



The relationship between service quality and outpatient satisfaction at the obstetrics polyclinic of Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital in 2025

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ABSTRACT

Background: The quality of health services is a crucial aspect that affects public health and patient satisfaction. At Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital, focusing on the interaction between medical personnel and patients is important in an effort to meet patient expectations and improve the quality of services. Research Objectives: This study aims to determine the relationship between service quality and outpatient satisfaction at the Obstetrics Polyclinic of Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital in 2025. Research Methods: The type of research used is observational with an analytical survey approach with a cross-sectional design. Sampling was carried out by accidental sampling, involving 34 outpatients. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using the Chi-Square test. Research Results: The results showed that 76.5% of patients rated the quality of service as good, with 67.6% of patients being satisfied with the services provided. The Chi-Square test showed a p-value of 0.000, which means that there is a significant relationship between service quality and patient satisfaction. Conclusion: There is a significant positive relationship between the quality of health services and patient satisfaction at the Obstetrics Polyclinic of Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital. Improving the quality of services must be a priority to increase patient satisfaction and the number of visits to the hospital.

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1. Introduction

The quality of healthcare services is an essential factor in a healthcare system that directly impacts the health and well-being of the community. Quality care is not only measured by the technical skills of medical personnel but also encompasses the interaction, communication, and empathy that shape the overall patient experience. According to the WHO, through the concept of Universal Health Coverage (UHC), effective and quality healthcare is the right of every individual, which must address the main causes of disease and death by ensuring equal access and quality of services (UHC Compendium., n.d.) Law Number 17 of 2023 reinforces this urgency by affirming that health is a state of physical, mental, spiritual, and social well-being that enables everyone to live productively socially and economically.

In Indonesia, the government has established minimum service standards for hospitals through Ministerial Regulation No. 6 of 2024. However, the facts on the ground show systemic problems such as limited access, inadequate infrastructure, uneven distribution of health workers between urban and rural areas, and unintegrated planning of health worker needs (Regulation of the Minister of Health of

the Republic of Indonesia No. 6 of 2024, 2024). This condition is also experienced by Muara Enim Regency, where geographical location also affects access to health services and impacts the Human Development Index (HDI) (Muara Enim Regency Government Health Service, 2023). This phenomenon shows the urgency of research to evaluate service quality as an improvement step to support the achievement of the 2024 national target and the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Data from the Central Statistics Agency of South Sumatra Province (2021) indicates an increase in the number of hospitals and healthcare facilities. This situation has fueled competition in providing services that meet patient expectations. However, patient satisfaction levels in Indonesia have not yet fully reached the 95% standard set by the Ministry of Health. Research in Surabaya showed that only 38.1% of patients were satisfied with the services they received. Studies by Sigalingging et al., (2022) and (Kurniawan, 2022) demonstrated a positive relationship between service quality and patient satisfaction, particularly in the dimensions of responsiveness, reliability, assurance, tangibles, and empathy.

The Obstetrics Polyclinic at Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital plays a strategic role in providing maternal and child health services. In 2024, 374 patient visits were recorded, with an average of 30 visits per month. Internal survey results indicated persistent complaints regarding the friendliness of staff and the clarity of information provided. Geographical and socio-economic factors of the Muara Enim community also influence the quality of services and patient satisfaction at the Obstetrics Polyclinic of Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital. The wide geographical area and uneven transportation access cause some patients to experience delays or difficulties in reaching healthcare facilities, which affect their perception of timeliness and comfort of services. Meanwhile, socio-economic factors, such as lower-middle income levels and variations in educational attainment, shape patients' expectations of affordable, friendly, and clear services. When these expectations are not met, patient satisfaction tends to decrease even though medical services are delivered according to standards. Thus, geographical and socio-economic conditions are closely related to the SERVQUAL dimensions, particularly responsiveness, empathy, and tangibles, which ultimately impact outpatient satisfaction. This study also bridges the gap between SERVQUAL theory and the reality of healthcare delivery in regional hospitals with limited resources and infrastructure, demonstrating that the five SERVQUAL dimensions remain relevant and adaptable for identifying service gaps and formulating evidence-based improvement strategies.

This study aims to analyze the relationship between service quality and patient satisfaction levels and to map the distribution of each variable. Operationally, 'service quality' in this study encompasses five dimensions: responsiveness, reliability, assurance, tangibles, and empathy, while 'patient satisfaction' refers to the degree of correspondence between expectations and the service experience received. The urgency of this research lies in the need for evidence-based data as a basis for developing strategies to improve hospital service quality.

The research findings are expected to benefit the management of Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital in formulating more effective service policies, patients through improved service experiences, and academics as a scientific reference for further research on healthcare quality across various contexts. Alternative solutions offered include increased training for healthcare workers in technical and communication aspects, improvements to physical facilities, and patient involvement in service evaluation as partners in the quality improvement process.

2. Methods

This study is an observational study with an analytical survey approach and cross-sectional design, using quantitative data analyzed statistically. The study was conducted in March–May 2025 at the Obstetrics Clinic of Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital with a population of all outpatients (50 people) and a sample of 34 people through accidental sampling. Primary data were obtained from observations and interviews using questionnaires on service quality (32 questions) and patient satisfaction (10 questions) that have been tested for validity and reliability; secondary data came from the Ministry of Health, BPS South Sumatra, and internal clinic data. Procedures included preparation, data collection, processing (editing, coding, entry, cleaning), and univariate and bivariate analysis using the Chi-Square test. Service quality

was categorized as Good (81–128) or Poor (32–80), while patient satisfaction was categorized as Satisfied (26–40) or Unsatisfied (10–25).

3. Results and Discussion

RESULT

Univariate Analysis

Frequency distribution based on research characteristics

Table 1.
Frequency Distribution of Patient Characteristics Based on Demographic Data In the Obstetrics Polyclinic, Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital, April-May 2025

No	Characteristics	Amount	%
1	Age		
	17-25 Years	11	32.4
	26-35 Years	15	44.1
	36-45 Years	7	20.6
	46-55 Years	1	2.9
	Amount	34	100.0
2	Education		
	Graduated from elementary school	9	26.5
	Graduated from junior high school	6	17.6
	Graduated from high school	15	44.1
	College	4	11.8
	Total	34	100.0
3	Work		
	Farmer	4	11.8
	Self-employed	1	2.9
	Housewife	22	64.7
	Doesn't work	1	2.9
	Other	6	17.6
	Total	34	100.0

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents were aged 26-35 years (15 people) (44.1%). Regarding education, the majority of respondents had a high school education (15 people) (44.1%), and in terms of occupation, the majority of respondents were housewives (22 people) (64.7%).

Distribution Respondents Based on Responsiveness (*responsiveness*)

Table 2
Distribution of Respondents Based on Responsiveness

No	Responsiveness	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Good	26	76.47
2	Not good	8	23.53
	Amount	34	100.00

Based on table 2, it shows that the good responsiveness category is 76.47% or 26 respondents and the less good responsiveness category is 23.53% or 8 respondents.

Distribution of Respondents Based on Guarantee (*Assurance*)

Table 3.
Distribution of Respondents Based on Guarantee

No	Guarantee	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Good	24	70.59
2	Not good	10	29.41
	Amount	34	100.00

Based on table 3 it shows that for the category Guarantee (*Assurance*) Good is 70.59% or 24 respondents and in the Guarantee category (*Assurance*) not good as much as 29.41% or 10 respondents.

Distribution Respondents Based on Physical Evidence

Table 4.
Distribution of Respondents Based on Physical Evidence

No	Physical evidence	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Good	27	79.41
2	Not good	7	20.59
	Amount	34	100.00

Based on table 4 it shows that for the category Physical evidence (*Tangible*) good is 70.41% or 27 respondents and in the category Physical evidence (*Tangible*) not good as much as 20.59% or 7 respondents.

Distribution Respondents Based on Empathy

Table 4.
Distribution of Respondents Based on Empathy

No	Empathy	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Good	26	76.47
2	Not good	8	23.53
	Amount	34	100.00

Based on table 5 it shows that for the category Empathy (*Empathy*) good is 76.47% or 26 respondents and in the category Empathy (*Empathy*) not good as much as 23.53% or 8 respondents.

Distribution Respondents Based on Reliability

Table 5.
Distribution of Respondents Based on Reliability

No	Reliability	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Good	25	73.53
2	Not good	9	26.47
	Amount	34	100.00

Based on table 6 it shows that for the category Reliability (*Reliability*) good is 73.53% or 25 respondents and in the category Reliability (*Reliability*) not good as much as 26.47% or 9 respondents.

Respondent Distribution Based on Quality of Service

Table 6.
Quality of Outpatient Services at the Obstetrics Clinic of Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital in 2025

Quality of service		
Quality of Service	f	%
Good	26	76.5
Not good	8	23.5
Total	34	100

Based on The results in Table 7 were obtained from 34 respondents who rated the service quality as good, 26 respondents (76.5%). Those who rated it as poor were 8 respondents (23.5%).

Distribution Respondents Based on Satisfaction

Table 7.
Distribution of Respondents Based on Satisfaction

No	Satisfaction	Total	Percentage (%)
1	Satisfied	23	67.65
2	Less satisfied	11	32.35
	Amount	34	100.00

Based on table 4.8, it shows that patient perceptions regarding respondent satisfaction, where patient perceptions in the satisfied category were 23 respondents (67.65%) and patient perceptions in the less satisfied category were 11 respondents (32.35%).

Bivariate Analysis

Table 8.
The Relationship Between Quality and Satisfaction with Health Services in the Obstetrics and Gynecology Polyclinic of Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital

SATISFACTION (Y)	QUALITY OF SERVICE (X)				Total	p value /assymp sig	r
	Not good		Good				
	f	%	f	%			
Less satisfied	7	21	4	12	11	32	
Satisfied	1	3	22	65	23	68	0,000
Total	8	24	26	76	34	100	

Based on table 4.9, a p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) was obtained, so it can be seen that there is a Relationship between Quality and Satisfaction of Health Services in the Obstetrics Polyclinic of Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital in 2025. Those with good quality and satisfied satisfaction were 22 respondents (65%), good quality and less satisfied satisfaction were 4 respondents (12%), poor quality and satisfied satisfaction were 1 respondent (3%), poor quality and less satisfied quality were 7 respondents (21%).

Discussions

Frequency Distribution of Outpatient Service Quality Levels at the Obstetrics Polyclinic of Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital in 2025

This study measured the quality of service in the Obstetrics and Gynecology Clinic of Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital by distributing questionnaires to 34 respondents. The analysis showed that 76.5% of patients rated the service quality as good, while 23.5% rated it as unsatisfactory. Although the majority of patients were satisfied, there is still room for improvement. The SERVQUAL theory identifies five dimensions of service quality: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles; at Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital, reliability and empathy were key in patient assessments. Previous research by (Setiawan & Raharjo, 2020) showed that good service quality is positively correlated with patient satisfaction. Although the service quality at Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital is considered good, the number of patient visits remains low, possibly due to minimal promotion of services, with many patients choosing private healthcare facilities that offer faster services.

Frequency Distribution of Outpatient Satisfaction Levels at the Obstetrics Clinic of Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital in 2025

Of the 34 respondents, 67.6% stated they were satisfied, while 32.4% were dissatisfied. The measurement of satisfaction was based on a questionnaire with 10 questions using a 4-point Likert scale, where the total scores were categorized into satisfied (26–40) and dissatisfied (10–25). Thus, the 32.4% of dissatisfied patients were those whose total questionnaire scores fell within the 10–25 interval. This level of dissatisfaction can influence patient visit decisions, as the Ministry of Health sets a satisfaction standard above 95%. Kotler and Keller's customer satisfaction theory suggests that satisfaction depends

on patient expectations and perceptions. Research by (Nursalam et al, 2021) underscores the importance of patient satisfaction in determining visit frequency. Although many patients are satisfied, the social stigma surrounding government hospitals and long queues can potentially deter patients from visiting. Nevertheless, the good quality of service at Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital (RSUD Lubai Ulu), particularly in providing better care and shorter waiting times, represents a strength that the hospital needs to leverage through innovation and consistent quality improvement.

The Relationship Between Service Quality and Outpatient Satisfaction at the Obstetrics Polyclinic of Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital in 2025

There is a significant relationship between the quality of health services and outpatient satisfaction, with a p-value of 0.000 indicating a close correlation where 65% of patients are satisfied with good service. Statistical tests using the chi-square method provide $r = 0.654$ and a p-value of 0.000. These results are in line with the SERVQUAL Theory which confirms the relationship between product quality and consumer satisfaction. This study confirms that services that meet patient expectations in the five dimensions of SERVQUAL can increase satisfaction. Although the quality of service in the Outpatient Clinic is good, the low number of patient visits can be caused by a lack of public awareness of available services, as well as economic factors. BPS data (2025) shows that 40% of the public prefers private services due to convenience and speed of service. Therefore, hospital management needs to evaluate the causes of low visits and implement appropriate strategies to attract more patients.

4. Conclusion

This study explores the relationship between service quality and outpatient satisfaction in the Obstetrics Polyclinic of Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital in 2025. Based on the data analysis conducted, several important findings were obtained that can be used as a reference in improving the quality of health services in the hospital.

First, the quality of service in the Obstetrics and Gynecology Clinic at Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital was satisfactory, with 26 respondents (76.5%) rating the service quality positively. However, 8 respondents (23.5%) rated the service quality as poor. This demonstrates the need to continuously maintain and improve service standards to ensure every patient is satisfied and receives adequate attention.

Second, patient satisfaction levels also showed significant results, with 23 respondents (67.6%) satisfied with the healthcare services they received. However, 11 respondents (32.4%) were still dissatisfied. These findings suggest that while the services provided were quite good, there is room for further improvement in certain aspects that may not have met patient expectations.

Third, the statistical analysis results show a significant relationship between the quality of health services and outpatient satisfaction in the Obstetrics and Gynecology Clinic of Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital. With a p-value of 0.00 ($p < 0.005$) and a correlation of 0.654, it can be concluded that improvements in service quality have a positive effect on patient satisfaction. This indicates that efforts to improve service quality at Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital have the potential to increase patient satisfaction, which in turn can encourage patients to return to the hospital.

Overall, this study provides valuable insights for the management of Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital to focus on improving service quality and meeting patient expectations. By strengthening the service quality dimension, the hospital can not only improve patient satisfaction but also enhance its image and public trust in the healthcare services it provides. The findings further emphasize that the priority strategy to be pursued is enhancing staff-patient communication through training in empathy, friendliness, and clarity of information. These aspects were identified as key determinants of patient satisfaction. Meanwhile, improvements in physical facilities and waiting time management should serve as supporting measures, but not as the main focus. Thus, strengthening communication skills among healthcare workers represents the most immediate and impactful step to raise patient satisfaction and overall service quality at the Obstetrics Polyclinic of Lubai Ulu Regional Hospital. From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the literature on healthcare services in rural areas by demonstrating the applicability of the SERVQUAL framework in contexts with geographical and socio-

economic challenges. From a practical perspective, it provides empirical input for district-level policymakers to prioritize communication training for healthcare staff, support basic facility improvements, and integrate patient feedback into service evaluation, thereby guiding both academic discourse and local health policy.

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