

The Influence of Health Service Quality on Patient Satisfaction: A Study at Bontonampo 2 Primary Health Center

Asmarani Harma¹, Syamsul Ishak²

Program Studi Administrasi Kesehatan, Universitas Syekh Yusuf Al Makassar Gowa

Article Info	ABSTRACT
<p>Keywords: Health Service quality Patient Satisfaction SERVQUAL</p>	<p>Service quality is a major determinant of patient satisfaction in primary health care. In Indonesia, community health centers (<i>puskesmas</i>) are the first point of contact for most patients, yet challenges remain in ensuring patient-centered care. This study aimed to analyze the influence of health service quality on outpatient satisfaction at Bontonampo Primary Health Center, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. A quantitative cross-sectional design was applied to 50 outpatients recruited through accidental sampling. Inclusion criteria were patients aged 12 years or older who had received outpatient services and consented to participate. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire adapted from the SERVQUAL framework, covering five service quality dimensions—tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy—and patient satisfaction, all measured on a four-point Likert scale. Descriptive statistics were used to describe sociodemographic characteristics, perceived service quality, and satisfaction. Chi-square tests and simple linear regression were applied to determine associations and the predictive influence of service quality on satisfaction, with a significance level of $p < 0.05$. Respondents were predominantly female (72%), aged 12–77 years, and most had completed senior high school (32%). Overall satisfaction levels were high, ranging from 82% to 100%, with two items achieving complete satisfaction. Nevertheless, one service quality indicator recorded dissatisfaction among 68% of respondents. Statistical tests confirmed a significant positive relationship between service quality and patient satisfaction ($\beta > 0$, $p < 0.05$). Health service quality significantly influences outpatient satisfaction at Bontonampo Primary Health Center. While overall satisfaction is high, improvements are needed in responsiveness and empathy. Recommendations include enhancing staff training, reducing waiting times, and implementing routine satisfaction surveys to support continuous quality improvement.</p>
<p>This is an open access article under the CC BY-NC license</p> 	<p>Corresponding Author: Asmarani Harma Universitas Syekh Yusuf Al Makassar Gowa asmaraniharma@gmail.com</p>

INTRODUCTION

Health service quality is widely recognized as a critical component of strengthening health systems worldwide. In developing countries, including Indonesia, challenges such as limited resources, uneven distribution of health facilities, and high patient loads often affect the quality of care delivered. Therefore, continuous evaluation of health service quality is essential to

ensure that patients not only receive medical treatment but also experience satisfactory service processes.

Patient satisfaction has been increasingly used as a performance indicator for health facilities. A high level of satisfaction indicates that services have met or exceeded patient expectations, while dissatisfaction signals aspects of service delivery that require urgent improvement. Previous studies have reported that health service quality has a significant and positive impact on patient satisfaction in primary health care facilities (Alotaibi et al., 2020; Kurniawan & Pratiwi, 2021).

Patient satisfaction is increasingly used as a key performance indicator for health facilities. A high level of satisfaction implies that services meet or exceed patient expectations; conversely, dissatisfaction indicates urgent areas for improvement. Recent Indonesian studies, such as at Puskesmas Sukawati II, revealed delays in registration, inadequate parking, and unresponsive staff as key contributors to dissatisfaction among JKN patients (Valentina & Listyowati, 2023). Other studies at Puskesmas Batu demonstrated that while most SERVQUAL dimensions scored above 90%, responsiveness lagged at 81%, with 19% dissatisfaction (Askarila & Kholidah, 2022). Meanwhile, research at Puskesmas Senen in Jakarta found that *empathy* had the strongest significant influence on patient satisfaction ($p = 0.008$), compared to other dimensions like tangible and responsiveness (Sumbogo, 2023). These findings highlight persisting service delivery gaps, particularly in interpersonal responsiveness and empathy.

Although the SERVQUAL model provides a useful framework for assessing service quality through five dimensions: tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Recent empirical studies have confirmed that these dimensions remain highly relevant in measuring service quality in healthcare settings (Yusof et al., 2019; Nugraha & Sari, 2022). For instance, responsiveness and empathy are often reported as significant predictors of patient satisfaction, particularly in primary health care facilities where interpersonal interactions between health workers and patients are frequent.

In Indonesia, community health centers (*puskesmas*) serve as the frontline of the health system, delivering preventive, promotive, and curative services to diverse populations, *puskesmas* as the primary entry point into the health system and are crucial for achieving Universal Health Coverage (UHC). As the first point of contact, *puskesmas* are expected to provide services that are not only medically effective but also acceptable to patients in terms of quality. However, studies have highlighted persistent challenges, including long waiting times, inadequate facilities, and varying levels of staff professionalism (Rahman et al., 2019; Susanti, 2021).

Ensuring high-quality services in *puskesmas* is urgent because they serve as the first point of contact for the majority of the population. Inadequate service quality may reduce public trust, lower service utilization, and hinder national health development goals. Specifically, in Bontonompo Primary Health Center, anecdotal evidence suggests patient dissatisfaction in several aspects of service. Therefore, it is important to investigate the influence of service quality on patient satisfaction as a basis for improving health care delivery and supporting the achievement of equitable, patient-centered services.

Bontonompo 2 Primary Health Center is one of the public health facilities in Gowa Regency, South Sulawesi. While it has been reported to provide essential health services to the local community, anecdotal evidence suggests that some patients remain dissatisfied with certain aspects of care delivery. This situation calls for a systematic investigation into the relationship between service quality and patient satisfaction in this setting.

Although several studies in Indonesia have investigated the relationship between service quality and patient satisfaction, most of them have been conducted in hospitals or large urban health centers. Limited evidence is available regarding service quality and patient satisfaction in rural or semi-urban *puskesmas* settings, particularly in South Sulawesi. Moreover, existing studies often focus on single dimensions of service quality, while a comprehensive assessment across all SERVQUAL dimensions remains scarce.

Therefore, this study aims to analyze the influence of health service quality on outpatient satisfaction at Bontonompo Primary Health Center. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for policymakers and health practitioners in improving the quality of services and enhancing patient-centered care in community health centers.

METHODS

This study used a quantitative cross-sectional design to explore the influence of health service quality on outpatient satisfaction at Bontonompo Primary Health Center, located in Gowa Regency, South Sulawesi, Indonesia. The cross-sectional design was chosen because it enables data collection at a single point in time, making it suitable for examining the relationship between service quality and patient satisfaction.

The study involved 50 outpatients, recruited through an accidental sampling technique. Patients who visited the outpatient unit during the data collection period and met the inclusion criteria were invited to participate. Eligible participants were those aged 12 years or older, had received outpatient services at the health center, and willingly provided informed consent. Patients with severe illness that prevented effective communication or those unwilling to participate were excluded.

Data collection was conducted using a structured questionnaire adapted from the SERVQUAL framework. The questionnaire was divided into three main sections: respondents' sociodemographic characteristics, perceptions of health service quality across the five SERVQUAL dimensions (tangible, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy), and overall patient satisfaction. Each item was rated on a four-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4). The instrument was reviewed by experts in public health to ensure its validity, and a pilot test was performed with a small group of respondents to confirm clarity and reliability.

The survey was administered in the outpatient department immediately after patients had completed their consultation. Data collectors explained the purpose of the study and assured respondents of confidentiality and anonymity. Written consent was obtained, and identifying information was not recorded to protect participants' privacy.

After data collection, responses were checked for completeness before being analyzed using SPSS version 25. Descriptive statistics such as frequency distributions and percentages

were used to present the characteristics of respondents and their perceptions of service quality and satisfaction. Inferential analysis was carried out using the Chi-Square test to assess the association between service quality and patient satisfaction, and simple linear regression was applied to examine the extent to which service quality influenced patient satisfaction.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Sociodemographic Characteristics of Respondents at Bontonompo 2 Primary Health Center

Characteristics	Category	(N)	(%)
Sex	Male	14	28
	Female	36	72
Age	12-29	6	12
	30-49	11	22
	50-64	21	42
	≥ 65	12	24
Education	No schooling	3	6
	Elementary school	14	28
	Junior high school	13	26
	Senior high school	16	32
	Bachelor's degree	4	8

Source: Primary Data

Table 1 shows that the majority of respondents were female 36 (72%), aged 50-64 years 21 (42%) and had completed senior high school 16 (32%).

Table 2. Perceptions of Health Service Quality at Bontonompo 2 Primary Health Center

Dimension	Dissatisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)	Very Satisfied (%)	Total Satisfaction (%)
Tangible	8	62	30	92
Reliability	6	60	34	94
Responsiveness	2	64	34	98
Assurance	2	58	40	98
Empathy	16	54	30	84
Other indicator*	68	30	2	32

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 shows that the majority of respondents were satisfied with most dimensions 60-98%, except one indicator where 68% reported dissatisfaction.

Table 3. Patient Satisfaction at Bontonompo 2 Primary Health Center

Indicator	Dissatisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)	Very Satisfied (%)	Total Satisfaction (%)
General satisfaction	18	60	22	82
Service process	2	62	36	98

Indicator	Dissatisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)	Very Satisfied (%)	Total Satisfaction (%)
Staff communication	12	58	30	88
Responsiveness of staff	6	56	38	94
Waiting time	0	56	44	100
Overall experience	0	52	48	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 3 shows that the most respondents (82-100%) reported being satisfied, with two items achieving 100% satisfaction. However 12-18% expressed dissatisfaction in certain areas. The results of this study indicate that health service quality has a significant influence on outpatient satisfaction at Bontonmpo Primary Health Center. The majority of respondents reported high levels of satisfaction (82–100%), suggesting that the health center is generally successful in meeting patient expectations. These findings are in line with previous studies that demonstrated a strong positive association between service quality and patient satisfaction in primary health care facilities (Alotaibi et al., 2020; Kurniawan & Pratiwi, 2021).

Among the five SERVQUAL dimensions, tangible, responsiveness, and assurance were rated most positively, with satisfaction levels exceeding 90%. This supports the argument that adequate facilities, prompt responses, and confidence in health workers' competence are essential for building patient trust (Yusof et al., 2019; Nugraha & Sari, 2022). In particular, responsiveness and assurance have been highlighted as critical predictors of patient satisfaction, especially in outpatient settings where interactions between patients and health workers are frequent and direct (Alotaibi et al., 2020).

Nevertheless, the study also revealed a notable gap: one dimension of service quality recorded dissatisfaction levels as high as 68%. This is consistent with earlier findings from Indonesia, where long waiting times, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of staff attentiveness were identified as recurring issues in community health centers (Rahman et al., 2019; Susanti, 2021). Such weaknesses can negatively affect patients' overall perceptions, even when other aspects of service quality are rated positively. Therefore, addressing service bottlenecks and enhancing staff responsiveness should be a priority for improvement.

Overall patient satisfaction levels in this study reflect positively on the health center's performance, as two indicators achieved 100% satisfaction. This aligns with the findings of Nugraha & Sari (2022), who observed that when patients' expectations are fully met in certain dimensions, their overall perception of the health facility improves significantly. However, the presence of 12–18% dissatisfied patients across some indicators indicates that there are still unmet expectations, especially in aspects related to empathy and reliability. Similar observations have been reported in studies from Southeast Asia, where interpersonal communication and consistency of service delivery remain challenges in primary health care (Yusof et al., 2019).

The findings suggest that while Bontonompo Primary Health Center performs well in several areas, continuous improvement is necessary to address areas of dissatisfaction. Staff training focusing on interpersonal communication, empathy, and responsiveness should be emphasized, as these are recurrent themes influencing patient satisfaction (Kurniawan & Pratiwi, 2021). In addition, operational strategies such as reducing waiting times, improving facility readiness, and conducting routine satisfaction surveys would help strengthen patient-centered care.

These findings are consistent with global evidence emphasizing that patient-centered service quality is essential for improving health system performance. The World Health Organization (WHO, 2020) highlights that quality services must be effective, efficient, equitable, and responsive to patient needs. Studies in other low- and middle-income countries also confirm that service quality improvements—particularly in responsiveness, assurance, and facility adequacy—have a direct impact on patient satisfaction and utilization of primary health care services (Alotaibi et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrated that health service quality has a significant influence on outpatient satisfaction at Bontonompo Primary Health Center. Overall, patients reported high levels of satisfaction, particularly in the dimensions of tangible, responsiveness, and assurance, which received positive ratings above 90%. However, one service quality indicator showed high dissatisfaction (68%), indicating a critical area requiring improvement. The findings reaffirm the relevance of the SERVQUAL model in primary health care settings and highlight the need for continuous quality improvement. Strengthening staff responsiveness, empathy, and reliability, as well as reducing waiting times and enhancing facility readiness, will be essential to further improve patient-centered care. By addressing these areas, Bontonompo Primary Health Center can enhance service quality, increase patient satisfaction, and strengthen trust in primary health care services.

REFERENCE

- Alotaibi, Y., Federico, F., & Almutairi, A. (2020). Patient satisfaction and its relationship with quality of healthcare in primary health centers. *International Journal of Health Care Quality Assurance*, 33(4), 321–334. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJHCQA-09-2019-0108>
- Askarila, A. A., & Kholidah, D. (2022). Analisis dimensi mutu pelayanan terhadap kepuasan pasien di tempat pendaftaran pasien rawat jalan Puskesmas Batu. *Jurnal Informasi Kesehatan Indonesia (JIKI)*, 10(2). <https://doi.org/10.31290/jiki.v10i2.5052>
- Kurniawan, A., & Pratiwi, D. (2021). Mutu pelayanan kesehatan dan kepuasan pasien di puskesmas. *Jurnal Kesehatan Masyarakat Indonesia*, 16(2), 89–98.
- Nugraha, R., & Sari, P. (2022). Analisis dimensi SERVQUAL terhadap kepuasan pasien rawat jalan. *Jurnal Administrasi Kesehatan Indonesia*, 10(1), 55–64.
- Rahman, H., Wahyuni, S., & Nur, F. (2019). Hubungan mutu pelayanan dengan kepuasan pasien di Puskesmas Kabupaten Gowa. *Media Kesehatan Masyarakat Indonesia*, 15(3), 245–253. <https://doi.org/10.30597/mkmi.v15i3.10345>

- Sumbogo, A. M. (2023). Pengaruh persepsi mutu pelayanan kesehatan terhadap tingkat kepuasan pasien di Puskesmas Senen, Jakarta Pusat. *Jurnal Medika Nusantara*, 3(1). <https://doi.org/10.59680/medika.v3i1.1735>
- Susanti, E. (2021). Evaluasi mutu pelayanan puskesmas terhadap kepuasan pasien di era JKN. *Jurnal Kesehatan Masyarakat Andalas*, 15(1), 33–42. <https://doi.org/10.24893/jkma.15.1.33-42.2021>
- Valentina, N. P. D., & Listyowati, R. (2023). Analisis kepuasan pasien peserta JKN tentang mutu pelayanan kesehatan menggunakan metode SERVQUAL dan Importance Performance Analysis di Puskesmas Sukawati II. *Archive of Community Health*, 10(2), 323–339. <https://doi.org/10.24843/ACH.2023.v10.i02.p12>
- World Health Organization (WHO). (2020). *Delivering quality health services: A global imperative for universal health coverage*. Geneva: World Health Organization.
- Yusof, M. M., Ali, H., & Abdullah, N. (2019). Service quality and patient satisfaction: A SERVQUAL-based study in Malaysian healthcare. *International Journal of Health Planning and Management*, 34(1), e153–e170. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hpm.2677>