



Analysis of Factors Associated with Patient Satisfaction in the Outpatient Unit

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Article Info

Article history:

Received 15 March 2026
Received in revised form 8 April 2026
Accepted 27 April 2026

Keywords:

Patient Satisfaction
Outpatient Care
Quality of Service
Reliability
Cost

Abstract

The patient satisfaction level at the Outpatient Unit of the Sengayam Regional General Hospital (RSUD) in the second quarter of 2025 was recorded at 84.23, which means it is still below the minimum service standard of $\geq 95\%$. This study aims to analyze factors associated with patient satisfaction through a literature review using a qualitative descriptive approach on scientific articles published between 2015 and 2025. The analysis results indicate that the reliability dimension is the most critical factor as it is directly related to the consistency of staff in accurately following standard operating procedures. In addition to clinical aspects, cost factors such as tariff transparency and physical facilities including the comfort of waiting areas and cleanliness were found to be significant in shaping patients' perceived value. This satisfaction dynamic is not static but continues to evolve alongside patients' demographic characteristics and the ease of accessing digital information, which makes the public's expectations regarding healthcare services increasingly critical and personalized. In conclusion, effective coordination across the SERVQUAL dimensions, particularly regarding reliability and tangible evidence, serves as the primary strategy for Sengayam General Hospital to enhance service quality and achieve the established satisfaction standards.

Introduction

Hospitals are healthcare institutions that provide comprehensive individual healthcare services, including inpatient care, outpatient care, and emergency care, and are permanent in nature over the long term (Johnson et al., 2015; Kellermann et al., 2013; Anyiwe et al., 2026). In efforts to improve the quality of healthcare services, service quality is a critical aspect that must be addressed, including nursing care as an integral part of the healthcare system (Ministry of Health Regulation No. 30 of 2019 on Hospital Classification and Licensing, 2019). One of the key units is the Outpatient Department (OPD), which provides examination, treatment, and medical procedures tailored to patients' needs (Borthakur et al., 2026; Kelly et al., 2026; Jacob et al., 2026).

As users of healthcare services, patients have expectations for high-quality, prompt, friendly, communicative, and empathetic care (Alfian et al., 2026; Jamil et al., 2026; Huang et al., 2026). However, in practice, patient complaints still arise due to unresponsive service that fails to meet expectations (Akhtika et al., 2024). This risks reducing patients' willingness to return to the healthcare facility. Globally, patient satisfaction levels vary, with some countries exceeding 90%, while in Indonesia, the minimum standard for patient satisfaction () is set at $\geq 92\%$ (Indonesian Ministry of Health, 2021). Nevertheless, various studies indicate that patient

satisfaction levels in healthcare facilities have not yet fully met this standard (Juwito & Bisri, 2026; Liem et al., 2026; Putra et al., 2026).

National data show that patient satisfaction levels in public hospitals are around 80%, while private hospitals are around 83% (Regulation of the Health Social Security Agency No. 5 of 2020 on the Second Amendment to Regulation of the Health Social Security Agency No. 6 of 2018 on the Administration of Health Insurance Program Membership, 2020). A similar situation is observed at the UPTD Sengayam District General Hospital in Kotabaru Regency, where outpatient patient satisfaction in the second quarter of 2025 stood at 84.23%, still below the minimum standard of $\geq 95\%$. This indicates a gap between patients' expectations and the actual care received, which requires serious attention from hospital management (Kodyat et al., 2026; Weber et al., 2026; Netsere et al., 2026).

This gap is influenced by various factors, including service costs that have risen in recent years, suboptimal service facilities such as uncomfortable waiting rooms and a manual queuing system, as well as the reliability of healthcare personnel that is not yet fully optimal, particularly regarding the timeliness of service. These factors are closely related to patients' perceptions of the quality of care received, which ultimately affects overall patient satisfaction (Al-Araafi et al., 2024; Wood et al., 2026; Alqifari et al., 2026).

Patient satisfaction is a key indicator in assessing the quality of healthcare services, measured based on the alignment between expectations and the reality of the service (Reinhardt et al., 2026; Aryandaru et al., 2026; Le et al., 2026). According to the ServQual theory, service quality is influenced by several dimensions, such as reliability, responsiveness, and tangible evidence, and is supported by other factors such as accessibility and cost. However, previous research findings indicate inconsistencies regarding the relationship between these factors and patient satisfaction. Therefore, this study aims to analyze the factors associated with patient satisfaction at the Outpatient Unit of the UPTD Sengayam District General Hospital in Kotabaru Regency, specifically focusing on the aspects of accessibility, service, cost, and reliability.

Methods

The research method used in this study is a literature review with a qualitative descriptive approach aimed at analyzing the factors associated with patient satisfaction in the outpatient unit, specifically regarding accessibility, service, cost, and reliability. The data used were secondary data obtained through a search of scientific articles from various databases such as Google Scholar, PubMed, and accredited national journals, using keywords related to patient satisfaction and the quality of health services, and limited to publications from 2015 to 2025. Selected articles met the inclusion criteria, namely relevance to the topic, availability of the full text, and clear research methods, while irrelevant, incomplete, or duplicate articles were excluded. The analysis process was conducted through the stages of identification, selection, data extraction, and synthesis by gathering key information such as authors, year, methods, variables, and research results; these were then analyzed descriptively to identify patterns and relationships among variables influencing patient satisfaction. The results of the study are presented in the form of a systematic narrative to provide a comprehensive overview as a basis for improving service quality at the Outpatient Unit of the Sengayam District General Hospital (RSUD) in Kotabaru Regency.

Result and Discussion

Table 1. Literature Review

Researcher	Title	Method	Results
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(Rahmi et al., 2022)	Hubungan Kualitas Pelayanan Terhadap Kepuasan Pasien di Puskesmas Tanah Grogot Tahun 2020	Method: <i>cross-sectional</i>	Patients' perceptions of service quality and satisfaction levels at the Tanah Grogot Community Health Center were classified as good; however, no significant relationship was found between service quality and patient satisfaction, so satisfaction monitoring needs to be conducted periodically as it is dynamic.
(Swastika et al., 2021)	Kajian Literatur Faktor Faktor yang Berhubungan dengan Kepuasan Pasien Rawat Inap di Rumah Sakit	Method: <i>cross-sectional</i>	Based on five journals, patient satisfaction is influenced by income, education, distance from home, the <i>tangible</i> dimension, <i>reliability</i> , <i>empathy</i> , and several services such as administration, doctors, laboratories, pharmacy, and support facilities, whereas factors such as age, gender, occupation, care class, as well as the <i>responsiveness</i> dimension, <i>assurance</i> , nursing care, and infrastructure are not associated with patient satisfaction.
(Nurahma et al., 2023)	Analisis Pengaruh Kualitas Pelayanan, Biaya dan Fasilitas Terhadap Kepuasan Pasien Rawat Jalan Rumah Sakit Benyamin Guluh Kolaka	Method: <i>cross-sectional</i>	All variables studied, including service quality dimensions (<i>tangibility</i> , <i>reliability</i> , <i>responsiveness</i> , <i>assurance</i> , <i>empathy</i>), cost aspects (affordability, competitiveness, appropriateness), and physical environment factors (space planning, equipment, and lighting), had a positive and significant effect on patient satisfaction
(Suciati & Zaman, 2023)	Analisis Kepuasan Pasien Terhadap Pelayanan di Rumah Sakit Umum Daerah Dr. H. Mohamad Rabain Kabupaten Muara Enim Tahun 2022	Method: <i>cross-sectional</i>	Results of the Chi-Square test and logistic regression indicate that only the <i>responsiveness</i> and <i>tangible</i> variables are significantly associated with patient satisfaction, with tangible being the most dominant factor, while other variables such as age, gender, education, <i>assurance</i> , <i>empathy</i> , and <i>reliability</i> are not significantly associated.
(Widayanti et al., 2024)	Hubungan Kehandalan atau Reliability Pelayanan Keperawatan dengan Kepuasan Pasien di RS PKU Muhammadiyah Yogyakarta	Method: <i>cross-sectional</i>	Most nursing services in terms of reliability were good, and the majority of patients were satisfied; there was a significant relationship between the reliability of nursing services and patient satisfaction, although the correlation was relatively weak.
(Silitonga et al., 2024)	Hubungan Kualitas Pelayanan dengan Kepuasan Pasien Rawat Inap Pengguna BPJS di Rumah Sakit Hermina Jatinegara	Method: <i>cross-sectional</i>	The quality of service at Hermina Jatinegara Hospital is classified as good, and the majority of inpatients covered by BPJS are satisfied; therefore, continuous evaluation of nursing service quality is necessary from the patients' perspective.

The Relationship Between Service Quality and Patient Satisfaction

Healthcare service quality is a fundamental factor that directly determines the level of patient satisfaction in the outpatient unit. This relationship is positive and significant; the better the dimensions of service quality provided including reliability, responsiveness, assurance,

empathy, and tangible evidence the higher the level of satisfaction felt by patients (Esty et al., 2023). At Sengayam General Hospital, the reliability of medical staff in providing accurate care and the responsiveness of staff in addressing patient complaints serve as key indicators. Patients will feel satisfied if their on-site experience aligns with or even exceeds the expectations they held prior to their examination.

Conversely, a mismatch between service procedures and patient expectations can damage the hospital's reputation and reduce patient loyalty. Service quality is not limited to medical procedures performed by doctors or nurses but also encompasses the efficiency of registration processes, the comfort of waiting areas, and the friendliness of all staff (Sapulette et al., 2025). Although some studies indicate that patient satisfaction is dynamic and influenced by other external factors, consistency in maintaining service quality remains a key strategy for Sengayam General Hospital to ensure patients feel valued and safe.

The Influence of the Reliability Dimension

The reliability dimension refers to the ability of a healthcare institution in this case, the outpatient unit of UPTD Sengayam General Hospital to deliver promised services in a timely, accurate, and trustworthy manner from the moment a patient first arrives. In the context of outpatient care, this includes the timeliness of registration, the speed of examination by doctors, as well as the accuracy of medical procedures and medication administration (Pramesti & Hamdan, 2025). Referring to a study at PKU Muhammadiyah Hospital in Yogyakarta, reliability has a significant relationship with patient satisfaction because patients tend to assess a hospital's quality based on how consistently healthcare staff adhere to standard operating procedures (SOPs). High reliability minimizes medical and administrative errors, which psychologically fosters a sense of safety and trust in patients.

However, the influence of the reliability dimension often becomes a critical point in outpatient services with high patient volume. If there are irregularities in doctors' schedules or errors in medical record data entry, patient satisfaction levels will drop drastically even if the hospital's physical facilities are adequate. As discussed in the literature review in the JMIAK journal, reliability is one of the main pillars of the SERVQUAL dimension most frequently correlated with satisfaction because it is directly related to the clinical outcomes received by patients (Indawati, 2025).

Cost and Facilities as Factors Supporting Satisfaction

Cost is a crucial element influencing patients' perceptions of services in outpatient units, particularly regarding perceived value (Wulandari, 2024). In a study conducted at Benyamin Guluh Kolaka Hospital, costs were found to have a positive and significant influence on patient satisfaction. This indicates that patients tend to feel satisfied when the service fees they pay are perceived as commensurate with the quality of care and the friendliness of the staff they receive. At the Sengayam Regional General Hospital (RSUD), cost transparency and the alignment of fees with minimum service standards are determining factors for patients particularly those with limited financial means in assessing whether the hospital's services meet their expectations or not (Ambas et al., 2025).

Facilities include the availability of modern medical equipment, the cleanliness of waiting areas, the comfort of restrooms, and a layout that facilitates accessibility for outpatients. A literature review in the JMIAK journal confirms that adequate facilities and infrastructure are the quality indicators most easily observed directly by patients. If Sengayam General Hospital can provide clean and well-organized facilities, this will create a strong impression of professionalism, thereby enhancing patients' overall trust and satisfaction with the healthcare institution (Putri & Putri, 2024).

Patient Characteristics and Provider Factors

Patient characteristics play a crucial role in determining the level of satisfaction with healthcare services, as each individual brings different expectations and perceptions. Demographic factors such as age, gender, educational level, and socioeconomic status often influence how patients assess service quality. For example, patients with higher levels of education tend to have more specific and critical expectations regarding medical information, while health conditions or the severity of illness can also affect a patient's emotional state when providing feedback. Differences in cultural background and past experiences with healthcare facilities also shape the personal standards patients use to measure whether the services received meet their expectations or not (Aribowo et al., 2024).

The quality of communication, empathy, and friendliness of doctors, nurses, and administrative staff are often considered more memorable for patients than the sophistication of medical equipment alone. Additionally, systemic factors such as efficient wait times, facility cleanliness, and ease of access to information also play a significant role in creating a positive experience. When healthcare providers demonstrate quick responsiveness and offer genuine care, patient trust increases, which directly correlates positively with patient satisfaction and loyalty toward the healthcare institution (Sepriano et al., 2025).

The Dynamics of Patient Satisfaction

The dynamics of patient satisfaction are a complex phenomenon centered on the gap between initial expectations and the perceived reality of the care received. Psychologically, satisfaction is not static, as it is influenced by various cognitive and emotional variables, ranging from the quality of interpersonal interactions with medical staff to the comfort of physical facilities. Patients tend to engage in continuous evaluation throughout the care process, during which satisfaction may fluctuate depending on the speed of staff responses, the clarity of information provided, and the empathy demonstrated in addressing complaints (Polanunu, 2025).

In the modern healthcare landscape, these dynamics are also significantly influenced by information accessibility and technological advancements. Patients today are more discerning and have higher standards due to the ease of comparing the quality of care across healthcare providers via digital platforms. Consequently, healthcare institutions are required to focus not only on clinical aspects (recovery) but also on non-clinical aspects such as streamlined bureaucracy and personalized service. Consistency in maintaining service quality at every touchpoint is the key to retaining patient loyalty amid ever-evolving service demands.

Conclusion

Overall, patient satisfaction in the outpatient unit at Sengayam Regional General Hospital is the result of a dynamic interaction between the quality of medical care and patients' subjective perceptions of the SERVQUAL dimensions. The main conclusion indicates that the reliability dimension plays the most vital role, where staff consistency in accurately following standard operating procedures (SOPs) serves as the primary foundation of patient trust. Beyond clinical aspects, supporting factors such as cost transparency and the comfort of physical facilities have proven significant in shaping perceived value. This dynamic of satisfaction is not static but continues to evolve alongside patients' demographic characteristics and the ease of accessing digital information, which makes the public's expectations regarding healthcare services increasingly critical and personalized.

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