

THE EFFECT OF SERVICE QUALITY ON PATIENT LOYALTY IN THE HOSPITAL

Putri Aulia Rosmayani^{1*}, Eva Nur Agustin², Bahiizza Shadrina Zhafarin³, Huwaydi Azzam Yusuf⁴, Riswandy Wasir⁵

Program Studi Kesehatan Masyarakat, Fakultas Ilmu Kesehatan, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional “Veteran” Jakarta^{1,2,3,4,5}

*Corresponding Author : 2010713025@mahasiswa.upnvj.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The quality of health services plays a crucial role in meeting patient needs and expectations, including optimal health service standards and accessible resources. Patients demand superior and high-quality health services that generate trust and protection, leading to repeated visits to hospitals. This study aims to investigate the impact of service quality on patient loyalty in hospitals through a systematic review method. The authors conducted a literature search using Google Scholar and SAGE databases, including open access articles with full text, relevance, an International Standard Serial Number (ISSN), and published in English and Indonesian from 2019 to 2022. The study's findings reveal that service quality significantly affects patient loyalty, with at least five dimensions of service quality associated with loyalty, namely reliability, assurance, responsiveness, tangibles, and empathy. The analysis of seven articles shows that high-quality health services can enhance patient satisfaction, leading to a positive impact on patient loyalty. The dimensions of service quality are essential for hospitals to understand and implement to foster patient loyalty and repeat visits. This study highlights the need for hospitals to focus on delivering high-quality health services that meet patients' expectations and needs. By doing so, hospitals can improve patient loyalty and generate long-term benefits for both patients and healthcare providers.

Keywords : Hospital, Patient Satisfaction, Patient Trust, Service Quality, Service Quality Dimensions

ABSTRAK

Kualitas layanan kesehatan memainkan peran penting dalam memenuhi kebutuhan dan harapan pasien, termasuk standar layanan kesehatan yang optimal dan sumber daya yang dapat diakses. Pasien menuntut layanan kesehatan yang unggul dan berkualitas tinggi yang menghasilkan kepercayaan dan perlindungan yang mengarah pada kunjungan berulang ke rumah sakit. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menyelidiki dampak kualitas layanan terhadap loyalitas pasien di rumah sakit melalui metode tinjauan sistematis. Penulis melakukan pencarian literatur menggunakan basis data *Google Scholar* dan SAGE, termasuk artikel akses terbuka dengan teks lengkap, relevansi, International Standard Serial Number (ISSN), dan diterbitkan dalam bahasa Inggris dan bahasa Indonesia dari tahun 2019 hingga 2022. Temuan penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa kualitas layanan secara signifikan mempengaruhi loyalitas pasien, dengan setidaknya lima dimensi kualitas layanan yang terkait dengan loyalitas, yaitu keandalan, jaminan, daya tanggap, bukti fisik, dan empati. Analisis terhadap tujuh artikel menunjukkan bahwa layanan kesehatan yang berkualitas tinggi dapat meningkatkan kepuasan pasien, yang mengarah pada dampak positif pada loyalitas pasien. Dimensi kualitas layanan sangat penting bagi rumah sakit untuk memahami dan menerapkannya untuk menumbuhkan loyalitas pasien dan kunjungan ulang. Penelitian ini meninjau perlunya rumah sakit untuk fokus dalam memberikan layanan kesehatan berkualitas tinggi yang memenuhi harapan dan kebutuhan pasien. Dengan demikian, rumah sakit dapat meningkatkan loyalitas pasien dan menghasilkan manfaat jangka panjang bagi pasien dan penyedia layanan kesehatan.

Kata Kunci : Dimensi Kualitas Layanan, Kepercayaan Pasien, Kepuasan Pasien, Kualitas Layanan, Rumah Sakit

BACKGROUND

Good service quality is essential for the success of service providers, including hospitals, as patients demand superior and high-quality health services that generate trust and protection. Hospitals are service systems where patients seek healthcare services and the indicators of quality service can be identified through security in providing health services based on actual conditions, prioritizing speed, efficiency, and patient-focused services (Chandra, Ward and Mohammadnezhad, 2019). Achieving patient loyalty to hospitals has become a major challenge as many patients seek other primary healthcare providers based on available information (Juhana *et al.*, 2015). Loyal patients are an invaluable asset for hospitals because they continue to repurchase products and services, refer others, and show resistance to competitors (George and Sahadevan, 2019).

Hospitals in Indonesia must improve themselves to restore public confidence in the quality of health services. Because in its development, hospitals not only provide medical services, but must be accompanied by excellent facilities so as to satisfy patients. Success can be obtained by hospitals through the management and development of human resources to be able to provide quality health services. Many empirical studies have examined the relationship between service quality and patient loyalty in various hospitals (Fatima, Malik and Shabbir, 2018). Regarding healthcare quality, most of the research on this topic is conducted in hospitals. (Mosadeghrad, 2014) conducted a study to identify factors affecting healthcare quality in Iranian hospitals. The results showed that healthcare quality was severely limited by a lack of resources and frequent management turnover. This study shows the need for important changes in various aspects of the healthcare system in Iran (quality management, social capital, leadership capital, cultural capital, human capital, physical capital).

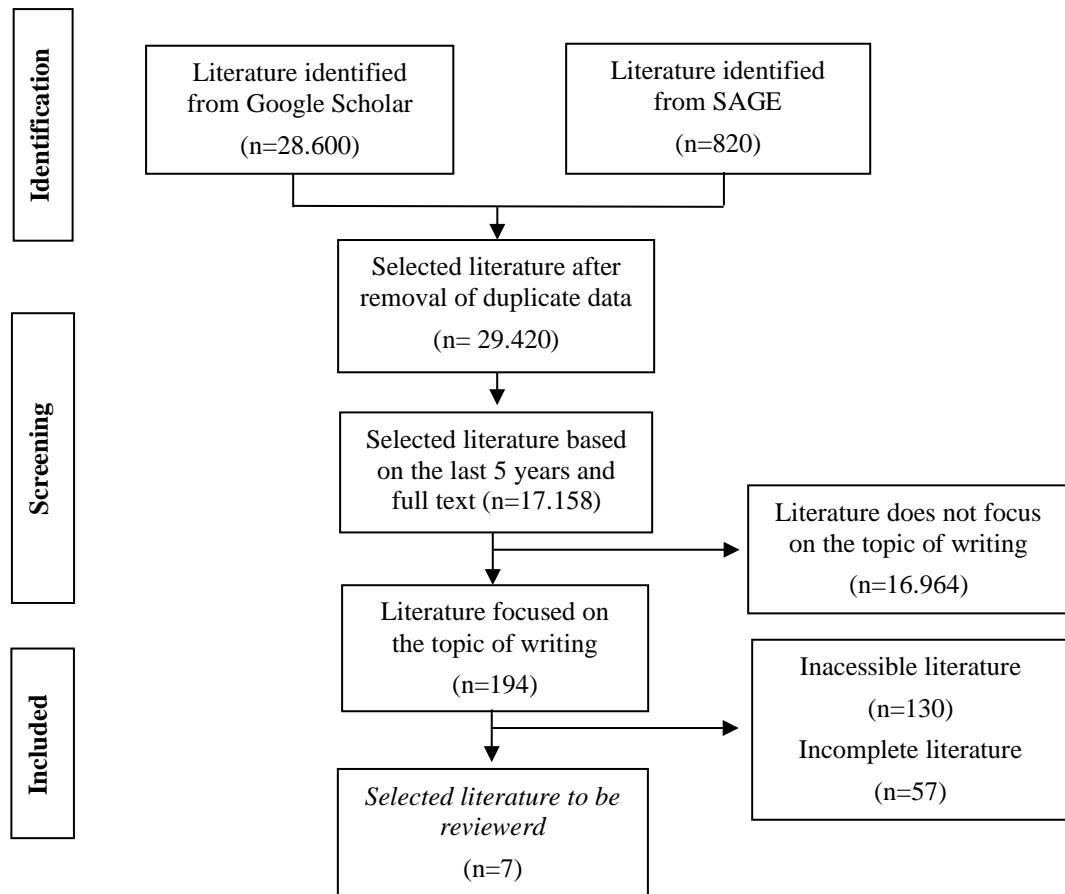
Based on research conducted at Hospital X, Malang, there was a decrease in the number of general patient visits in the X Hospital Outpatient Department from 2018 to 2019 (Sholeh and Chalidyanto, 2021). This was followed by a decrease in patient satisfaction levels in both years. This shows that there is a relationship between patient dissatisfaction and the number of visits that have decreased due to suboptimal service quality, such as doctor examinations that take too long, lack of information provided by health workers to patients regarding their illnesses, and lack of communication between health workers and patients.

Assessing the quality of service provided by hospitals is an important basis for determining patient loyalty. The high level of loyalty is influenced by the level of patient satisfaction with the quality of service provided by the hospital. Satisfied patients become loyal patients, which supports the survival of the hospital and increases excellence in competition with other hospitals (Hakim, Cahyono and Herlambang, 2019). Therefore, this study aims to measure the influence of service quality on patient loyalty in hospitals.

METHODS

The methodology employed in this study is a systematic review aimed at exploring the impact of service quality on patient loyalty in hospitals. The authors searched for relevant articles in two databases, namely Google Scholar and SAGE, with a publication date range of 2019 to 2022. Inclusion criteria for the study were articles published in English or Indonesian, have an International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) and focus on the topic. Articles that were inaccessible or incomplete were excluded from the study. A total of 28,600 articles were retrieved from Google Scholar and 820 articles from SAGE using the keywords "Hospital," "Patient Satisfaction," "Patient Trust," "Service Quality," "Service Quality Dimensions." After applying the inclusion and exclusion criteria, 7 articles were selected for inclusion in the review. The findings were presented in a table and analyzed narratively. Overall, the systematic

review method used in this study allows for a rigorous and comprehensive analysis of the available literature on the impact of service quality on patient loyalty in hospitals. By employing a systematic approach to identifying and selecting relevant articles, the study ensures that the results are reliable and relevant to the research question.



Scheme 1. Flowchart of the Selection and Selection Process of Articles

RESULTS

Based on the systematic review of seven articles published between 2019 to 2022, the study found strong evidence to support the positive relationship between service quality and patient loyalty in hospitals. The majority of the studies reviewed concluded that quality health services have a significant effect on patient satisfaction, which in turn leads to increased patient loyalty. This finding is consistent with previous research on the topic and supports the idea that healthcare organizations should prioritize service quality as a key factor in achieving patient loyalty. Furthermore, the review identified five dimensions of service quality that are strongly related to patient loyalty, namely reliability, assurance, responsiveness, tangible, and empathy. These dimensions are consistent with the widely used SERVQUAL model and highlight the importance of various aspects of healthcare service delivery in determining patient loyalty. The review also found that patient loyalty is a critical factor for hospitals to maintain their competitive advantage and achieve long-term success.

Overall, the study underscores the need for healthcare organizations, including hospitals in Indonesia, to focus on providing high-quality healthcare services to enhance patient loyalty and improve the overall patient experience. This can be achieved by investing in training and

development of healthcare personnel, improving healthcare infrastructure, and leveraging technology to streamline healthcare service delivery.

Table 1. Journal Description

| No | Authors | Place | Title | Methods | Result |
|----|--------------------------------|-----------|---|--|--|
| 1 | (Sholeh and Chalidyanto, 2021) | Indonesia | The Effect of Service Quality on Loyalty Through Patient Satisfaction in Outpatient of Hospital X, Malang | Quantitative research with a cross sectional study | The results of testing the hypothesis of the effect of service quality on patient loyalty indicate a significant positive effect of service quality on patient loyalty. The results showed that 65.34% of respondents agreed to three indicators of loyalty, namely positive word of mouth about services at the hospital, recommending services at the hospital to others and a desire to reuse services at the hospital. The results showed that the most loyalty ratings were positive word of mouth about services at the hospital, which was 70% and there was a desire to reuse services at the hospital by 64.4%. |
| 2 | (Fauziah et al., 2019) | Indonesia | Integration of Service Quality and Quality Function Deployment as an Effort of Pharmaceutical Service Improvement on Outpatient in a Referral Hospital, Karawang, Indonesia | Mix methods with a cross sectional study | The results showed that the services provided did not meet expectations based on ServQual attributes because each attribute was negative. The biggest gap is in the speed and accuracy of pharmacy staff in serving, which is -1.3. And, there are 10 House of Quality attributes as recommended patient satisfaction training as the main improvement effort. The results of the path analysis of 100 samples found that the reliability and responsiveness sub-variables affected the trust of outpatients by 59.8%. |
| 3 | (Berlianto, 2022) | Indonesia | The Service Quality, Patient Satisfaction and it's Impact to Patient Loyalty at X Hospital | Quantitative research with a cross sectional study | This study found a positive effect between all 4Qs; object quality, infrastructure quality, ambience quality, interaction quality on patient loyalty. Loyalty is influenced by the constructs of satisfaction, trust and commitment by 0.806 or 80.6%. The loyalty that the patients have for the hospital also develops their trust in the quality and capability of the hospital. |
| 4 | (Dubey & Sahu, 2019) | India | Effect of Service Quality on Perceived Value, Satisfaction and Loyalty of Customers: A Study on Selected Hospitals of Chhattisgarh | Structural Equation Model (SEM) method | Service quality has a positive influence on patient loyalty in hospitals in Chhattisgarh ($\beta = 0.876$, $p = 0.000$). The results of this study show that maintaining high service quality in hospitals can significantly increase perceived value and high levels of satisfaction for patients. |

| | | | | | |
|---|----------------------------|-----------|---|--|---|
| 5 | (Elizar et al., 2020) | Indonesia | Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Customer Trust, and Customer Loyalty in Service of Paediatric Polyclinic Over Private H Hospital of East Jakarta, Indonesia | Descriptive research with cross sectional study | The test results in this study indicate that it meets the Goodness of Fit criteria where the t-value of service quality on customer satisfaction is 14.71 and service quality on customer trust is 16.10. Customer trust significantly mediates the effect of service quality on customer loyalty. Service quality has a positive effect on loyalty and this study found that there is a relationship between loyalty and five dimensions: reliability, assurance, responsiveness, tangible, empathy. |
| 6 | (Asabea Addo et al., 2020) | Ghana | Sustainability of Health Institutions: The Impact of Service Quality and Patient Satisfaction on Loyalty | Quantitative research with cross sectional study | The main objective of this study was to analyze the relationship between medical personnel service quality, patient satisfaction and consequently patient loyalty in ten public hospitals in Ghana. The study states that if the health services provided by the medical personnel are good and high quality, it will have a positive effect on patient satisfaction and eventually will also have a positive impact on patient loyalty. |
| 7 | (Aladwan et al., 2021) | Jordan | The Relationship among Service Quality, Patient Satisfaction and Patient Loyalty: Case Study in Jordan Mafraq Hospital | Mixed-Methods Study | Service quality has a positive effect on patient loyalty (Path Coefficient = 0.086; T-Value = 2.310; P-Value = 0.021; 2.5% LL = 0.011; 97.5% UL = 0.160). This means that hospital staff control the workload towards increasing patients and provide a level of service and disease care that makes patients at Mafraq hospital satisfied and loyal for the hospital to increase patient loyalty. |

Based on the findings presented in the table above, it can be concluded that there is a significant relationship between service quality and patient loyalty. The level of patient satisfaction with the quality of services provided by the hospital has a significant impact on patient loyalty. Therefore, hospitals should strive to provide high-quality services to enhance patient loyalty, which can ultimately improve their overall performance and competitiveness in the healthcare.

DISCUSSION

Service Quality

Service quality is an important factor in determining patient loyalty, because patient perceptions of the quality of service provided by the hospital affect their level of satisfaction. This is supported by research Dubey & Sahu (2019) which states that service quality has a positive influence on patient loyalty at Chhattisgarh Hospital. In maintaining high service

quality in hospitals, it can significantly increase perceived value and high levels of satisfaction for patients. In turn, patient satisfaction can determine the success and quality of services provided by the hospital. This is in accordance with research by Elizar et al., (2020) that patient satisfaction significantly mediates the effect of service quality on customer loyalty in one of the private hospitals in East Jakarta. This research is supported by research by Asabea Addo et al., (2020) which states that health services provided by medical personnel in a good and quality manner will have a positive effect on patient satisfaction and will ultimately have a positive impact on patient loyalty. According to Chandra, Ward, and Mohammadnezhad (2019), indicators of service quality can be determined by factors such as health service safety, service fairness, speed, efficiency, and relevance of patient services. The importance of service quality in shaping patient perceptions cannot be overstated, as higher levels of perceived service quality are positively associated with patient loyalty and willingness to recommend the hospital to others. Therefore, it is important for hospitals to prioritize service quality to achieve higher levels of patient loyalty and positive outcomes.

Patient Loyalty

Loyalty can be defined as a strong dedication to continue purchasing or utilizing a specific product or service in the future, regardless of external influences or marketing efforts that may impact behavior (Elizar, Indrawati, & Syah, 2020). In the hospital context, the level of patient loyalty is greatly influenced by their satisfaction with the quality of services they receive. Repeated patterns of service utilization also play a significant role in shaping patient attitudes and loyalty towards hospitals (Berlianto, 2022). This dimension of loyalty accounts for 54.8% of patient loyalty, while the remaining 45.2% is influenced by factors that go beyond loyalty dimensions (George & Sahadevan, 2019). Furthermore, patient loyalty reinforces their trust in the hospital's quality and efficiency, thereby strengthening their commitment to continued use of services.

The quality of service assessed by patients is an important basis for determining patient satisfaction and loyalty. Through patient satisfaction as an indicator of service outcome, services will determine the success of service and quality of service in the hospital (Mohd, A., & Chakravarty, A., 2014). Patient loyalty not only adds value to the business, but also has the potential to attract new patients, leading to increased profitability for the hospital. Retaining existing patients has proven to be more profitable for hospitals than attracting new patients, as it involves lower marketing costs and the ability of loyal patients to attract new patients. Improving and increasing patient loyalty is influenced by factors such as service quality. Understanding buyer behavior can be a fundamental guideline for establishing the relationship between service quality to use the same service (Ramya et al., 2019).

Dimensions of Service Quality

Reliability

The dimension of reliability in healthcare services assumes that providers must deliver accurate, dependable, and trustworthy services to patients. This dimension reflects the ability of healthcare facilities and infrastructure to deliver optimal services that meet the expectations of patients (Pakurár et al., 2019). Reliability is essential in building patient trust and confidence in the healthcare provider, which in turn can lead to increased patient loyalty and satisfaction. Therefore, service companies need to be aware of customer expectations of reliability (Ramya et al., 2019).

Assurance

The assurance dimension in healthcare aims to provide patients with a sense of security and comfort by building trust in staff who have the knowledge, skills, competence, and credibility needed to provide optimal healthcare services. In addition, staff should provide care

and hospitality so that patients feel comfortable in the hospital (Mohd, A., & Chakravarty, A., 2014).

Responsiveness

The responsiveness dimension in healthcare services refers to the staff's ability to promptly and accurately respond to patient needs and requests. This includes providing clear explanations of the service actions to be carried out, giving full attention to patients, and effectively promoting services. It can be calculated based on the length of time waiting for assistance and answers to patient questions (Ramya et al., 2019). This dimension plays a crucial role in patient satisfaction and loyalty, as patients feel valued and respected when their needs are met in a timely and efficient manner.

Tangible

The tangible dimension of service quality refers to the physical facilities, equipment, and appearance of staff that patients use to assess the quality of healthcare services. It encompasses the physical aspects of the service environment, such as the cleanliness and maintenance of the facilities, the availability and functionality of equipment, and the appearance and professionalism of staff. Patients often use these tangible elements to form their perceptions of the quality of care they receive. Therefore, the tangibles dimension has a significant influence on patient satisfaction. The better the tangibles provided, the higher the patient satisfaction (Elizar et al., 2020).

Empathy

Empathy is a dimension that measures the ability of healthcare providers to understand and respond to the emotional needs of patients. It includes the ability to listen actively, show concern, and demonstrate a willingness to help patients with their individual needs. In addition to the technical aspects of healthcare, empathy is essential for building a positive patient experience and improving patient satisfaction. Patients who feel heard and understood by their healthcare providers are more likely to report high levels of satisfaction and loyalty to the hospital (Elizar et al., 2020).

Effect of service quality on patient loyalty

The relationship between service quality and patient loyalty has been explored in several studies, and the results consistently show that higher service quality leads to greater patient loyalty. Berlianto (2022) found that patient satisfaction and service quality were strong predictors of patient loyalty, while Chandra, Ward, and Mohammadnezhad (2019) suggested that patient trust in service quality influenced their likelihood to return to the hospital for healthcare services. Additionally, Sholeh and Chalidyanto (2021) found that positive word-of-mouth recommendations and a desire to reuse hospital services were the most common indicators of patient loyalty, with 70% and 64.4% of patients expressing these behaviors, respectively. Therefore, in this case the hospital needs to strive to continuously improve the quality of service provided to patients, so that later if the patient is satisfied with the service he gets, of course this can make the patient come back again if he needs treatment or just to check his health condition at the hospital. Hospitals with effective and efficient services and have qualified health workers and a high sense of empathy for their patients, will certainly generate positive perceptions and trust from patients because they feel safe and comfortable when visiting the hospital if they need treatment or care, and this will increase the loyalty of patients to the hospital (Ramya et al., 2019). Ultimately, patient loyalty is driven by their perceptions and expectations of the care they receive. When healthcare providers exceed these

expectations, patients are more likely to remain loyal to the hospital and return for future care (Elizar, Indrawati, & Syah, 2020).

CONCLUSION

Overall, the study indicates that there is a significant relationship between service quality and patient loyalty in the healthcare industry. The five dimensions of service quality including reliability, assurance, tangibles, empathy, and responsiveness have a considerable impact on patient loyalty. The study highlights the importance of providing high-quality services that meet or exceed patient expectations to ensure patient satisfaction and loyalty. The findings suggest that healthcare providers should focus on improving the quality of their services to enhance patient loyalty and ultimately improve patient outcomes.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The author would like to express gratitude to Mr. Arga Buntara, S.KM., MPH, for his guidance and support throughout the research process of this study. The author would also like to thank the Health Administration and Policy classmates who provided valuable advice and feedback.

REFERENCES

- Aladwan, M. A., Salleh, H. S., Anuar, M. M., ALhwadi, H., & Almomani, I. (2021). The Relationship among Service Quality, Patient Satisfaction and Patient Loyalty: Case Study in Jordan Mafraq Hospital. *Linguistics and Culture Review*, 5(S3), 27–40. <https://doi.org/10.21744/lingcure.v5ns3.1368>
- Asabea Addo, A., Wang, W., Dankyi, A. B., Abban, O. J., & Bentum-Micah, G. (2020). Sustainability of Health Institutions: The Impact of Service Quality and Patient Satisfaction on Loyalty. *European Journal of Business and Management Research*, 5(4), 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.24018/ejbmr.2020.5.4.345>
- Berlianto, M. P. (2022). The Service Quality, Patient Satisfaction And It's Impact To Patient Loyalty at X Hospital. *I2*(4).
- Chandra, S., Ward, P., & Mohammadnezhad, M. (2019). Factors Associated with Patient Satisfaction in Outpatient Department of Suva Sub-Divisional Health Center, Fiji, 2018: A Mixed Method Study. *Frontiers in Public Health*, 7(JUL), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2019.00183>
- Dubey, P., & Sahu, S. K. (2019). Effect of Service Quality on Perceived Value, Satisfaction and Loyalty of Customers: A Study on Selected Hospitals of Chhattisgarh. *International Journal of Computer Sciences and Engineering*, 7(3), 55–62. www.ijcseonline.org
- Elizar, C., Indrawati, R., & Syah, T. Y. R. (2020). Service Quality, Customer Satisfaction, Customer Trust, and Customer Loyalty in Service of Paediatric Polyclinic Over Private H Hospital of East Jakarta, Indonesia. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Academic*, 4(2), 105–111.
- Fatima, T., Malik, S. A., & Shabbir, A. (2018). Hospital healthcare service quality, patient satisfaction and loyalty: An investigation in context of private healthcare systems. *International Journal of Quality and Reliability Management*, 35(6), 1195–1214. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJQRM-02-2017-0031>
- Fauziah, F., Surachman, E., & Muhtadi, A. (2019). Integration of Service Quality and Quality Function Deployment as an Effort of Pharmaceutical Service Improvement on Outpatient in a Referral Hospital, Karawang, Indonesia. *Journal of Advanced Pharmacy Education*

and Research, 9(2), 13–23.

- George, A., & Sahadevan, J. (2019). A Conceptual Framework of Antecedents of Service Loyalty in Health Care: Patients' Perspective. *IIM Kozhikode Society and Management Review*, 8(1), 50–59. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2277975218812952>
- Hakim, M. L., Cahyono, D., & Herlambang, T. (2019). Dampak Kualitas Pelayanan terhadap Kepuasan dan Loyalitas Pasien di Instalasi Rawat Jalan Rumah Sakit Daerah Dr. Soebandi Jember. *Jurnal Sains Manajemen dan Bisnis Indonesia*, 9(1), 1–13. <http://jurnal.unmuhjember.ac.id/index.php/SMBI/article/view/2365>
- Juhana, D., Manik, E., Febrinella, C., & Sidharta, I. (2015). Empirical Study on Patient Satisfaction and Patient Loyalty on Public Hospital in Bandung, Indonesia. *International Journal of Applied Business and Economic Research*, 13(6), 4305–4326.
- Mohd, A., & Chakravarty, A. (2014). Patient satisfaction with services of the outpatient department. *Medical Journal Armed Forces India*, 70(3), 237–242. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.mjafi.2013.06.010>
- Mosadeghrad, A. M. (2014). Factors Influencing Healthcare Service Quality. *International Journal of Health Policy and Management*, 3(2), 77–89. <https://doi.org/10.15171/ijhpm.2014.65>
- Pakurár, M., Haddad, H., Nagy, J., Popp, J., & Oláh, J. (2019). The Service Quality Dimensions that Affect Customer Satisfaction in the Jordanian Banking Sector. *Sustainability (Switzerland)*, 11(4), 1–24. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11041113>
- Ramya, N., Kowsalya, A., & Dharanipriya, K. (2019). Service Quality and its Dimensions. *EPRA International Journal of Research and Development (IJRD)*, 4(2), 1–5.
- Sholeh, M., & Chalidyanto, D. (2021). The Effect of Service Quality on Loyalty Through Patient Satisfaction in Outpatient of Hospital X, Malang. *JMMR (Jurnal Medicoeticolegal Dan Manajemen Rumah Sakit)*, 10(2), 148–157. <https://doi.org/10.18196/jmmr.v10i2.10239>