



## Review Article

## Exploring factors influencing patient satisfaction with nursing care quality: A study of private hospitals in Uttar Pradesh, India

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### Abstract

Patient satisfaction has emerged as a pivotal indicator of healthcare quality, particularly in private hospital settings where service excellence directly impacts patient retention and institutional reputation. Among various components of healthcare delivery, nursing care holds a central role due to nurses' continuous, direct interaction with patients throughout their treatment journey. This study explores the key factors influencing patient satisfaction with nursing care quality in selected private hospitals, with a specific focus on interpersonal, clinical, and environmental dimensions. "The research is grounded in the SERVQUAL model, emphasizing five core service dimensions: reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. A structured questionnaire was administered to a sample of 100 patients discharged from private hospitals, selected through stratified random sampling. The instrument captured demographic data and patient perceptions on aspects such as communication, emotional support, technical competence, timeliness, and hospital cleanliness. Data were analyzed using SPSS software, employing descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and multiple regression analysis to assess the strength and significance of relationships between variables. The findings indicate that nurse-patient communication, empathy, and responsiveness significantly contribute to higher satisfaction levels, while even clinically competent care may fall short of generating satisfaction in the absence of emotional support and personalized attention. Regression analysis revealed that communication and empathy were the strongest predictors, explaining a significant proportion of variance in satisfaction scores ( $R^2 = 0.68$ ). Interestingly, demographic variables such as age and education moderately influenced expectations and perceptions of care.

**Keywords:** Patient Satisfaction, Nursing Care Quality, Private Hospitals, Communication in Healthcare, Empathy in Nursing, SERVQUAL Model, Healthcare Quality

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### 1. Introduction

With an effect on the hospital's reputation, capacity to keep accreditation, bottom line, and clinical outcomes, patient satisfaction has become an increasingly important metric of service quality in modern healthcare.<sup>1</sup> Nursing care is crucial in deciding the quality of treatment patients receive since it is the initial and most direct point of interaction between patients and the healthcare system. Nurses have an essential role in many aspects of patient care, including providing ongoing medical attention, coordinating with other medical professionals, managing the healing process, and providing emotional and psychological support to patients and their families.<sup>2</sup> They are responsible for more than simply delivering clinical therapy; they also spend more time with patients than physicians or office staff. Carers, educators, and

advocates for patients are additional roles they play. Their demeanour, behaviours, and skill sets significantly impact the quality in patients' eyes.

Private hospitals have an even greater demand for top-notch nursing care since patients there often pay more for treatment and expect it to be tailored to their specific needs.<sup>3,4</sup> Without a doubt, most studies on patient satisfaction have focused on healthcare system quality or public sector systems more generally, ignoring the unique features of nursing care in private institutions.<sup>5,6</sup> The term patient satisfaction encompasses a wide range of ideas, including but not limited to: technical competence, emotional support, responses, interpersonal communication, and the physical environment of care. Evaluation of nursing care is complex and multidimensional, requiring consideration of both objective clinical outcomes and the subjective perspective of

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patients' experiences and goals. Patient satisfaction is a potential differentiator in India's rapidly growing private healthcare market, making it all the more important to assess and enhance nursing care quality.<sup>7</sup> Hospital competition is fierce. Research that attempts to systematically identify the components of private hospital nursing care that patients find most satisfactory is noticeably lacking.<sup>8</sup> To address this gap, this study employs the SERVQUAL framework to evaluate patient satisfaction based on criteria such as responsiveness, reliability, assurance, empathy, and tangibles. By surveying a statistically valid cross-section of private hospital discharges with standardized questionnaires, this study aims to provide empirical evidence about the correlation between nursing care practices and patient satisfaction.<sup>9,10</sup>

These results will be very useful for hospital management, nursing programs, and policymakers looking to improve healthcare quality. The ultimate goal of this effort is to improve healthcare delivery and patient satisfaction by encouraging private healthcare facilities to cultivate a nursing culture that is more caring, sympathetic, and patient-centered.<sup>11</sup>

### *1.1. Rising importance of patient-centered care*

Satisfaction among patients is quickly becoming a key indicator of healthcare quality and system performance as the industry shifts from provider-centric to patient-centered models. A patient-centered approach to healthcare considers not only medical evidence but also the patient's values, preferences, and degree of comfort when making decisions about the patient's treatment.<sup>12</sup> Private hospitals, driven by consumer expectations and fierce competition, prioritise patient happiness above all else while providing healthcare. Patients are no longer merely observers of treatment; they are active participants in evaluating its efficacy, and this shift has highlighted the importance of nursing care in contemporary healthcare. When it comes to healthcare, patients mostly interact with nurses.<sup>13</sup>

Nurses play an important role in facilitating clinical treatments and providing patients with the psychological support system that is necessary for recovery.<sup>14</sup> Private hospitals are under continual pressure to provide treatment that is both technically proficient and emotionally and psychologically competent due to the increasing commercialisation of healthcare. Evaluating nursing care quality from the patient's point of view is essential for improving patient-centered outcomes and understanding nursing practice. Because of its impact on hospital rankings, accreditations, and reimbursement processes, measures that measure patient happiness are relied upon by policymakers and quality assurance experts. This has led healthcare systems around the world, including India's, to try to rethink quality standards and how they relate to patient happiness.<sup>15</sup> The demand for this strategy is on the rise because of things like more patient agency, more health literacy, and more internet tools for comparing and assessing healthcare.

Because of this change in thinking, we need to learn more about what patients want from their nurses in terms of high-quality care and how healthcare systems can meet their expectations.<sup>16</sup>

Conducting thorough assessments of patient satisfaction with nursing care can help identify areas for improvement, identify service gaps, and direct training and policy initiatives based on evidence. Given the strong correlation between patient loyalty and institutional credibility and the perceived value and quality of services, this study aims to investigate the critical elements impacting patient satisfaction with nursing care in private hospitals. Healthcare administrators can promote patient-centered healthcare systems by implementing targeted initiatives to improve care delivery after identifying and assessing the components that impact satisfaction.<sup>17</sup>

### *1.2. Need for research in private healthcare settings*

Modern conveniences, shorter wait times, and specialised treatment are all available to patients in India's rapidly expanding private healthcare facilities, which serve both urban and semi-urban areas. Nurse care is the bedrock of the patient experience, but as the industry grows, there will be more competitors and a pressing need to maintain high service standards. Research assessing the quality of nursing care from the perspective of patients is severely lacking, despite the field's significance. In their pursuit of general healthcare satisfaction or public hospital outcomes, most studies ignore the unique dynamics at play in private hospitals.<sup>18</sup>

Contrary to publicly-funded hospitals, private hospitals usually operate on customer-centric business models that depend on satisfied patients and repeat business to finance expansion. Seeing it in this context, patient satisfaction goes beyond just a simple quality indicator and becomes a potent marketing tool that influences hospital rankings, reputation, and patient flow. Still, management's assumptions about patients' satisfaction don't always line up with what patients really experience.<sup>19</sup> When strong, evidence-based feedback systems are lacking, the true image of nursing care quality could be obscured, leading to missed opportunities to improve services. Patients visited by private hospitals also tend to be more diverse, and as a result, they have higher—and sometimes unreasonable—expectations of punctuality, cleanliness, emotional support, and personalised care. Consequently, patient-centered evaluations of private hospital nursing services are crucial for meeting clinical and experiential standards.

Given the current data gap, more targeted research is required to understand patients' perceptions of nursing care quality, the factors that affect their satisfaction, and overall systemic ways to enhance it. Training programs and policy decisions in the private healthcare industry are greatly influenced by this kind of study.<sup>20</sup> A shift in focus from

imagined satisfaction levels to actual patient feedback might help healthcare providers develop interventions that are more responsive, relevant, and based in patients' realities. Using established questionnaires and comprehensive statistical analysis, this research aims to fill that gap by investigating the most important aspects that lead to patients' pleasure with their nursing care at a subset of private hospitals. On the way, it contributes to the growing discussion on the competence of private healthcare providers to deliver high-quality treatment while offering practical recommendations for aligning healthcare standards with patient expectations. By giving patients a platform to share their stories and providing a systematic analysis of their experiences, this study enables healthcare stakeholders to make better decisions that boost clinical outcomes and patients' emotional and psychological wellbeing.<sup>21</sup>

### 1.3. Multidimensional nature of patient satisfaction

Patient satisfaction is a complex concept that relies on various clinical, interpersonal, and experiential elements, especially when it comes to nursing care. A more comprehensive strategy that takes into account emotional support, communication, empathy, and environmental support is necessary to evaluate satisfaction; relying solely on clinical outcomes or technological means is no longer enough. Among the many intangibles that patients take into account while rating their hospital stays are the ward's cleanliness, the nurses' punctuality, the staff's kindness, and their understanding of their patients' problems. Factors related to demographics, culture, and context dictate the relative importance of each of these categories, which in turn affects total happiness. While younger patients may be more focused on speeding up their recovery and maintaining an open channel of communication, older patients may place a higher importance on the nursing staff's patience and respect.

The SERVQUAL model, which includes assurance, responsiveness, empathy, and tangibles as subcategories of

service quality, is frequently utilised by healthcare researchers to evaluate these aspects of care. Patients' well-being depends on many fundamental nursing principles. Reliability is demonstrated when one has faith in the nurses to consistently and accurately give care. Encouraging patients to have faith in the nurses' ability is another aspect of confidence. Quickly attending to patients' demands is a hallmark of a responsive physician. When dealing with emotional and mental challenges, empathy is a useful tool. Physical aspects of treatment, such as how the patient perceives the facility's accessibility, cleanliness, and general appearance, are also part of tangibles.

All of these factors add up to the patient's pleasure level. Most significantly, every interaction between patients and nurses has an impact on the patients' levels of satisfaction with their care. While patients may feel comforted and cared for upon arrival, they may experience frustration if their requests are unmet. Consistent and uninterrupted service delivery is crucial to maintaining high levels of satisfaction. A number of measures of nursing care quality are impacted by priorities in training and staffing, including emotional involvement, the patient-to-nurse ratio, and total patient care time. Hospitals can evaluate patient feedback more accurately and make targeted changes if they acknowledge the complex nature of pleasure.

For instance, if employees aren't very empathic, it can mean they need soft skills training. On the other hand, if they're slow to respond, it could mean they're understaffed or have bad workflow management. If we could deduce that happiness is the product of a web of interrelated causes, we could use that information to guide efforts to enhance quality". By zeroing in on these particular aspects of private hospital nursing care, we aim to have a deeper understanding of patients' complex experiences and expectations, and thus be better able to meet their needs.

### 1.4. Review of literature

**Table 1:** Different studies related to the article in question.

Author(s)	Title of study	Key focus	Findings/contributions
Al-Daoar <sup>1</sup>	A Critical Review of the Service Quality and its Measurement in Indian Health Care Sector	Review of 30 studies on healthcare service quality in India	"Emphasizes SERVQUAL usage; identifies lack of standard definition of quality; scale reliability measured by Cronbach's alpha
Gill <sup>3</sup>	A Primary Evaluation of Service Delivery under NRHM	Evaluation of NRHM implementation in 4 Indian states	Highlights infrastructure gaps, personnel shortage, and inter-state variations in healthcare delivery
Samal et al. <sup>7</sup>	Comparison and Study of Various Reviews and Articles on the Quality of Service in Hospitals	Analysis of healthcare service quality in Odisha	Developed a post-2000 framework for assessing healthcare quality; identified need for further targeted research
To be continued...			

Manary et al. <sup>5</sup>	The Patient Experience and Health Outcomes	Link between patient satisfaction and healthcare outcomes	Identifies growing influence of patient experience on hospital reforms; satisfaction increasingly tied to institutional improvements
Bhattacharyya et al. (2018) <sup>2</sup>	Do Women's Perspectives of Quality of Care During Childbirth Match with Those of Providers?	Qualitative study on maternal care in Uttar Pradesh	Cultural norms and poor service quality affect maternal outcomes; highlights mismatch between provider and patient perspectives
Kamra et al. (2019) <sup>4</sup>	An Empirical Study on Service Quality Comparison Between Private and Public Hospitals in Delhi-NCR	Quality comparison using SERVQUAL	Private hospitals performed better across all SERVQUAL dimensions, especially tangibility; recommends focus on public sector upgrades
Research Scholar & Mammen (2022) <sup>6</sup>	An Empirical Study on Service Quality Comparison Between Private and Public Hospitals in Delhi-NCR	Questionnaire-based comparison of hospital service quality	Confirms private hospitals' superiority in empathy, responsiveness, reliability, and physical infrastructure; advises public hospital reforms

## 2. Materials and Methods

A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect the responses from a sample size of 100 respondents. The data is then analysed using SPSS V26 using statistical techniques (Table 1).

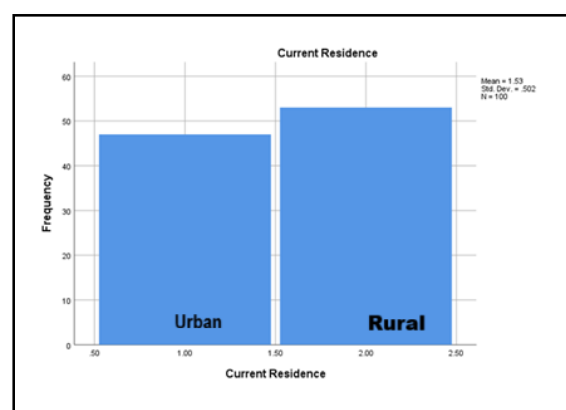
### 2.1. Data analysis

**Table 2** shows the survey found 53% male and 47% female respondents. The sample included 100 responders, with strong representation from each gender. When the cumulative percent reaches 100%, the valid percentage shows the proportion of each gender in the sample without missing data. Male and female responders are balanced to reflect gender diversity in the sample.

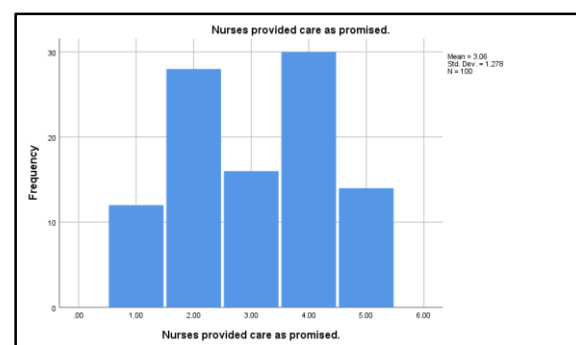
In **Table 3** respondents are diverse in age. 24% are 18-24, 20% are 35-44. At least 15% of responses are 25-34 and 45-54. The remaining 14% are under 18 and 12% are 55+. This distribution ensures sample variety by representing all age groups. Valid and cumulative percentages show no missing data.

In **Figure 1** the current residence data shows that 53% of respondents live in rural areas, while 47% reside in urban areas. This indicates a fairly balanced representation between rural and urban populations in the sample. The valid percentage reflects that all data is accounted for, with no missing responses, and the cumulative percent reaches 100%, confirming that the entire sample is represented.

**Figure 2** represents the responses to the statement Nurses provided care as promised show a diverse range of opinions. 30% of respondents agreed, while 14% strongly agreed, reflecting a positive perception of nurses fulfilling their care promises. However, 28% disagreed and 12% strongly disagreed, indicating some dissatisfaction. Additionally, 16% of respondents were neutral, suggesting a moderate or indifferent stance on the issue. The data is complete, with no missing responses, as indicated by the valid and cumulative percentages both totalling 100%.



**Figure 1:** Current residence distribution of the sample population



**Figure 2:** Nurses provided care as promised

**Table 4** represents the responses to the statement Nurses were dependable in handling my needs indicate a relatively positive view of nurse dependability. 34% of respondents agreed, and 17% strongly agreed, highlighting a general satisfaction with the nurses' dependability. However, 21% disagreed and 14% strongly disagreed, suggesting some concerns about the reliability of care. Additionally, 14% of respondents were neutral, reflecting indifference or uncertainty. The valid and cumulative percentages sum to 100%, confirming no missing data.

## 2.2. Correlations

$H_0$  (Null Hypothesis): There is no significant correlation between nurse empathy and overall patient satisfaction with nursing care in private hospitals.

$H_1$  (Alternative Hypothesis): There is a significant correlation between nurse empathy and overall patient satisfaction with nursing care in private hospitals.

**Table 5** reveals the correlation analysis reveals a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between the statements *Nurses were dependable in handling my needs* and *Nursing procedures were conducted consistently and correctly*, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.981 at a significance level of 0.01 (2-tailed). This indicates that patients who perceived nurses as dependable also overwhelmingly believed that nursing procedures were carried out consistently and accurately. The extremely high correlation value suggests that these two aspects of reliability in nursing care are closely interlinked and reinforce each other in shaping patient perceptions. Given the significance level ( $p = 0.000$ ), the null hypothesis is rejected, affirming that nurse reliability is a strong determinant of patient satisfaction in the context of private hospital care.

## 2.3. Regression

$H_0$  (Null Hypothesis): The five SERVQUAL dimensions (reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, tangibles) do not significantly predict patient satisfaction with nursing care in private hospitals.

$H_1$  (Alternative Hypothesis): The five SERVQUAL dimensions significantly predict patient satisfaction with nursing care in private hospitals.

**Table 6, Table 7** and **Table 8** reveals the regression analysis was conducted to test whether responsiveness, as one of the SERVQUAL dimensions, significantly predicts patient satisfaction with nursing care in private hospitals. The results indicate a very strong positive relationship between the predictor variable (*I did not have to wait long for assistance*) and the dependent variable (*Nurses responded quickly when I needed help*), with a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.975 and  $R^2 = 0.951$ , suggesting that 95.1% of the variance in perceived responsiveness is explained by waiting time.

The ANOVA result is statistically significant ( $F = 1919.245$ ,  $p = 0.000$ ), confirming the model's overall validity. The regression coefficient ( $B = 1.001$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) also confirms that as the perception of reduced waiting time improves, the perception of nurses' quick response increases almost proportionally. Given the high significance ( $p < 0.01$ ) and large effect size, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is rejected, and we accept the alternative hypothesis ( $H_1$ ), confirming that responsiveness significantly predicts patient satisfaction. This reinforces the importance of timely nursing responses as a critical component of perceived care quality in private hospitals.

**Table 2:** Survey details of proportion of each gender in sample.

Gender		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Male	53	53.0	53.0	53.0
	Female	47	47.0	47.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

**Table 3:** Distribution of sample representing in all age groups

Age		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Under 18	14	14.0	14.0	14.0
	18-24	24	24.0	24.0	38.0
	25-34	15	15.0	15.0	53.0
	35-44	20	20.0	20.0	73.0
	45-54	15	15.0	15.0	88.0
	55 or older	12	12.0	12.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

**Table 4:** Nurses were dependable in handling my needs

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	14	14.0	14.0	14.0
	Disagree	21	21.0	21.0	35.0

	Neutral	14	14.0	14.0	49.0
	Agree	34	34.0	34.0	83.0
	Strongly agree	17	17.0	17.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

**Table 5:** Correlations between nursing handling dependable and nursing procedure conducted consistently and correctly

		Nurses were dependable in handling my needs.	Nursing procedures were conducted consistently and correctly
Nurses were dependable in handling my needs.	Pearson correlation	1	.981**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	100	100
Nursing procedures were conducted consistently and correctly.	Pearson correlation	0.981**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	100	100

\*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

**Table 6:** Model summary

Model	R	R square	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate
1	0.975 <sup>a</sup>	0.951	0.951	0.29881

a. Predictors: (Constant), I did not have to wait long for assistance.

**Table 7:** ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	171.360	1	171.360	1919.245	0.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	8.750	98	0.089		
	Total	180.110	99			

a. Dependent variable: Nurses responded quickly when I needed help.

b. Predictors: (Constant), I did not have to wait long for assistance.

**Table 8:** Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-0.052	0.079		-0.654	0.515
	I did not have to wait long for assistance.	1.001	0.023	0.975	43.809	0.000

a. Dependent variable: Nurses responded quickly when I needed help.

### 3. Discussion

The findings of the study highlight a strong positive correlation between nursing reliability indicators, with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.981 ( $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that dependable nurses and consistent procedures

significantly enhance patient satisfaction. Regression analysis further supports this, with responsiveness emerging as a key predictor ( $R = 0.975$ ,  $R^2 = 0.951$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ). The model explains 95.1% of the variance in patient satisfaction, confirming that timely assistance strongly influences

perceived care quality. These results affirm the SERVQUAL model's relevance and underscore the importance of responsiveness and empathy in achieving high satisfaction in private hospital nursing care.

#### 4. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study confirms that nursing care quality significantly influences patient satisfaction in private hospitals of Uttar Pradesh India, including Gorakhpur with responsiveness, empathy, and reliability being the most critical determinants. The correlation and regression analyses validated that timely assistance and consistent care practices greatly enhance patient perceptions of service quality. These findings highlight the need for private healthcare providers to invest in staff training, communication skills, and patient engagement strategies". By prioritizing not just clinical competence but also emotional support and interpersonal sensitivity, hospitals can foster a more patient-centred environment, ultimately leading to improved satisfaction, better health outcomes, and stronger institutional trust.

#### 5. Conflict of Interest

None.

#### 6. Source of Funding

None.

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