

The Impact of Hospital Accreditation on Healthcare Service Quality and Patient Safety: A Systematic Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

Hospital accreditation has been widely implemented as a strategy to improve healthcare quality and patient safety. However, evidence regarding its effectiveness remains inconsistent across healthcare settings. Therefore, this study aims to systematically review the current evidence on the impact of hospital accreditation on healthcare quality and patient safety. A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) was conducted following the 2020 Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines. A literature search was conducted in Google Scholar, PubMed, ScienceDirect, and Garuda databases using predefined search terms. Articles published between 2017 and 2026 were screened according to predefined inclusion and exclusion criteria, and 20 eligible studies were analyzed using a narrative synthesis approach. Findings indicate that hospital accreditation generally improves adherence to quality standards, patient safety culture, organizational governance, clinical documentation, healthcare worker competency, and patient satisfaction. However, the sustainability of these improvements depends on leadership commitment, organizational readiness, adequate resources, and ongoing quality improvement after accreditation. These findings suggest that hospital accreditation should be implemented as a continuous quality improvement strategy, not merely as a certification process but also as a means to support hospital administrators and policymakers in strengthening healthcare quality and patient safety. This review includes 20 references, 1 tables, and 1 figures.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTION

- A. Conception and design of the study;
- B. Acquisition of data;
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INTRODUCTION

Healthcare quality has become a global priority due to increasing public expectations for safe, effective, patient-centered, and high-quality healthcare. Hospitals are expected not only to provide appropriate medical care but also to continuously improve healthcare quality through effective quality management systems. Consequently, hospital accreditation has been widely adopted as an external quality assurance mechanism to evaluate healthcare organizations against predetermined standards and to encourage continuous quality improvement. Accreditation aims to improve healthcare quality by enhancing organizational performance, strengthening clinical governance, standardizing healthcare processes, and ensuring patient safety. Although accreditation has been implemented in

many countries, its effectiveness in improving healthcare quality remains a topic of significant debate as reported outcomes vary across healthcare environments and organizational contexts (Lewis & Hinchcliff, 2023; Alhawajreh et al., 2023).

In Indonesia, hospital accreditation has become a crucial component of the national healthcare quality improvement strategy. Hospitals are required to adhere to accreditation standards set by the national accreditation body while implementing National Quality Indicators (NIM) to continuously monitor healthcare quality. Accreditation is expected to improve healthcare quality, increase patient satisfaction, strengthen patient safety practices, and build a culture of continuous quality improvement. However, several studies report that maintaining accreditation standards remains a challenge due to limited human resources, lack of organizational commitment, inadequate monitoring and evaluation, and inconsistent implementation of quality improvement programs. These findings suggest that accreditation should be considered a continuous quality improvement process, rather than simply a certification requirement (Fitriani et al., 2024; Fauziah et al., 2025; Muslimah, 2026).

Previous studies have consistently reported that hospital accreditation positively contributes to healthcare quality. A comprehensive review by Lewis and Hinchcliff (2023) showed that accreditation is associated with improved organizational effectiveness, efficiency, patient-centered care, and healthcare quality, although evidence supporting a direct causal relationship is limited. Similarly, Alhawajreh et al. (2023) concluded that accreditation is internationally recognized as an important quality improvement strategy, but its effectiveness depends on several contextual factors, including leadership, staff engagement, organizational culture, and sustained implementation. Similar findings have been reported in studies in Indonesia, which showed that accreditation improves healthcare quality, strengthens a culture of patient safety, increases adherence to healthcare standards, and enhances patient satisfaction (Miandi & Peristiowati, 2022; Purwanto et al., 2023; Sukarno, 2025).

Collectively, these findings suggest that accreditation provides substantial benefits to healthcare organizations when its implementation is supported by effective management and continuous quality improvement initiatives. Despite this growing body of evidence, several research gaps remain. First, previous studies primarily examined the effects of accreditation on specific aspects of healthcare quality, such as patient safety, organizational performance, or service quality, rather than comprehensively synthesizing these findings. Second, many published studies used cross-sectional designs or focused on a single healthcare institution, thus limiting the generalizability of their findings and providing limited evidence regarding the long-term sustainability of accreditation outcomes. Third, previous reviews have reported inconsistent conclusions regarding the effectiveness of accreditation because organizational characteristics, implementation strategies, leadership commitment, and quality management systems vary widely across hospitals. Furthermore, available evidence regarding the integration of hospital accreditation with the implementation of National Quality Indicators (NIMs) remains limited, particularly in the Indonesian healthcare system (Lewis & Hinchcliff, 2023; Alhawajreh et al., 2023).

Therefore, a comprehensive synthesis of available evidence is needed to provide a clearer understanding of the relationship between hospital accreditation and healthcare quality. Unlike previous studies that focused on individual outcomes or specific healthcare settings, this systematic literature review integrates findings from national and international studies to identify consistent evidence, conflicting findings, and factors influencing the effectiveness of accreditation in improving healthcare quality. The findings of this review are expected to provide valuable evidence for hospital managers, healthcare professionals, policymakers, and researchers in strengthening accreditation implementation and promoting continuous quality improvement. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to systematically review and synthesize published evidence regarding the impact of hospital accreditation on healthcare quality, identify factors influencing successful accreditation implementation, and summarize existing research gaps for future research. This study was conducted using a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines to ensure a transparent, systematic, and reproducible review process.

METHOD

This study used a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to comprehensively synthesize existing evidence regarding the impact of hospital accreditation on healthcare quality. This review was conducted following the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA 2020) guidelines to ensure a systematic, transparent, and reproducible review process. A systematic literature review was chosen because it allows for the identification, critical appraisal, and synthesis of relevant scientific evidence to answer the research question while minimizing selection bias. A literature search was conducted using several electronic databases, including PubMed, Scopus, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, Google Scholar, and Garuda. A combination of keywords was used to retrieve relevant studies, including hospital accreditation, healthcare quality, quality improvement, hospital quality, and patient safety. These keywords were combined using the Boolean operators AND and OR to optimize search results. The search was limited to articles published between 2017 and 2026 in English and Indonesian. Only full-text articles focusing on the relationship between hospital accreditation and healthcare quality were considered for inclusion in this review.

The study selection process followed the PRISMA 2020 framework. Initially, 26 articles were identified through a database search. All identified articles were screened based on their titles and abstracts to determine their relevance to the study objectives. Next, the full texts of eligible articles were assessed according to predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria included original research articles, systematic reviews, and literature reviews addressing hospital accreditation and healthcare quality. Conference proceedings, editorials, opinion papers, duplicate publications, inaccessible full-text articles, and studies unrelated to the study objectives were excluded. After an eligibility assessment, six articles were excluded for not meeting the inclusion criteria. Consequently, 20 articles were included in the final qualitative synthesis. The full article selection process is presented in Figure 1.

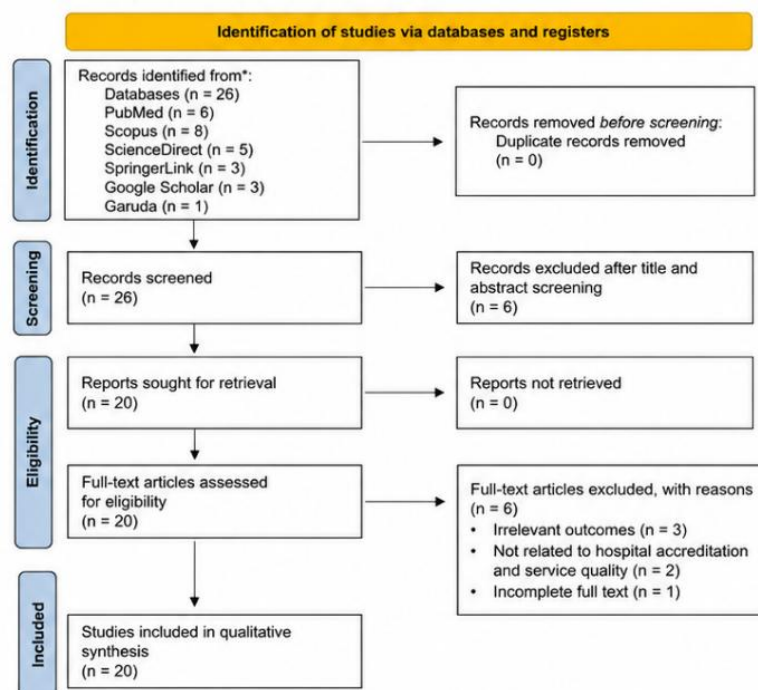


Figure 1.
PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram

Data extraction was performed using a standardized data extraction form to ensure consistency throughout the review process. Information extracted from each study included authors, year of publication, country, study design, study objectives, study population, variables studied, data collection methods, and key findings. The extracted data were then organized into a data extraction table to facilitate comparison of study characteristics and research findings across included articles.

The extracted data was analyzed using a narrative synthesis approach. Studies reporting similar findings were grouped into several key themes, including the impact of hospital accreditation on healthcare quality, patient safety, patient satisfaction, organizational performance, and factors influencing successful accreditation implementation. The synthesis was used to identify similarities and differences among previous studies, summarize current evidence, identify existing research gaps, and formulate recommendations for future research on hospital accreditation and healthcare quality.

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Results

A literature search identified 26 articles from PubMed, Scopus, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, Google Scholar and GARUDA. After title and abstract screening and full-text eligibility assessment, six articles were excluded because they did not meet the inclusion criteria. Finally, 20 studies were included in the qualitative synthesis. Articles were limited to publications published between 2017 and 2026, in both English and Indonesian.

Inclusion criteria included studies addressing the impact of hospital accreditation on service quality, patient safety, safety culture, quality indicators, and patient satisfaction. Conversely, articles in the form of editorials, opinion pieces, proceedings, and research not directly related to the implementation of hospital accreditation were excluded from the analysis.

Table 1.

Characteristics of Included Studies

Author	Year	Design	Sample	Main outcome
Devkaran & O'Farrell	2017	Interrupted Time Series	12.000 records	Quality indicators improved after accreditation
Hussein et al	2021	Systematic review	76 studies	Positive effect on safety culture and performance
Al-surimi et al	2021	Pre post study	300 staff	Improved patient safety culture
Al-sayedahmed et al	2021	observational	Hospital KPI	Accreditation maintained IPSG compliance
Miandi & Peristiwati	2022	Systematic Review	20 articles	Improved quality and patient safety
Lewis & Hinchcliff	2023	Umbrella Review	33 reviews	Evidence generally positive but heterogeneous
Alhawajreh et al.	2023	Systematic Review	Multiple studies	Implementation factors determine accreditation success
Purwanto et al.	2023	Systematic Review	10 studies	Positive influence on patient safety culture
Primasa & Kosasih	2024	Case study	Hospital staff	Improved quality and patient safety
Octavia	2024	Literature Review	25 studies	Positive and negative impacts identified
Fitriani et al.	2024	Qualitative	RSUD Bangkinang	Several INM indicators not yet achieved
Yulinar & Dhamanti	2024	Literature Review	5 studies	Positive association with patient safety
Fauziah et al.	2025	Literature Review	Multiple studies	MFK standards not fully implemented
Riyadi et al.	2025	Systematic Review	20 studies	Improved safety culture
Pratiwi et al.	2025	Cross-sectional	102 patients	Accreditation significantly affects service quality
Widjaja	2025	Literature Review	Use the "Insert Citation" button to add citations to this document. al documents	Accreditation strengthens legal accountability

Ratnajaya et al.	2026	Cross-sectional	99 patients	Accreditation mediates service quality and satisfaction
Muslimah	2026	Literature Review	Various studies	Accreditation supports continuous quality improvement
Sukarno	2025	Literature Review	Various studies	Positive impact on quality and safety

Most included studies reported that hospital accreditation contributes to improved healthcare quality. Improvements were observed in adherence to clinical standards, implementation of standard operating procedures, clinical documentation, organizational governance, and continuous quality improvement initiatives (Pasinringi et al., 2021). Patient safety was the most frequently reported outcome in the reviewed studies. Accreditation was associated with improvements in patient identification, medication safety, infection prevention and control, communication during patient handovers, incident reporting, and adherence to patient safety standards (Hussein et al., 2021; Al-Surimi et al., 2021).

Several studies also demonstrated positive changes in patient safety culture, particularly in teamwork, communication, leadership support, organizational learning, and staff engagement following accreditation implementation (Riyadi et al., 2025). Regarding organizational performance, the reviewed studies reported improvements in hospital quality indicators, governance systems, documentation quality, accreditation compliance, and managerial accountability following accreditation implementation (Lewis & Hinchcliff, 2023; Alhawajreh et al., 2023; Muslimah, 2026). Several studies report that accreditation has a positive impact on patient satisfaction by improving the quality of healthcare services and service delivery. However, several studies found that accreditation alone is insufficient to significantly improve patient satisfaction because other service-related factors also influence patient perceptions. Although most findings are positive, several studies identified challenges during accreditation implementation, including limited human resources, financial constraints, increased administrative workload, inconsistent leadership commitment, and difficulties in maintaining quality improvements after the accreditation survey (Octavia, 2024; Fitriani et al., 2024; Fauziah et al., 2025; Alhawajreh et al., 2023).

Discussion

This systematic literature review indicates that hospital accreditation generally has a positive impact on healthcare quality, patient safety, and organizational performance. Most included studies reported improved adherence to clinical standards, implementation of standard operating procedures, governance, and continuous quality improvement after accreditation (Lewis & Hinchcliff, 2023; Muslimah, 2026).

Patient safety was the most consistently reported outcome across the reviewed studies. Accreditation contributed to better patient identification, medication safety, infection prevention, communication, and incident reporting. However, several studies also highlighted challenges, including limited human resources, increased administrative workload, financial constraints, and inconsistent leadership commitment, which may affect the sustainability of accreditation outcomes. This review identified several research gaps. Most studies used cross-sectional or literature review designs, while evidence regarding the long-term effectiveness of accreditation remains limited. In addition, studies evaluating the economic impact of accreditation, workforce well-being, and digital quality management are still scarce (Lewis & Hinchcliff, 2023).

The findings suggest that accreditation should be implemented as part of a continuous quality improvement strategy rather than solely as a certification requirement. Strengthening leadership commitment, staff competency, and continuous monitoring is essential to sustain improvements in healthcare quality and patient safety. Future studies should employ longitudinal and multicenter designs to provide stronger evidence regarding the long-term impact of hospital accreditation (Muslimah, 2026; Sukarno, 2025; Ratnajaya et al., 2026).

CONCLUSION

This systematic literature review indicates that hospital accreditation generally contributes to improvements in healthcare quality, patient safety, patient safety culture, and organizational performance. Findings indicate that accreditation supports the implementation of standard clinical practices, strengthens organizational governance, and encourages continuous quality improvement within healthcare institutions. However, the magnitude and sustainability of these improvements vary depending on leadership commitment, human resource capacity, organizational support, and consistency of accreditation implementation. Furthermore, evidence regarding the relationship between accreditation and patient satisfaction remains inconsistent, suggesting that accreditation alone is insufficient to improve all dimensions of healthcare quality.

This review advances current knowledge by synthesizing recent evidence on the impact of hospital accreditation across various healthcare settings and identifying common factors influencing successful implementation. However, this review has several limitations. The included studies used heterogeneous study designs and outcome measures, limiting direct comparisons between studies. Furthermore, most studies used cross-sectional or literature review designs, while longitudinal evidence evaluating the long-term impact of accreditation is limited.

RECOMMENDATION

Future research should employ longitudinal, multicenter, or mixed-methods designs to provide stronger evidence regarding the long-term effectiveness and sustainability of hospital accreditation. Further studies are also recommended to investigate the economic impact of accreditation, digital quality management, healthcare workforce well-being, and patient-centered outcomes to support evidence-based accreditation policies and continuous quality improvement in healthcare organizations.

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