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The Relationship Between The Quality Of Health Services And Patient Loyalty In Hospitals: A Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Healthcare quality is one of the factors influencing patient loyalty to a hospital. This study aims to analyze the relationship between healthcare quality and patient loyalty through a literature review using the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) approach. A literature search was conducted through Google Scholar and PubMed databases using relevant keywords. Articles published between 2017 and 2026, available in full text, in Indonesian or English, and discussing the relationship between healthcare quality and patient loyalty were selected based on inclusion and exclusion criteria. Of the 17,362 identified articles, six met the criteria for descriptive narrative analysis. The review results showed that all articles reported a significant relationship between healthcare quality and patient loyalty. The dimensions of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy were consistently associated with patient loyalty, while the tangible dimension did not show a significant relationship in one study. These findings indicate that improving service quality, particularly in the aspects of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, plays a crucial role in enhancing patient loyalty and supporting the sustainability of hospital service quality.

Keywords: Quality of Health Services; Patient Loyalty; Hospitals.

INTRODUCTION

Healthcare services in hospitals typically include services that focus on caregiver activities. Furthermore, the increasing number of hospitals managed by the Indonesian government and the private sector demands that hospitals provide the highest possible level of service, professionalism, and expertise, reflecting the highest quality of service, increasing patient satisfaction, and fostering patient loyalty.(Arief Fardiansyah, Dwi Helynarti Syurandhari, 2022). Health efforts can be carried out through facilities or places, namely health services. One form of facility that provides health services is a hospital. According to the Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 44 of 2009 concerning Hospitals, a hospital is a health service institution that provides various services such as inpatient, outpatient, and emergency services on an individual and comprehensive basis, which includes several activities, namely promotive, preventive, curative, and rehabilitative. Along with the increasing population in Indonesia, it is a consideration for the growth of various forms of hospitals that compete with each other to provide quality health services with quality that meets standards.(Oktavia & Prayoga, 2023).

The quality of healthcare services is a crucial component in improving the quality of the healthcare system and serves as a strategic indicator for assessing hospital performance. In the development of modern healthcare, hospitals are not only required to provide effective medical services but also services that meet

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patient expectations in terms of comfort, speed, accuracy, safety, and interpersonal interaction.(Bas & Syahria, 2025). According to Goetsh and Davis in Tjiptono, quality is a dynamic condition related to products, services, people, processes, and environments that meet or exceed expectations. Meanwhile, Buddy defines quality as a basic business strategy that produces goods and services that meet the needs and satisfaction of internal and external consumers, explicitly and implicitly. The dimensions of service quality according to Lupiyoadi and Hamdani are tangible evidence, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.(Putu Hema Maharani, 2023).

Patient loyalty is a direct result of patient satisfaction. Loyal patients are those who consistently choose and use healthcare services from a particular provider (Aini et al., 2021). Patient loyalty is a strategic goal for healthcare facilities because it positively impacts operational sustainability, reputation, and financial stability. However, healthcare facilities are still aware that patient satisfaction and loyalty do not always go hand in hand. Some patients may be satisfied with the service provided but not become repeat customers, while others may be loyal but not completely satisfied with the service provided.(Laila & Paramarta, nd).

Various previous studies have shown that the quality of healthcare services has a positive relationship with patient loyalty. One study at the Outpatient Facility of Sultan Agung Islamic Hospital in Banjarbaru obtained a correlation coefficient of 0.662 with a significance value of 0.000, indicating a positive and significant relationship between service quality and patient loyalty. These results indicate that the better the quality of service provided, the higher the patient's loyalty to the healthcare facility. However, research results on the relationship between healthcare service quality and patient loyalty still show variations in the strength of the relationship and the most influential dimensions of service quality. These differences may be influenced by patient characteristics, the type of healthcare facility, the research location, and the research methods used.(Dyah Khoirunnisa, et al. 2026).

Therefore, this literature review was conducted with the aim of identifying, analyzing, and synthesizing various research findings regarding the relationship between healthcare service quality and patient loyalty. This study aims to obtain a comprehensive overview of the influence of healthcare service quality on patient loyalty, identify the dimensions of service quality that play the most important role in shaping patient loyalty, and provide information that can serve as a basis for healthcare facilities to improve service quality and maintain patient loyalty.

METHOD

This study used a literature review method with the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) approach. The literature review was conducted to identify, analyze, and synthesize research findings on the relationship between healthcare quality and patient loyalty. A literature search was conducted in July 2026 through two databases, Google Scholar and PubMed. The keywords used in the article search were "healthcare quality" OR "health service quality" AND "patient loyalty" OR "patient loyalty." The search was conducted using Boolean operators (AND and OR) to obtain articles relevant to the research topic. The inclusion criteria for this study included: (1) original research articles, (2) published between 2022 and 2026, (3) available in full text, (4) written in Indonesian or English, and (5) discussing the relationship between healthcare quality and patient loyalty in hospitals. The exclusion criteria included review articles, proceedings, undergraduate theses, and dissertations, articles not available in full text, articles published outside the 2022 and 2026 period, duplicated articles, and articles not relevant to the research topic.

Based on the search results, 17,300 articles were obtained from Google Scholar and 62 articles from PubMed, resulting in a total of 17,362 identified articles. A screening process was then carried out based on the year of publication, full text availability, and article duplication, resulting in 11,334 articles that met the screening stage. In the next stage, selection was carried out based on the title and abstract until 20 articles were obtained that met the requirements for eligibility assessment. After a comprehensive assessment of the article content according to the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 14 articles were excluded because they did not match the research objectives, resulting in 6 articles that met the inclusion criteria and were used in the analysis process. The flow of the article selection process is presented in Figure 1 using a PRISMA diagram.

Data were analyzed using narrative descriptive analysis by identifying and comparing the characteristics of each article, including author, research title, research location, and research findings. The results from each

article were then synthesized to obtain a comprehensive picture of the relationship between healthcare quality and patient loyalty in hospitals.

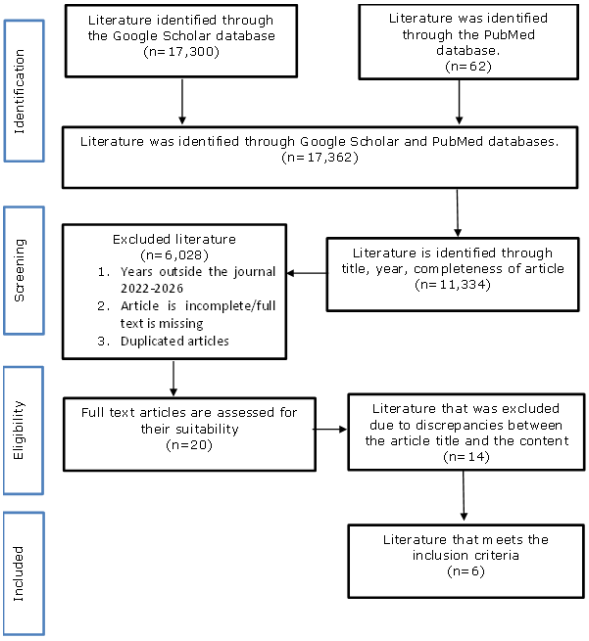


Figure 1. PRISMA Chart

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results

After carrying out the identification, screening, and feasibility assessment processes based on inclusion and exclusion criteria using the PRISMA diagram, 6 articles were obtained that met the criteria and were used in this literature review:

Table 1. Article Review Results

Writer	Title	Location	Results
(Arief Fardiansyah, Dwi Helynarti Syurandhari, 2022)	The Relationship between Service Quality and Satisfaction with Outpatient Loyalty at Tiara Fatrin Hospital, Palembang	Tiara Fatrin Hospital for Women and Children in Palembang	Most respondents rated service quality as good (53.9%), were satisfied (59.6%), and were loyal (61.5%). There was a significant relationship between service quality and patient loyalty (p = 0.001) and a significant relationship between patient satisfaction and patient loyalty (p = 0.000).
(Sari et al., 2023)	The Relationship between the Quality of Health Services and the Loyalty of Non-Insured Patients at Hospital X Purwodadi	Hospital Purwodadi	The results of the Chi-Square test show that all dimensions of service quality have a significant relationship with non-insurance patient loyalty, namely tangible evidence (p=0.000), reliability (p=0.000), responsiveness (p=0.000), assurance (p=0.000), and empathy (p=0.000). The better the quality of service perceived by patients, the higher the level of patient loyalty.
(Noor Aliyah, Alimin Maidin, 2024)	The Relationship between Service Quality and Patient Satisfaction with Patient Loyalty at Dr. Tadjuddin Chalid General Hospital, Makassar	Dr. Tadjuddin Chalid General Hospital, Makassar	The results of the bivariate analysis showed a significant relationship between service quality and patient loyalty at Dr. Tadjuddin Chalid General Hospital, Makassar, with a p-value of 0.007 (<0.05). The better the quality of service provided, the higher the patient's loyalty to the hospital.
(Costantia et al., 2025)	The Relationship between Service Quality and Patient Loyalty at H.	H. Padjonga Dg Ngalle Regional	The analysis results show that all dimensions of service quality have a significant relationship with patient loyalty, namely tangibles (p=0.029), reliability

	Padjonga Dg Ngalle Regional Hospital, Takalar Regency	Hospital, Takalar Regency	(p=0.003), responsiveness (p=0.024), assurance (p=0.016), and empathy (p=0.008). This indicates that the better the quality of service received by patients, the higher their loyalty to the hospital.
(Miftahul Jannah, 2024)	The Relationship between Quality of Health Services and Patient Loyalty at Vina Estetika Hospital	Vina Aesthetic Hospital	The dimensions of reliability (p=0.001), responsiveness (p=0.001), assurance (p=0.001), and empathy (p=0.001) are significantly related to patient loyalty, while the tangible dimension (p=0.063) is not significantly related to patient loyalty.
(Fatima et al., 2025)	The Relationship Between Service Quality and Satisfaction with Patient Loyalty	Diamond IHC inpatient room, Lavalette Hospital, Malang	There is a positive and significant relationship between service quality and patient loyalty (r = 0.695; p = 0.000). The better the service quality, the higher the patient loyalty.

Discussion

Patient loyalty is a patient's commitment to continue using health services at the same health facility repeatedly and is willing to recommend the hospital to others.(Rayhani Ichsan, 2025)Patient loyalty is influenced by various factors, one of which is the quality of service provided by the hospital. According to Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry, service quality consists of five dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy.(Azwari et al., 2024). Services that meet or even exceed patient expectations will increase trust and thus encourage patient loyalty.

Based on a review of six articles, all studies showed a significant relationship between service quality and patient loyalty. The better the quality of service a patient receives, the higher their loyalty to the hospital. This loyalty is demonstrated by patients' willingness to return to the hospital, their reluctance to switch to other healthcare facilities, and their willingness to recommend the hospital to family and others.

Research by Arief Fardiansyah et al. (2022) showed that the majority of respondents rated the service quality at Tiara Fatrin Palembang Hospital as good (53.9%), were satisfied with the service provided (59.6%), and had a high level of loyalty (61.5%). The results of statistical tests showed a significant relationship between service quality and patient loyalty (p=0.001) and a significant relationship between patient satisfaction and patient loyalty (p=0.000). These findings indicate that good service quality can increase patient satisfaction, which in turn contributes to the formation of patient loyalty. Patients who receive services that meet or exceed their expectations will have higher trust in the hospital, so they are more likely to use health services at the same hospital again and recommend it to others.

Research by Sari et al. (2023) shows that all dimensions of service quality tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy have a significant relationship with non-insured patient loyalty. The Chi-Square test results show that each dimension has a significance value of p=0.000, meaning all dimensions of service quality play a role in shaping patient loyalty. These findings indicate that patient loyalty is not solely influenced by a single aspect of service but is the result of overall quality service. Adequate facilities, reliable service, prompt response to patient needs, the ability of healthcare workers to provide a sense of security, and empathy toward patients can create a positive service experience. This experience will increase patient trust in the hospital, encouraging patients to return to the service, continue to choose the hospital when in need of healthcare services, and recommend it to others.

Research by Noor Aliyah et al. (2024) showed a significant relationship between service quality and patient loyalty at Dr. Tadjuddin Chalid General Hospital, Makassar, with a bivariate test result of p=0.007 (p<0.05). These results indicate that service quality is a factor that plays a role in increasing patient loyalty. The better the quality of service provided by the hospital, both in terms of service accuracy, staff friendliness, speed in treating patients, and the ability to provide a sense of security and comfort, the higher the patient's loyalty to the hospital. Patients who receive services according to their expectations tend to have greater trust in the hospital, so they are willing to return to use health services when needed, and recommend the hospital to others and family.

Research by Costantia et al. (2025) showed that all dimensions of service quality have a significant relationship with patient loyalty. The analysis results showed that the dimensions of tangible evidence

(p=0.029), reliability (p=0.003), responsiveness (p=0.024), assurance (p=0.016), and empathy (p=0.008) were significantly related to patient loyalty. These findings indicate that patient loyalty is influenced by the overall quality of service provided, both in terms of physical facilities and the quality of interactions between healthcare workers and patients. Clean and comfortable facilities, appropriate and reliable services, quick responses to patient needs, the ability of staff to provide a sense of security, and empathy during the service process will create a positive experience for patients. This experience will increase patient trust and satisfaction, thus encouraging them to return to hospital services and continue to choose that hospital when requiring healthcare services.

Miftahul Jannah's (2024) research shows that the dimensions of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy have a significant relationship with patient loyalty, each with a p value of 0.001. Meanwhile, the tangible dimension did not show a significant relationship with patient loyalty (p = 0.063). These results indicate that patient loyalty is more influenced by the quality of service related to the interaction between healthcare workers and patients than by the physical condition of the hospital. The reliability of staff in providing appropriate services, responsiveness to patient needs, the ability to provide a sense of security, and empathy during the service process can increase patient trust and comfort, thus encouraging loyalty. The insignificance of the tangible dimension indicates that physical facilities are not a primary consideration for patients in determining their loyalty. Patients tend to value professional, responsive, and needs-oriented services more than purely physical aspects.

Research by Fatima et al. (2025) shows a positive and significant relationship between service quality and patient loyalty, with a correlation coefficient of r = 0.695 and a significance value of p = 0.000. These results indicate that service quality has a strong relationship with patient loyalty, where the better the quality of service provided by the hospital, the higher the patient loyalty. Quality services, such as fast, accurate, friendly service, and supported by adequate facilities, can provide a positive experience for patients. This experience will increase patient trust and confidence in the hospital, thus encouraging them to return to use health services when needed, not easily switch to other hospitals, and are willing to recommend the hospital.

CONCLUSION

The literature review results indicate that healthcare service quality has a significant relationship with patient loyalty in hospitals. Of the six articles that met the inclusion criteria, all studies reported that the better the quality of service received by patients, the higher the level of patient loyalty to the hospital. The service quality dimensions most consistently related to patient loyalty were reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, while the tangible dimension (physical evidence) in one study did not show a significant relationship. These findings suggest that improving healthcare service quality, particularly in the aspects of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy, can increase patient trust, encourage patients to return to healthcare services, and increase patients' willingness to recommend the hospital to others.

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