2022)	Sentosa Baru Community Health Center, Medan	Analytical quantitative, cross-sectional; 81 respondents	Dental and oral health services → patient satisfaction	Dental and oral health services had a significant effect on patient satisfaction.
2	Alamsyah et al. (2022)	Maridan Community Health Center, North Penajam Paser	Quantitative, total sampling; 48 respondents	SERVQUAL: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy	All dimensions received high ratings, with assurance being the most prominent dimension.
3	Akmal et al. (2022)	Dental Clinic, Pekanbaru	Quantitative, descriptive-explanatory survey; PLS-SEM	Service quality → satisfaction → loyalty	Service quality had a positive and significant effect on patient satisfaction, with a path coefficient of 0.647 and $p = 0.000$.
4	Afdillah et al. (2023)	Dental Clinic, Lepo-Lepo Community Health Center, Kendari	Descriptive quantitative; 50 respondents	Assurance, effectiveness, responsiveness, tangibles, empathy	The highest level of satisfaction was found in the comfort/tangibles dimension (60%), while assurance accounted for 48%. Overall, patients were categorized as satisfied.
5	Artamevia et al. (2023)	Independent Dental and Oral Therapist Practice, Denpasar	Descriptive quantitative survey; 30 respondents	Service quality → patient satisfaction	Patient satisfaction can be used as an indicator for evaluating the quality of dental and oral health services.
6	Marini et al. (2023)	Provincial Dental and Oral Hospital of South Sumatra	Quantitative observational, cross-sectional	Service quality → BPJS patient satisfaction	Service quality is an important component in determining BPJS patient satisfaction with dental and oral health services.
7	Simamora et al. (2023)	Community Health Centers in Kupang City	Quantitative cross-sectional; multivariate logistic regression analysis	Safety, effectiveness, patient-centeredness, waiting time, efficiency, equity	A significant relationship was found between the quality of dental and oral health services and patient satisfaction ($p = 0.002$). Equity was among the aspects receiving favorable assessments.
8	Sudirman et al. (2024)	Dental Clinic, Anutapura Regional Hospital, Palu	Quantitative; 97 patients; convenience sampling	Tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy	Tangibles and reliability were associated with patient satisfaction. Assurance and empathy were important determinants, while responsiveness showed a positive trend but was

							not statistically significant.
9	Surbakti et al. (2024)	Drs. Haji Tambunan Regional Hospital, Deli Serdang	Amri	Analytical cross-sectional survey; 377 patients	Tangibles, timeliness, compassion satisfaction	reliability, assurance, →	The study demonstrated the importance of service quality in determining patient satisfaction in the hospital dental clinic. The relatively large sample size strengthens the evidence in the hospital setting.
10	Nurhasanah et al. (2025)	Prima Dental and Oral Hospital, Medan		Analytical cross-sectional; 44 respondents; Chi-square test	Dental and oral health services → patient satisfaction		A total of 84.1% of respondents rated the services as good, while 79.5% of patients were satisfied. A significant relationship was found between service quality and patient satisfaction ($p = 0.002$).

Synthesis of Review Findings

Based on the synthesis of the 10 quantitative studies, five main themes were identified:

1. Service Quality Is A Major Determinant Of Patient Satisfaction
The majority of studies demonstrated a positive relationship or effect between the quality of dental and oral health services and patient satisfaction. The strongest findings were reported by Akmal et al. (2022), Simamora et al. (2023), Sudirman et al. (2024), and Nurhasanah et al. (2025). Therefore, efforts to improve patient satisfaction cannot be separated from the ability of hospitals or dental healthcare facilities to improve the quality of the service delivery process.
2. Assurance And Empathy Are Highly Important Interpersonal Dimensions
The synthesis indicates that patients do not assess service quality solely based on physical facilities. A sense of safety, staff competence, courtesy, communication, attention, and empathy are important components in establishing a positive patient experience. This was demonstrated by Alamsyah et al. (2022) and Sudirman et al. (2024), which highlighted the important roles of assurance and empathy.
3. Tangibles And Facility Comfort Remain Important Factors
The condition of the service environment, cleanliness, comfort, equipment, and supporting facilities constitute important components of the patient experience. Afdillah et al. (2023) found that the comfort/tangibles dimension achieved a patient satisfaction level of 60%. Sudirman et al. (2024) also found a relationship between tangibles and patient satisfaction. Therefore, quality improvement strategies should integrate both physical and interpersonal aspects of service delivery.
4. Responsiveness And Waiting Time Are Areas Requiring Improvement
Several studies indicate that service speed and responsiveness remain areas requiring attention. Simamora et al. (2023) included waiting time and efficiency as components of healthcare quality, while Surbakti et al. (2024) explicitly evaluated timeliness. In the study by Sudirman et al. (2024), responsiveness showed a positive direction of association but did not reach statistical significance. This indicates that hospitals need to improve service processes, queue management systems, physician punctuality, and coordination among healthcare personnel.
5. Patient Satisfaction Measurement Should Be Part Of Continuous Quality Improvement
The synthesis indicates that patient satisfaction surveys should not be treated merely as an administrative requirement. Survey results should be used as a basis for identifying service gaps, determining improvement priorities, evaluating SOP implementation, enhancing healthcare workers' competencies, and monitoring the effectiveness of quality improvement interventions. The findings of Nurhasanah et al. (2025) explicitly recommend conducting periodic patient satisfaction surveys as part of quality improvement efforts.

DISCUSSION

The results of the systematic literature review of 10 quantitative studies demonstrate that the quality of dental and oral health services is an important factor in improving patient satisfaction. This relationship was identified across various types of healthcare facilities, including community health centers, dental clinics, general hospitals, and specialized dental and oral hospitals. The consistency of these findings indicates that patient satisfaction is not determined solely by the success of clinical procedures, but also by the overall service process experienced by patients from registration through completion of care. For example, Akmal et al. (2022) found that service quality had a positive and significant effect on patient satisfaction, with a path coefficient of 0.647. Similar findings were reported by Simamora et al. (2023), who identified a significant relationship between the quality of dental and oral health services and patient satisfaction ($p = 0.002$), as well as by Nurhasanah et al. (2025), who reported $p = 0.002$.

From a quality management perspective, these findings indicate that improving patient satisfaction should be implemented through a systemic approach rather than focusing solely on improving the clinical skills of dentists. Hospital management needs to ensure that service standards, standard operating procedures (SOPs), healthcare worker competencies, availability of facilities, queue management systems, communication, patient safety, and complaint-handling mechanisms are implemented in an integrated manner. Thus, quality management can be understood as a cycle involving quality measurement, problem identification, improvement planning, implementation, evaluation, and continuous improvement (Ariandini, 2023).

The assurance dimension emerged as one of the important findings in the synthesis. Alamsyah et al. (2022) reported that the assurance dimension had the highest proportion of satisfied patients compared with several other dimensions, reaching 97.9%. In the study by Sudirman et al. (2024), assurance also emerged as an important determinant of patient satisfaction. This indicates that dental and oral health patients require a strong sense of safety and confidence in dentists and healthcare personnel. Within the context of hospital management, these conditions can be improved through clinical competency and communication training, implementation of patient safety standards, provision of clear information regarding procedures, and strengthening of professional ethics and healthcare worker professionalism.

In addition to assurance, the empathy dimension is also an important component in shaping patient satisfaction. Dental care has specific characteristics because patients may experience anxiety, fear of procedures, pain, or concerns regarding treatment costs and outcomes. Therefore, dentists and healthcare personnel need to provide individualized attention, listen to patients' concerns, explain procedures in language that is easy to understand, and involve patients in decision-making. Sudirman et al. (2024) demonstrated that empathy was one of the important determinants of patient satisfaction. These findings indicate that the quality of dental services cannot be assessed solely based on technical aspects but must also consider the quality of interpersonal relationships between patients and healthcare providers.

The tangibles dimension also demonstrated an important role in patient satisfaction. Afdillah et al. (2023) found that the comfort or physical evidence dimension achieved a satisfaction level of 60%, while Sudirman et al. (2024) identified a relationship between tangibles and patient satisfaction. A clean, comfortable, well-organized service environment equipped with adequate facilities and equipment and providing patient privacy can create a positive perception of hospital service quality. Therefore, quality management improvement should incorporate facility maintenance, cleanliness of treatment rooms, adequacy of dental equipment, waiting-room comfort, information systems, and patient privacy as components of quality indicators.

Meanwhile, reliability refers to the ability of healthcare facilities to provide services accurately, consistently, appropriately, and in accordance with established commitments or standards. In dental and oral healthcare services, reliability can be demonstrated through accurate physician scheduling, accurate diagnosis and treatment, administrative accuracy, availability of medical records, continuity of care, and consistent implementation of SOPs. Sudirman et al. (2024) demonstrated that reliability was associated with patient satisfaction. This finding implies that hospitals need to establish consistent service systems so that patients' experiences do not depend solely on particular individual healthcare workers.

Responsiveness and timeliness are also strategic components of quality improvement. Patients generally expect services that are fast, accessible, and do not involve excessive waiting times. Simamora et al. (2023) included waiting time and efficiency as components of dental and oral healthcare quality, while Surbakti et al. (2024) assessed timeliness as one of the service dimensions. Interestingly, Sudirman et al. (2024) found that responsiveness had a positive direction of association but did not achieve statistical significance. These differences indicate that responsiveness may be influenced by facility characteristics, service workload, queue management systems, healthcare workforce availability, and patient expectations.

These findings have direct implications for hospital operational management. Improving patient satisfaction can be achieved through optimization of registration systems, digital queue management, adjustment of staffing levels according to patient workload, certainty of dentists' schedules, monitoring of

waiting times, and development of communication systems to inform patients when delays occur. Thus, quality management of dental services is not limited to the clinical setting but also encompasses the administrative and operational processes surrounding clinical care.

Variations in findings across studies also indicate that not all quality dimensions have the same influence in every healthcare facility. Sudirman et al. (2024) demonstrated that assurance and empathy were important determinants, whereas responsiveness was not statistically significant. In contrast, other studies indicated that tangibles, reliability, or other dimensions could be more prominent. These variations may be attributable to differences in patient characteristics, facility type, financing systems, organizational culture, healthcare workforce availability, service workload, facility conditions, and measurement instruments. Therefore, hospitals should not adopt a uniform quality improvement strategy but should conduct quality assessments based on local conditions.

Based on the overall synthesis, improving patient satisfaction through dental and oral health service quality management should employ a continuous quality improvement approach. The first stage is to measure patient perceptions through satisfaction surveys and service quality assessments. The second stage is to identify the dimensions with the largest service gaps. The third stage involves developing interventions, such as improving human resource competencies, enhancing facilities, simplifying service processes, reducing waiting times, strengthening communication, and improving patient safety. The fourth stage is to conduct reassessment to determine whether the interventions have successfully improved patient satisfaction.

Therefore, the synthesis of the 10 studies indicates that the most promising strategy for improving the quality management of dental and oral health services is a multidimensional approach integrating physical facilities, service reliability, responsiveness, assurance of safety and competence, empathy, timeliness, patient safety, and patient-centered care. The findings of Akmal et al. (2022), which demonstrated a positive effect of service quality on satisfaction; Simamora et al. (2023), which identified a significant relationship between service quality and satisfaction; and Nurhasanah et al. (2025), which again demonstrated a significant relationship in a dental and oral hospital setting, strengthen the evidence that quality improvement is a relevant managerial strategy for enhancing patient satisfaction.

Conceptually, the results of the SLR can be formulated into the following model:



Figure 2. Conceptual Model

This model demonstrates that patient satisfaction can be positioned as an important outcome of dental and oral health service quality management, while service quality represents the primary mechanism linking hospital management policies and strategies with patient experiences.

Overall, the 10 quantitative studies demonstrate a consistent tendency that better dental and oral health service quality is associated with higher patient satisfaction. However, the most dominant dimensions vary according to the characteristics of the healthcare facility and patients. Assurance and empathy appear to be important in establishing trust and psychological comfort, whereas tangibles and reliability are associated with perceptions of professionalism and service consistency. Waiting time and responsiveness represent areas requiring particular attention in service process improvement. These findings also identify a relevant research gap for this SLR: most studies continue to focus on the direct relationship between service quality and patient satisfaction, whereas studies specifically examining quality management as an organizational strategy or system for improving the quality of dental and oral health services in hospitals remain relatively limited.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the Systematic Literature Review of 10 quantitative studies published during the 2022–2026 period, it can be concluded that improving the quality management of dental and oral health services plays an important role in enhancing patient satisfaction across healthcare facilities, including hospitals, dental and oral hospitals, community health centers, and dental clinics. The synthesis demonstrates a relatively consistent pattern whereby better service quality is associated with higher levels of patient satisfaction. The service quality dimensions most frequently identified as contributing to patient satisfaction include tangibles, such as cleanliness, comfort, adequate facilities, and equipment; reliability, referring to accuracy, consistency, and the ability to provide services according to established standards; responsiveness, referring to the speed and promptness of healthcare personnel; assurance, encompassing competence, safety, courtesy, and the ability to establish patient trust; and empathy, referring to individualized attention and communication oriented toward patient needs. In addition, waiting time, service timeliness, patient safety, dentist–patient communication, accessibility, and patient-centered care are also important components in shaping the patient experience. The findings indicate that not all quality dimensions have the same degree of influence across healthcare facilities; therefore, hospitals need to conduct regular assessments of service quality and patient satisfaction to identify service gaps according to patient characteristics and organizational conditions. Accordingly, quality management of dental and oral health services should be implemented as a continuous quality improvement process encompassing performance measurement, problem identification, strengthening of human resource competencies, optimization of facilities and infrastructure, improvement of SOPs and service processes, reduction of waiting times, enhancement of healthcare worker communication and empathy, strengthening of patient safety, complaint management, and continuous evaluation of patient satisfaction. This approach has the potential not only to improve patient satisfaction but also to strengthen patient trust, positive experiences, intention to revisit, and hospital image. Therefore, improving the quality management of dental and oral health services can be regarded as an integral, evidence-based managerial strategy for achieving dental and oral healthcare services that are safe, effective, efficient, responsive, patient-centered, and sustainable.

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