

# Hospital consumer assessment of healthcare providers and systems (HCAHPS) for measuring patients' satisfaction: A literature review

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**Hospital consumer assessment of healthcare providers and systems (HCAHPS)  
for measuring patients' satisfaction: A literature review**

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**Abstract**

**Background:** Hospital managers, healthcare providers, patients, and their families all share the same goal of enhancing the patient experience. Surveys are the predominant method for assessing patient experience and happiness, since they offer a convenient means of gathering the viewpoints of a substantial number of individuals and discerning patterns inside one or multiple establishments. HCAHPS is an acronym that stands for Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems. Hospitals are becoming more concerned with enhancing patient happiness due to the fact that medicare reimbursement is now partially dependent on patient satisfaction scores. Nevertheless, limited knowledge exists regarding the distinct attributes linked to increased patient satisfaction.

**Purpose:** To conduct a comprehensive analysis of existing literature on patient satisfaction and determine the factors that predict patient happiness, utilizing data from the HCAHPS survey.

**Method:** A comprehensive literature review was conducted using the Wiley Online Library, PubMed, and Frontiers databases. Additionally, a literature search was performed using Google Scholar. The authors performed an extensive database search covering the period from 2014 to 2023, which led to the identification of 15 papers that met the inclusion criteria. Out of a total of 95 article titles and abstracts, 15 papers were selected based on the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

**Results:** After reviewing 15 relevant articles, it was determined that patient satisfaction is affected by every aspect of the service. This is due to the fact that all components form a cohesive and interconnected system.

**Conclusion:** The key to enhancing patient satisfaction lies in adopting a patient-centered approach that focuses on ensuring patients fully understand and actively engage in their care. Research shows a strong link between higher patient satisfaction and significantly better outcomes.

**Keywords:** Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS); Hospital; Satisfaction.

**INTRODUCTION**

Hospital providers strive to improve the experiences of both patients and their families. Surveys are the primary tool used to assess patient experience and satisfaction, as they offer an efficient way to collect feedback from a large group of individuals and identify trends across one or multiple institutions. Customer satisfaction is the emotional

response that arises when individuals compare their performance or outcomes with their expectations, especially in the context of using a product or service. Evaluating patient satisfaction can be a reliable indicator of service quality (Velez, Kaw, Hu, Frankel, Windover, Bokar, & Rothberg, 2017). Although healthcare services have distinct

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characteristics, the current method of assessing patient satisfaction closely resembles the evaluation of customer satisfaction in general service industries.

The Agency for Healthcare Quality Research (AHRQ) developed a standardized tool to measure patient satisfaction called the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). Surveys use this standardized instrument to measure patients' perceptions of service quality. While healthcare services are unique, the metric often used to evaluate patient satisfaction is similar to how customer satisfaction is measured in other service sectors. Several factors contribute to patient satisfaction, but only a few provide a precise picture of how satisfied patients are with hospital care (Simbolon & Hamid, 2019). Consequently, the HCAHPS survey was created to provide a standardized way to assess patient satisfaction.

It is essential to better evaluate the effectiveness of strategies aimed at improving patient satisfaction in various healthcare settings, particularly with the use of HCAHPS. The HCAHPS survey consists of 29 questions designed to collect data on patients' perceptions of their hospital experience. This tool, used by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS), measures patient perspectives on their overall hospital stay. The survey covers 10 components, with six focusing on key areas: communication with nurses, communication with doctors, hospital environment, communication about

medications, discharge information, and patient comprehension of information needed for their recovery. Additionally, factors such as the overall hospital rating and patient recommendations are also considered.

#### RESEARCH METHOD

A systematic literature review method was used to gather and evaluate findings from relevant and objective articles focusing on identifying studies related to the HCAHPS. The literature search was conducted using keywords like "Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) AND hospital environment AND/OR policy AND/OR cost AND/OR service" in databases such as WileyOnlineLibrary, PubMed, Frontiers, and Google Scholar. Academic articles, either in English or Indonesian, were sourced directly, provided they were peer-reviewed, full-text, and published online between 2014 and 2024. The inclusion criteria centered on satisfaction with services or facilities, while the exclusion criteria involved policy and financing.

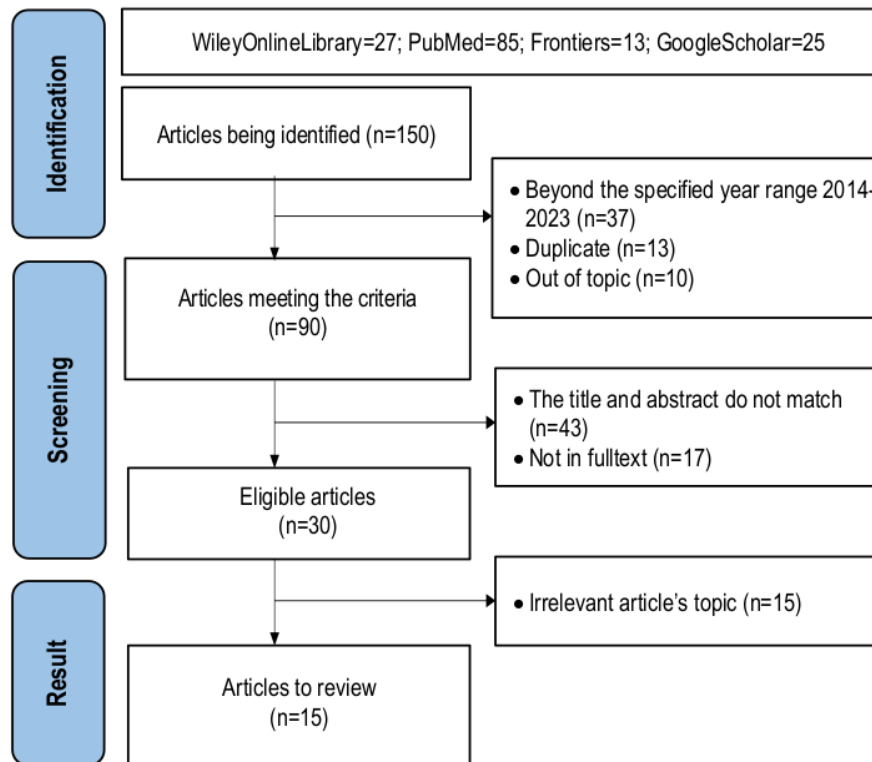
Data extraction from the reviewed articles was done independently, focusing on details such as authorship, study design, objectives, and samples. Initially, 150 articles were identified, which were then refined to 15 relevant and applicable ones. The findings from this review offer insights into the HCAHPS.

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## RESEARCH RESULTS



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**Table 1. Summary of The Articles' Review**

Author (Year) (Country)	Purpose	Method	Results
(Sidin, Noor, Adayanti, 2016) (Indonesia)	To obtain an overview of the satisfaction level of JKN participants regarding the quality of healthcare services in the Inpatient Unit of Stella Maris Hospital, Makassar in 2015.	Quantitative descriptive. The population in this study consisted of 482 respondents, and the sample was selected using proportional stratified random sampling with a total of 120 respondents. This study used the service quality indicators from the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) survey.	Patient satisfaction with service quality based on the dimensions of doctor communication was satisfied (97.5%) and dissatisfied (2.5%). For nurse communication, satisfied (94.2%) and dissatisfied (5.8%). In the dimension of doctor responsiveness, satisfied (96.3%) and dissatisfied (1.7%). For nurse responsiveness, satisfied (96.7%) and dissatisfied (3.3%). In the dimension of medication communication, satisfied (94.2%) and dissatisfied (5.8%). In the dimension of the environment, satisfied (90%) and dissatisfied (10%). For food service, satisfied (91.7%) and dissatisfied (8.3%). The level of patient satisfaction with service quality in the Inpatient Department at Stella Maris Hospital Makassar was satisfied (99.2%) and dissatisfied (0.8%).
(Layuk, 2019) (Indonesia)	To assess the satisfaction level of JKN participants regarding the quality of healthcare services using HCAHPS indicators in the Inpatient Unit of Undata Regional Hospital, Central Sulawesi Province.	A quantitative study with a descriptive approach. The population in the study consisted of 7,083 respondents, and the sample was selected using probability sampling, with a total of 95 respondents.	The satisfaction of JKN participants using the <b>3</b> AHPS method as follows: in the dimension of doctor communication, satisfied (85.5%) and dissatisfied (10.5%); in the dimension of nurse communication, satisfied (88.4%) and dissatisfied (11.6%); in the dimension of hospital environment, satisfied (84.2%) and dissatisfied (15.8%); in the dimension of pain management, satisfied (83.2%) and dissatisfied (16.8%); in the dimension of medication communication, satisfied (83.2%) and dissatisfied (16.8%); and in the dimension of recommending to friends and family, recommend (91.6%) and do not recommend (8.4%).
(Purbowati Ningrom, 2023) (Indonesia)	To determine the difference in the quality of service of government hospitals and private hospitals in Purbalingga district	Quantitative with an observational analytic design and a cross-sectional approach. The number of samples is 100 respondents, consisting of 50 inpatients in government hospitals and 50 inpatients in private hospitals. The research instrument used	<b>1</b> Mann Whitney comparative test of service quality of government hospitals and private hospitals in Purbalingga Regency showed p-value on the doctor's communication component 1.00 (> 0.05), nurse communication 0.325 (> 0.05), hospital environment 0.205 (> 0.05), experience hospitalized 0.204 (>0.05), discharge information

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Author (Year) (Country)	Purpose	Method	Results
(Riani, Mulyadi, & Yulia, 2021) (Indonesia)	To describe patient satisfaction of health care in Palembang Hospital	A quantitative descriptive approach with a descriptive survey design. A total of 154 respondents were selected using cluster sampling. Data collection was conducted using the HCAHPS questionnaire, and univariate analysis was applied in the study.	1 The average percentage of patient satisfaction from six aspects was 85.37%, with the highest percentage of satisfaction in the aspect of doctor services 92.37%, followed by Nursing services 90.22%, hospital services 86.20%, patient experience services at the Hospital 82.68%, and aspects of providing information 80.86% and the lowest percentage of satisfaction in the aspect of hospital rank 79.92%.
(Jaqua, 2021) (The United States)	To determine whether the implementation of mandated nurse-to-patient ratios by AB 394 was associated with patient satisfaction and subsequent reimbursement.	1 A quantitative, epidemiologic, cross-sectional design was selected to investigate the association between mandated compliance with nurse-to-patient ratios and HCAHPS scores using archival secondary data from JL Morgan, as well as publicly available data from the Hospital Compare database of Medicare	1 Independently, in the bivariate analyses and also upon adjustment of key covariates such as age, sex, education, race, and language, mandated nurse-to-patient ratios in California hospitals were associated with lower levels of patient satisfaction across each of the six HCAHPS score indicators examined in this study. Each multivariate analysis predicted consistently lower patient satisfaction in California with mandated nurse-to-patient ratios compared to hospitals in Texas with no mandated ratios. Several opportunities for future research emerged from the analyses to better understand and further investigate the counterintuitive findings of this study
(Hendsun, Achmadi, 2022) (Indonesia)	& To examine the positive effect of the independent or independent variables, namely: Hospital environment, communication with patients, and responsiveness to patient needs	A cross sectional quantitative research design with hypothesis testing (hypothesis test). This study obtained 164 respondents willing to survey from January to February 2022 and processed using PLSSEM.	The hospital setting exerts a substantial impact on hospital ratings. The p-value of 0.000 indicates that overall has a substantial impact on hospital discharge. The standardized coefficient for this hypothesis is 0.790, indicating a positive correlation in keeping with the direction of the hypothesis.

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Author (Year) (Country)	Purpose	Method	Results
(Hachem, Fullam, Hohmann, Johnson, 2014). (The United States)	To find out relationships between HCAHPS communication and discharge satisfaction items and hospital readmissions.	Retrospective cross-sectional design. Variables analyzed in this study were the eight HCAHPS questions about nurse communication, physician communication, and discharge communication. SPSS Statistical Package 18 was used for data management and analysis.	Patients who had higher scores on HCAHPS communication questions were shown to have a reduced likelihood of being readmitted within 30 days. This indicates a complex correlation between readmission and HCAHPS items. Out of the eight questions examined, four showed a significant correlation with readmission.
(Kang, Tzeng, Zhang, 2020) (The United States)	To examine rurality's impact on patient satisfaction measures	Examining patients (age 50 and up) from 65 rural and urban hospitals in Massachusetts, using the merged data from 2007 American Hospital Association Annual Survey, State Inpatient Database and Survey of Patients' Hospital Experiences, utilizing Hierarchical binary logistic regression analyses to examine the rural disparities in patient satisfaction measures.	This study investigates the influence of several factors at the person and institution levels in rural areas on the quality of hospital services, as assessed by patient satisfaction. Even after accounting for additional factors such as demographic variables, payment source, diagnosis, and facility features, the results remained statistically significant. Implementing policy initiatives aimed at enhancing Medicaid and Medicare payment methods and rates, providing specialized training to nursing staff for the care of patients with mental health disorders, and establishing teaching hospitals are expected to diminish the disparity in the quality of healthcare provided in rural and urban areas.
(Putri & Aini, 2021) (Indonesia)	To describe the findings of studies that reviewed the rating of patient perspective experiences during hospitalization with four composites measured in Hospital Consumer Assessment Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS).	A literature study where four electronic databases were used as part of the search strategy: PubMed, Cochrane Library, Scopus, and JMMR. Via bibliographic database searches, 2047 studies were found. Through manual journal search, 33 papers were identified with the following keywords	The literature assessment of this study revealed a substantial amount of research findings about inpatient satisfaction levels measured by the composite HCAHPS. Patient experience surveys specifically evaluate the quality of service provided at the patient center. They objectively identify the essential elements of service standards, rather than establishing connections between patient satisfaction and other indications of healthcare quality. The analyses revealed a positive correlation between enhanced patient service or patient satisfaction interactions and increased adherence to physician-recommended preventative and treatments. Specifically, patient contact and nurse communication were identified as key factors in improving the quality of care.

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Author (Year) (Country)	Purpose	Method	Results
(Merlino, Kestranek, Bokar, Sun, Nissen, & Longworth, 2014) (The United States)	To determine the impact of severity of illness on patients' self-reported inpatient satisfaction	<b>3</b> The All Patient-Refined, Diagnosis Related Group (APR-DRG) classifies every patient into one of four levels of severity of illness. Evaluating the impact of APR-DRG severity of illness on five HCAHPS domains, two reputation and two environmental questions, using linear regression analysis.	Higher severity of illness was consistently and inversely associated with lower patients' self-reported perception of inpatient hospital satisfaction as measured by HCAHPS scores. For each one-unit increase in severity of illness, the average HCHAPS scores across all five domains were approximately 3 percent lower.
(Farghaly, Kamal, El-Setouhy, Hirshon, & El-Shinawi, 2021) (Egypt)	To assess patient satisfaction and outcomes in polytraumatized patients in El-Demerdash hospital.	<b>2</b> Prograde cross-sectional study. A version HCAHPS survey was used to query 361 patients from November 2015 until July 2018. Survey questions were divided into the following categories: communication with doctors, responsiveness of hospital staff, cleanliness of the hospital environment, quietness of the hospital environment, pain management, communication about medicines, discharge information, overall rating of the hospital, and willingness to recommend the hospital	<b>2</b> A total of 361 patients were interviewed. The results showed both positive and negative levels of satisfaction. The positive results included no delay in admission, friendly staff including nurses and doctors, better patient outcomes regarding pain management and adverse side effects, and the overall rating of the hospital was good, which reflected patient satisfaction. The negative findings were lack of proper communication between the medical staff and patients. Patients indicated they did not get a satisfactory explanation of their prescribed drug doses and drug adverse effects. In addition, they did not get enough instruction on what to do after being released from the hospital.
(Maher, Wong, Woo, Padilla, Zhang, Shamloo, & Louy, 2015) (The United States)	To determine perioperative treatments and events associated with Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) survey responses.	Retrospective analysis with 2,758 consecutive surgical inpatients meeting criteria for evaluation by HCAHPS. Responses to four HCAHPS questions were compared against 19 perioperative treatments and events. Responses to four HCAHPS questions were compared against 19 perioperative treatments and events were measured	HCAHPS is associated with various factors, specifically surgical procedures and postoperative treatments and occurrences. Only a limited number of treatments and events performed by anesthesiologists and pain management experts were shown to have a significant correlation with overall hospital satisfaction or satisfaction with pain management.

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Author (Year) (Country)	Purpose	Method	Results
(Chen, Cates, & Taylor, 2023) (The United States)	To determine whether hospitals which reported better patient quality metrics and lower frequency of pressure sores received higher reimbursements.	<b>1</b> Literature Review. The data were retrieved from the CMS Care Compare website utilizing matched data from 2297 US hospitals. Information on HCAHPS, the VBP Program in Patient Safety Index, and Reimbursements was obtained for this study. Partial Least Square (PLS) was utilized thru SmartPLS 3.0 to test the hypotheses.	<b>7</b> The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) collaborated to create the Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) patient satisfaction survey. This survey was designed to provide a consistent method for collecting and reporting patient opinions on the quality of care they receive.
(Godden, Paseka, Gnida, & Inguanzo, 2019) (The United States)	To examine the methods of survey administration, and the analysis presented here seeks to understand the impact of one particular aspect of the measurement: response rate	<b>4</b> Utilizing publicly reported HCAHPS (Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems) data from Hospital Compare, a positive correlation between response rate and HCAHPS scores nationwide was identified and replicated	<b>4</b> Using publicly-reported CMS HCAHPS national data, the findings recently identified by HQI between response rate and HCAHPS dimension scores for California hospitals were validated for hospitals nationally. A relationship exists between these two variables that weakens (decreases) as the sampled population becomes more representative of the total population. This correlation supports the importance of achieving a high response rate to accurately report a hospital's true performance score.
(Quigley, Slaughter, Gidengil, Palimaru, Lerner, & Hays, 2021) (The United States)	To examine quality leader and frontline staff perceptions about patient experience measurement and use of Child HCAHPS data for QI.	A survey on children's hospital leaders and staff about their use of child HCAHPS for QI, including measures from other studies. Comparing scale and item means for leaders and staff and compared means to other studies.	Several reporting findings have implications that could incentivize hospitals to utilize Children's HCAHPS for quality monitoring and improvement purposes. Our hospital quality leaders have reported that they extensively utilize children's HCAHPS data, particularly for the purpose of comparing it with data from other hospitals. Both the quality lead and FS concurred on the authenticity of the HCAHPS data.

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## DISCUSSION

Evaluating hospital service quality through patient assessments is crucial as it provides a basis for improving services, thereby boosting patient satisfaction and loyalty. Patients generally expect satisfaction from the products and services they consume, along with a positive experience. Ensuring patient satisfaction is essential in healthcare because it serves as an indicator of performance and quality (Barr, Giannotti, Sofaer, Duquette, Waters, & Petrillo, 2006). The HCAHPS survey is a standardized tool used to assess hospital service quality, focusing on factors such as clinical performance, efficiency, effectiveness, patient safety, and overall satisfaction. Comfort, friendliness, and service speed are strongly linked to patient satisfaction (Al-Abri & Al-Balushi, 2014).

Further research can enhance the HCAHPS tool, leading to a deeper understanding of the factors that drive patient satisfaction (Mann, Siddiqui, Kurbanova, & Qayyum, 2016). Expanding the role of anesthesia and pain management specialists in perioperative care could increase the positive impact and value of these services.

The primary goal of healthcare systems is to provide the best care possible. The HCAHPS survey helps measure service quality, track progress in system improvements, and monitor changes in patient satisfaction over time. Understanding the factors that influence patient satisfaction is crucial for hospitals seeking to improve their HCAHPS scores and refine their reporting processes.

Studies have shown that demographic factors like age, education, and language, as well as non-traditional variables like self-reported health status and service type, can influence HCAHPS scores. The CMS uses these variables to adjust patient data before making hospital ratings public. Researchers have identified additional factors that significantly affect HCAHPS results. Currently, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) allow four survey methods: mailed questionnaires, telephone interviews, a combination of both, and interactive voice response systems (Walker & Karl, 2019). The HCAHPS survey and its patient mix adjustments were designed to provide a relevant and unbiased measure of patient satisfaction across hospitals of all sizes.

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Studies on American hospitals have found that 60% of patients consider communication about medications by doctors, nurses, and pharmacists as a critical factor in their satisfaction (Williams, Weinman, & Dale, 1998). Despite its limitations, the HCAHPS survey provides valuable insights into various aspects of organizational performance. It's important to note that other factors also influence HCAHPS ratings, which serve as a measure of patient experience (LaVela & Gallan, 2014). Additionally, the survey questions directed at physicians and nurses apply to all members of those groups involved in a patient's care, leaving it unclear whether patients rated the best, worst, or average-performing provider.

## CONCLUSION

The Hospital Consumer Assessment Survey of Healthcare Services and Systems (HCAHPS) is utilized as a standardized tool to assess patient experience and facilitate quality monitoring and improvement in healthcare services. The quality of hospital treatment is influenced by various factors, including clinical features, efficiency and effectiveness aspects, patient safety aspects, and patient satisfaction aspects. The level of patient satisfaction significantly impacts the degree of comfort, ease, and efficiency in healthcare delivery.

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ORIGINALITY REPORT

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# 23%

SIMILARITY INDEX

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