

# A Systematic Literature Review: Determinants of Hospital Service Quality

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**Abstract.** The low quality of hospital services is caused by patient dissatisfaction with the attitudes and behavior of staff, such as delays in doctor and nurse services, difficulty in seeing a doctor, lack of communication and information, lengthy hospital stays, and irregularities and cleanliness of the hospital environment. This article aims to explore conceptual research on service quality using a systematic literature review approach based on the PRISMA guidelines. Of the 25 articles analyzed, it was found that research on service quality focuses on three main variables, namely *customer/patient satisfaction, revisit intention, and Behavioral intention*. The results of the study indicate inconsistent influences between variables, with some studies finding significant effects and others not. These findings are expected to serve as a consideration for hospitals in improving service quality as a key determinant of patient satisfaction.

**Keywords:** Variable determinants, service quality, hospital, systematic literature review, PRISMA

## 1. Introduction

Quality is a crucial tool for service organizations to remain competitive because it directly influences consumer repurchase intentions. Return visits arise when customers respond positively to the service they receive. In the era of globalization, various institutions, including hospitals, compete to provide excellent service. Patients tend to return if their needs are met, particularly when it comes to service quality and a positive hospital image, which then triggers word of mouth. Despite increasing attention to quality, patients' perspectives are often overlooked, even though their input regarding expectations and service experiences is equally important to quality improvement efforts. Understanding patient needs helps understand their perceptions of healthcare services and uncovers areas of weakness.

In developing countries, there are two types of service providers: public and private hospitals. The choice of hospital and experienced doctors is an important factor influencing treatment outcomes [1]. Public hospitals are government-run, while private hospitals tend to have greater funding and are able to provide more personalized services. Various studies have shown that patients prefer private hospitals due to better technology, minimal waiting times, hygienic environments, and more personalized service from doctors and nurses [1]. Various studies on service quality emphasize the importance of exploring the views of service providers and recipients to understand the dimensions of expectations and perceptions in designing quality services [2].

The demand for superior healthcare services is increasing, requiring hospitals to meet patient needs [3]. Pressure to improve quality has led service providers, researchers, hospital administrators, and policymakers to strive to build patient satisfaction and loyalty [4], especially since the cost of attracting new patients is higher than retaining existing patients [5]. Quality in the service sector is multidimensional and is measured through an evaluation process between

user expectations and perceptions [6]. Therefore, service providers need to ensure mutual service and assess it continuously [7].

In the context of hospitals, healthcare services are a crucial element. Research shows a strong relationship between care and patient outcomes [8], and places nurses as a key factor influencing patient satisfaction [9]. Satisfaction is also influenced by the environmental conditions of healthcare facilities [10], including equipment, infrastructure, appearance, physical facilities, and communication materials [11]. The physical appearance of a hospital also shapes a patient's first impression [10], while reception services such as registration, appointments, and staff attitudes influence patient expectations and perceptions [12]. Efficient admission procedures, easy ambulance access, on-time appointments, and simple flow improve patient assessment of service quality [13]. Dissatisfaction arises when expectations are higher than the actual performance of the service provider [14].

Perceived service quality has a positive relationship with patient satisfaction and behavioral intentions, where satisfaction acts as a mediator [15]. In healthcare, patient satisfaction is a common indicator for assessing quality, and research shows a positive relationship between the two [1]. Satisfaction can also be measured through the difference between expected and perceived quality [16].

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1 Service Quality

The quality revolution has had a major impact on organizational management systems. Good service quality is a crucial element for organizational success in industrial competition [17]. This quality reflects the level of knowledge, ability, and willingness of employees in serving customers [18]. Therefore, service quality is a priority so that services can meet patient expectations [19]. Service quality is understood as the difference between customer expectations and their perceptions of the services received [20][21], thus becoming a strategic factor to improve organizational performance in tight competition [22]. Thus, service quality describes the gap between what customers expect and their experience after receiving the service [23].

In the context of health, service quality is very important because it directly influences the sustainability of healthy human resources and national development [24]. Health service quality is defined as the provision of appropriate services to achieve appropriate results [25]. As a key element for service providers to achieve excellence, quality must be improved and measured effectively [26]. In hospital services, quality is the difference between patient perceptions and expectations [27][28], measured by the extent to which services meet or exceed their expectations [29]. Service quality is also complex because it encompasses various dimensions in one unit [30].

### 2.2 Customer or Patient Satisfaction

Satisfaction is defined as a feeling of pleasure when someone has or achieves something of value [31]. In the context of healthcare, patient satisfaction is the match between patient expectations and their perceptions of the quality of the service received [32]. Patient satisfaction is a key indicator of healthcare quality and must be continuously assessed to maintain the smooth operation of healthcare facilities [33]. Due to the importance of this issue, governments in various countries strive to ensure that their citizens receive satisfactory services [34]. Patient satisfaction has long been an important part of patient-centered care and is a crucial element in healthcare quality [35]. In general, satisfaction occurs when patients' perceptions of the service match their expectations [36]. Patient satisfaction is also assessed as a patient's assessment after

receiving medical results and comparing them with their expectations, as well as as a feeling that arises from the experience of the service received [37].

Patient satisfaction encompasses their attitudes and perceptions towards healthcare services [38], and describes the pleasure or comfort they feel when using the service [39]. It can be measured by summing subscores for various aspects of the service experience [40]. This satisfaction can be predicted by service dimensions such as empathy, accommodation, and responsiveness, as well as other factors such as medical procedures, availability and continuity of services, trust in the service provider, and service efficiency [41]. Ultimately, patient satisfaction is a psychological state that arises from an emotional response to a service experience based on previous impressions [42].

### **2.3 Loyalty**

Patient loyalty describes the likelihood of a person to continue performing a certain behavior consistently [43]. Behavioral intentions can be categorized as favorable or unfavorable loyalty: favorable loyalty is demonstrated through positive responses such as recommendations, commitment, and willingness to pay more, while unfavorable loyalty is seen through negative attitudes such as switching to another provider or reducing interaction with the organization [44]. Loyalty is an important factor for business success and can only be built through good service quality that can increase customer satisfaction [45].

### **2.4 Corporate Image**

Corporate image is understood as the overall impression formed in the minds of the public about an organization [47]. This image is a consumer perception reflected through various associations stored in their memories. When corporate image is designed and managed effectively, it becomes a very potential marketing strategy to attract today's consumers [48].

### **2.5 Revisit Intention**

Revisit intention is a person's tendency to return to a service based on a positive experience previously obtained [31]. This term also refers to a visitor's intention to return within a certain period of time and their willingness to make repeat visits [56]. Revisit intention occurs through visitors' evaluation of their perceived value and level of satisfaction [57]. Satisfaction then drives loyalty, consumer commitment, and interest in repurchasing or switching brands, so that revisit intention becomes a natural continuation of the satisfaction that arises from the initial interaction [57].

### **2.6 Behavioral Intention**

Behavioral dimensions include loyalty to the company, tendency to switch, willingness to pay more, and external and internal responses [54]. Intention describes a person's willingness to provide services to others and make repeat purchases [55]. In addition, behavioral intention also reflects a person's general attitude, whether he or she likes or dislikes using a particular information system [55].

### **2.7 Systematic Literature Review**

Systematic Literature Review (SLR) is a research method that includes establishing research objectives, literature collection procedures, inclusion and exclusion criteria, data extraction processes, and synthesizing specific topics [58]. Literature reviews help researchers formulate questions and find relevant answers [59], allowing researchers to examine various questions related to their research topics [60]. The systematic literature review method is widely

used by researchers and scholars because its structured writing approach can minimize bias and reduce the influence of emotional judgment in the research process [61].

### **3. Research Method**

#### **3.1 PRISMA**

The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines are used in systematic literature observation, with stages that include determining eligibility criteria, determining information sources, selecting information sources, selecting data, data collection processes, determining data items to be taken, and reaffirming eligibility criteria as part of the procedures collected [62].

#### **3.2 Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria**

This study employed mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative) to identify variables influencing service quality in hospitals. Keywords were selected to ensure search results reflect a broad and up-to-date scope of service quality. Of the 180 journals found, the selection process yielded 19 articles suitable for analysis.

#### **3.3 Resources**

Sources of information and references were obtained through one of the leading online databases, namely Emerald Insight.

#### **3.4 Study Selection**

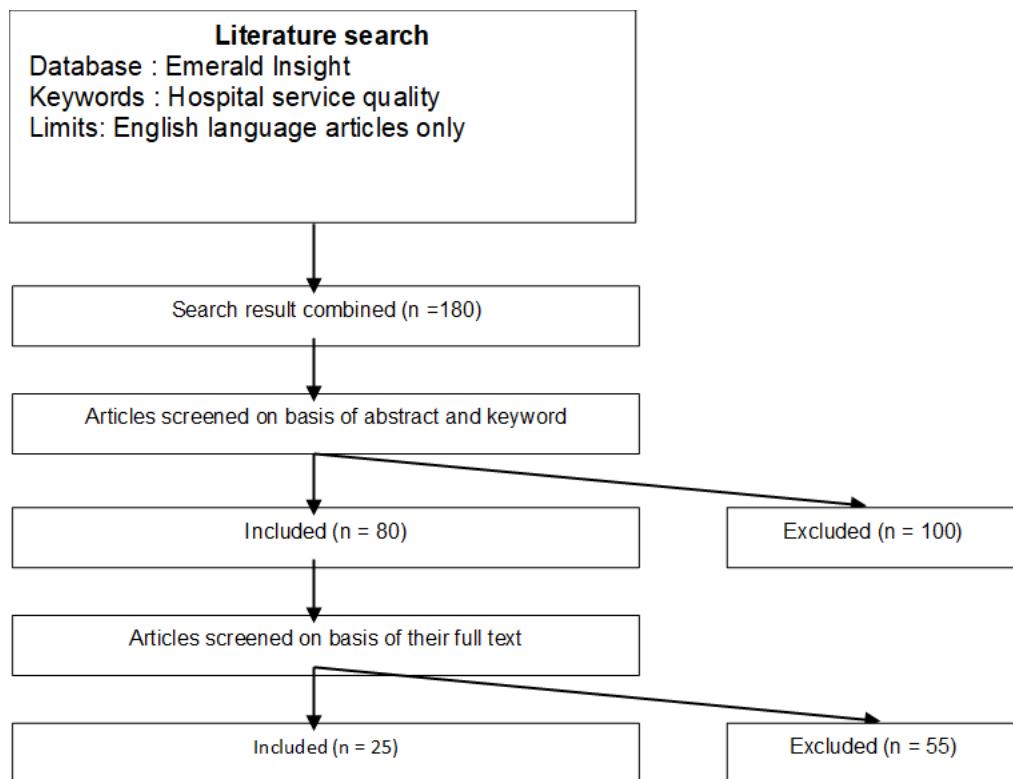
The study selection process is carried out in three stages, namely: determining keywords that are appropriate to the research objectives and topics, searching for and selecting articles based on eligibility criteria, then reviewing all eligible articles and selecting the most relevant ones.

#### **3.5 Data Collection Process**

The information sources in this study were obtained manually through data extraction based on content analysis, including the type of article, journal name, year of publication, research topic and title, methods used, respondent data, variables related to determining factors, and findings regarding the influence of determining variables on patient satisfaction.

#### **3.6 Item Data**

Information collected from each article includes the year of publication, author, number of samples, research objectives, variables used, determining factors, and findings regarding the influence of these determining factors on service quality.

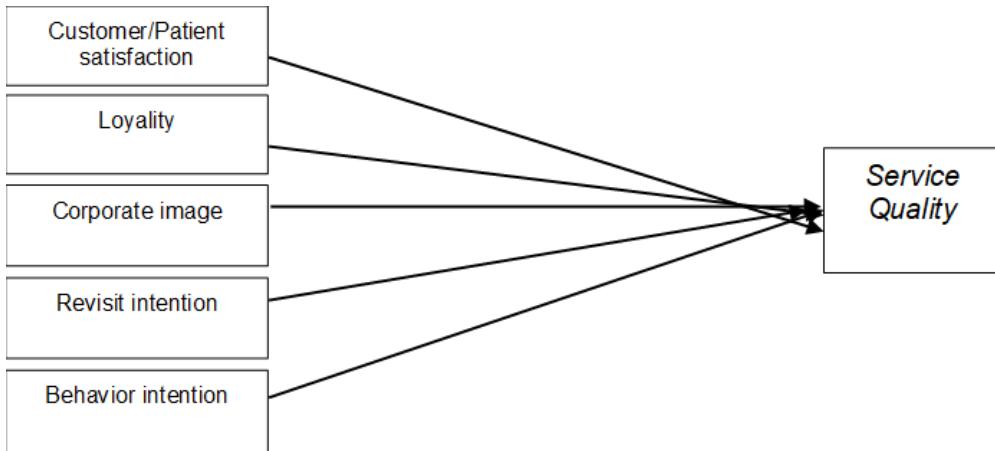


**Figure 1.** PRISMA Flow Diagram

#### 4. Finding and Discussion

A search of the Emerald database using the keywords "service quality" and "hospital service quality" yielded 180 English-language articles. Screening through abstracts and keywords yielded 80 articles, and 55 were eliminated after a full review, leaving 25 for analysis. These articles were used to identify determinants of hospital service quality, with service quality as the dependent variable measured through various indicators. The five main factors identified were patient satisfaction, loyalty, corporate image, revisit intention, and behavioral intention.

Patient satisfaction is a key determinant, as explained by [31], [10], [33], and [34], which explains that satisfaction arises from the service experience and is a key indicator of healthcare quality. The next factor is loyalty, which according to [81], [82], [43], and [44] is related to continued patient relationships, recommendations, and positive and negative responses to services. Corporate image also plays a role, understood as the public's overall impression of the organization [47], associations in consumers' memories, and strategies for attracting customers [48], and influences behaviors such as loyalty [83]. Repurchase intention is influenced by perceived value and satisfaction [57] as well as previous service experience [31]. Finally, behavioral intention describes a person's tendency to use or recommend a service and willingness to make repeat purchases [55].



**Figure 2.** Variables Determining The Quality Of Hospital Services

**Table 1.** Determinants of sustainable competitive advantage

NO.	Determinant Variable	Previous Research	Results	Conclusion
1.	<i>Quality of Service</i>	Rahmantya et al. [63] Fiakpa et al. [64] Lim et al. [65] Rahman et al. [66] Lai et al. [67] Altaf et al. [68] Jain et al. [69] Alfarizi and Ngatidriatun [70]	Significant (+) Significant (-) Significant (+) Significant (+) Significant (+) Significant (+) Significant (-) Significant (+) Significant (+)	Positive Trend Inconsistent
2.	<i>Customer/Patient Satisfaction</i>	Almomani et al. [71] Fatima et al. [72] Lim et al. [65] Joseph [73] Shyh et al. [74] Verma et al. [75] Javed and Liu [76] Nkrumah et al. [77] Ismail et al. [78] Alfarizi and Ngatidriatun [70] Swain and Kar [79]	Significant (+) Significant (+) Significant (+) Significant (+) Significant (+) Significant (+) Significant (+) Significant (+) Significant (-) Significant (+) Significant (+)	Positive Trend Inconsistent
3.	<i>Loyalty</i>	Nkrumah et al. [77]	Significant (+)	Positive Trend
4.	<i>Corporate Image</i>	Rahman et al. [66] Countiho et al. [80]	Significant (+) Significant (+)	Positive Trend
5.	<i>Revisiting Intentions</i>	Lai et al. [68]	Significant (+)	Positive Trend
6.	<i>Behavioral Intentions</i>	Shyh et al. [76] Swain and Kar [81]	Significant (-) Significant (+)	Inconsistent

## 5. Conclusion

These observations indicate that patient demand for quality services is very high, requiring hospitals to be able to provide superior and sustainable services. To achieve long-term service quality, various supporting factors need to be strengthened. Of the 180 articles reviewed, 25 met the criteria and identified five key factors influencing service quality: patient satisfaction, loyalty, corporate image, revisit intention, and behavioral intention. However, findings across studies showed inconsistent results, with some articles finding a strong relationship while others showed no significant correlation. Therefore, further research is needed to further explore the causes of this inconsistency to strengthen understanding of how hospital service quality is determined.

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