



Service Management and Patient Satisfaction in Independent Midwifery Clinical Practice

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Abstract

Midwifery services in independent clinical practices play a crucial role in the primary healthcare system, particularly in providing care for mothers and children. This study aims to analyze the relationship between service management and patient satisfaction levels in independent midwifery clinical practices (PMB). A descriptive qualitative approach was employed, using the PRISMA method to trace and analyze data from various scholarly sources related to service management and patient satisfaction in PMBs. Key dimensions from the SERVQUAL model reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurance, and tangible aspects served as the main indicators for assessing service quality. Case studies from several PMBs demonstrate that the use of simple technologies, effective communication, and efficient time management contribute significantly to high levels of patient satisfaction. Conversely, unstructured management practices negatively affect perceptions of care. The findings underscore the importance of enhancing midwives' managerial capacity, developing standard operating procedures (SOPs), and conducting routine evaluations of patient experiences to maintain service quality. These results offer strategic insights into strengthening PMBs as a responsive and high-quality pillar of maternal healthcare services.

Introduction

Midwifery care is an integral part of the health care system that directly contributes to the quality of life of mothers and children. In Indonesia, independent midwifery clinical practice (PMB) plays an important role as a first-level health care facility, especially in providing midwifery care during pregnancy, childbirth, postpartum, and family planning services. As public awareness of the quality of health services increases, patient expectations for fast, friendly, and professional services are also getting higher (Ministry of Health RI, 2022). In this case, service management is the main foundation that determines the success of independent midwifery clinic practice. Service management includes planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating the service process to patients. Good management can provide a quality service experience and ensure patient safety (Nursalam, 2020; Jesus et al., 2025; World Health Organization, 2021; Lee & Lee, 2022; De Rosis et al., 2022; Ekasari et al., 2024). Patient satisfaction is an important indicator in assessing the success of midwifery services.

This satisfaction is influenced by various aspects, including midwife competence, communication skills, facility comfort, and speed and accuracy of service (Utami et al., 2013; Solichati & Agushybana, 2023; Haryanti & Elmaghfuroh, 2025). Previous research shows that patients who are satisfied with the service will be more likely to comply with medical

recommendations, make repeat visits, and recommend the service to others (Puspitasari & Kusumawati, 2022). Given the importance of the relationship between service management and patient satisfaction, it is necessary to conduct a more in-depth study of how managerial practices in PMB can influence patient perceptions and experiences. This study is important because the results can be used as a basis for developing strategies to improve the quality of midwifery services, especially at the independent practice level, which is often the main choice of people in the regions. In addition, the findings of this study are expected to contribute to policy development and service management training for midwives (Janes et al., 2024; Sheffield et al., 2024).

The purpose of this paper is to analyze the relationship between service management and the level of patient satisfaction in independent midwifery clinical practices (Ngatindriatun et al., 2024; Utomo et al., 2024; Saleh et al., 2025). This paper is expected to provide a number of benefits, including for health practitioners, namely as an insight into the importance of service management in improving patient satisfaction in independent midwifery clinics. For academics, this paper can be an additional reference in developing theories and studies related to midwifery services and health management. Furthermore, for policy makers, the results of this study can be used as input in designing policies that encourage quality management in midwifery service facilities. Finally, for the community, this paper provides information about the factors that influence the quality of midwifery services they receive.

Literature Review

Health service management is the process of planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating all service activities that aim to meet patient needs effectively and efficiently (Nursalam, 2020; Hampel, 2021; Ekasari et al., 2024; Gartner et al., 2022). In the context of midwifery, service management not only includes administrative aspects, but also touches on the process of midwifery care, communication, and professional ethics in clinical practice. According to Afifah & Kurniawati (2021), good midwifery service management must pay attention to four main components, namely: human resources (midwives and support staff), structured service flow, adequate facilities and infrastructure, and accurate recording and reporting. This is important to ensure continuity of care and minimize errors in the care process. The quality of management determines the quality of care received by patients. With an effective management system, midwifery clinics can provide services that are fast, precise, and responsive to patient needs, thereby increasing trust and satisfaction (Dewi & Hendrawati, 2022; Firmansyah, 2024; Friedel et al., 2023; Jonkisz et al., 2021).

Patient satisfaction is defined as a form of subjective patient assessment of the quality of service they receive during the treatment or care process (Kotler & Keller, 2009; Ferreira et al., 2023; Gartner et al., 2022; Sharkiya, 2023). In midwifery services, patient satisfaction is strongly influenced by how midwives provide communication, treatment, service comfort, and clinical abilities. Factors that affect patient satisfaction in midwifery services include: interpersonal skills of midwives, speed of service, availability of facilities, cleanliness of space, patient privacy, and clarity of information provided (Utami et al., 2013; Atero, 2024; Momoh et al., 2024). In addition, cultural values and patient expectations also play an important role in determining their level of satisfaction with the service. Satisfied patients tend to return to receive further services, recommend the clinic to others, and have a higher level of compliance with midwives' recommendations (Puspitasari & Kusumawati, 2022); Opdam et al., 2021).

Midwife Independent Practice (PMB) is a health service place organized by midwives independently with a valid practice license, to provide basic midwifery services to the community, especially mothers and babies (Indonesian Ministry of Health, 2022; Katmi et al., 2025; Kusumawati & Istiana, 2024). PMB is the spearhead of maternal and child health services, especially in remote areas or with limited access to health facilities. Midwives in

PMBs are responsible for overall service management, from managing practice time, recording medical records, managing equipment and drugs, to building good relationships with patients. Therefore, the managerial skills of midwives are very important in ensuring the smooth running of services (Yulianti et al., 2023). In practice, the challenges that midwives often face include limited resources, lack of managerial training, and high workloads. Nevertheless, PMBs remain the first choice of the community due to their geographical and emotional proximity to the community (Harimurti & Wahyuningsih, 2021).

The relationship between service management and patient satisfaction is direct and significant. When service management is well implemented, especially in the aspects of schedule regularity, responsiveness of health workers, and communication, the level of patient satisfaction tends to increase (Dewi & Hendrawati, 2022; Zineldin, 2006; Baalbaki et al., 2008; Mosadeghrad, 2014). Conversely, services that are not organized, slow, and uncommunicative can lead to patient disappointment. This relationship model can be explained through SERVQUAL (Service Quality) theory, which assesses service quality based on five dimensions: tangible (physical evidence), reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Parasuraman et al., 1988). In the context of midwifery, the dimensions of responsiveness and empathy are crucial due to the personalized and repetitive nature of midwifery services. Conceptually, the framework of this study is described as follows:

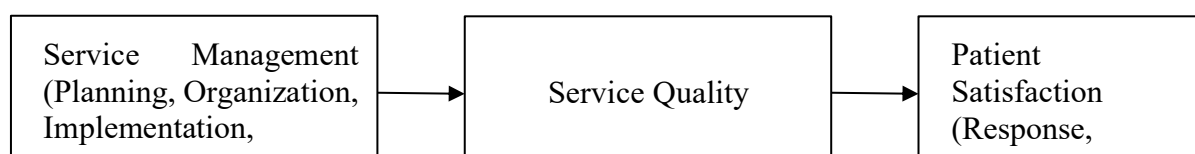


Figure 1. Thinking Framework

Methods

A systematic literature review with a qualitative descriptive orientation was adopted in this study because it was selected to reveal the relationship between service management in independent midwifery practice and patient satisfaction. The review was organized according to the PRISMA 2020 guideline, and all the steps of identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion were conducted in a systematic and transparent manner.

PubMed, Scopus, ScienceDirect, and Google Scholar searched the literature based on combinations of the following words: service management, patient satisfaction, independent midwifery practice, and SERVQUAL. The Boolean operators were also used to broaden coverage by using synonyms like, maternal health services, and midwife-led care. Due to the need to keep current, only articles published between 2015 and 2025 in English or Indonesian and directly related to midwifery services or equivalent primary care environments were included. Articles lacking empirical basis, duplicates and irrelevant to the topics of patient satisfaction or service management were excluded.

The screening was done by first elimination of duplicates, then review of titles and abstracts and subjectively the full-text. Evaluations of studies were performed at every step according to their contribution to the central question, and a final set of eligible articles was formed. A PRISMA flow diagram was used to document the process so that clarity can be seen in the narrowing of records to the included sample. In the data extraction, information was analyzed by reviewing each study on the basis of author information, design, setting, and main findings. The analysis was conducted based on the SERVQUAL framework, which made it possible to arrange the findings within five dimensions, namely reliability, responsiveness, assurance,

empathy, and tangibles. This methodology made it possible to identify common themes and gaps in the literature. The selection and coding were done by two reviewers, who disagreed on some points; these were settled by discussions. Since the review was conducted based on published studies only, it did not need any ethics approval. Ethical integrity, however, was maintained by proper citation and proper representation of original research.

Result and Discussion

Service management in independent midwifery clinical practice (PMB) is a crucial element that directly affects patient perceptions and satisfaction levels. Based on the results of searching and analyzing through the PRISMA method of scientific articles published in the last five years, it was found that factors such as the quality of midwife communication, timeliness of service, comfort of facilities, and clarity of medical information greatly determine the level of patient satisfaction. Research by Abeng & Rumintjap (2025) that effective management of service flow arrangements and a humane approach from midwives contribute significantly to the satisfaction of pregnant and giving birth women. In addition, patient trust in the competence of health workers and the existence of a complaint management system also strengthen the relationship between service management and patient satisfaction (Doni & Andi, 2025). The results of article selection through the PRISMA flow also identified that the quality of interactions between patients and health care providers has a major influence in building patient psychological comfort, especially in the context of personalized and sustainable independent midwifery services.

Theoretically, the relationship between service management and patient satisfaction can be explained through the SERVQUAL theory developed by (Parasuraman et al., 1988). This theory emphasizes that service quality is influenced by five dimensions: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. These dimensions form the basis for assessing how effectively services are delivered and how they are perceived by patients. Several studies show that the implementation of good service management has a positive impact on the level of patient satisfaction. For example, research by (Dewi & Hendrawati, 2022) stated that patient satisfaction increased significantly when midwives made good time arrangements, clear communication, and provided clean and comfortable facilities. In another study by Puspitasari & Kusumawati (2022), it was stated that 78% of patients expressed satisfaction with services at PMBs that had an orderly administrative and record management system.

In the field, good practices of service management can be found in PMBs that integrate simple technology in recording and managing patient data. For example, the PMB "Sehat Ibu" in Yogyakarta uses a digital-based queuing system and SMS reminders for repeat visits. This improves patient compliance with visit schedules and reduces no-show rates (Yulianti et al., 2023). In contrast, in PMBs that do not have an organized management system, patient complaints such as service delays, unclear queues, and discrepancies in information between visits are often encountered. A study by (Harimurti & Wahyuningsih, 2021) noted that in clinics in rural areas that did not have written service SOPs, the rate of patient complaints was twice as high as in clinics that implemented standards-based management.

The practice of Independent Midwifery Clinics (PMB) is structurally different from hospitals or health centers because it is individual, with midwives as the main managers. Therefore, the ability of midwives to manage services is crucial. PMB is not only a place to provide health services, but also a space for social interaction that shapes community trust in the health system. In this context, good service management reflects the professionalism of midwives. Systematic and humane management not only increases patient satisfaction, but also strengthens the positive image of independent practice in the eyes of the community. As stated by (Afifah &

Kurniawati, 2021), satisfied patients will be more loyal, willing to provide feedback, and become informal promotional agents for the practice.

The above analysis shows that service management has a close relationship with patient satisfaction. Therefore, strategic implications that can be applied in independent midwifery clinical practice include: 1) Development of clear SOPs for the entire service process, from registration, examination, to referral; 2) Improving the managerial capacity of midwives, through training in time management, communication, and resource management; 3) Use of simple technology such as queuing applications or digital recording systems to speed up processes and minimize errors; 4) Regular evaluation of patient satisfaction, as a basis for service improvement.

By implementing a responsive and patient-centered managerial approach, independent midwifery practices can continue to improve their quality of care and contribute to national efforts to reduce maternal and infant mortality.

Conclusion

Based on theoretical analysis and findings from previous studies, it can be concluded that service management has a significant relationship with the level of patient satisfaction in independent midwifery clinical practices. Good service management, which includes structured planning, implementation, and evaluation, can improve service quality, improve communication between midwives and patients, and create a more responsive and humane service atmosphere. The application of management principles that focus on patient needs not only has an impact on increasing satisfaction, but also strengthens public trust in independent midwifery practices as part of the primary health care system. For this reason, it is recommended that midwives strengthen their managerial skills through regular training that includes time management, effective communication, and administrative systems. Each midwife's independent practice also needs to have a written standard operating procedure (SOP) that is easy to implement, and conduct regular evaluations of patient satisfaction as a basis for continuous improvement. In addition, the use of simple technology such as digital queuing systems or electronic records can be an effective practical strategy to improve service efficiency and accuracy. By implementing these measures, independent midwifery practices are expected to become a pillar of quality, responsive and highly competitive maternal health services.

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