



## Healthcare Service Quality and the Citizens' Satisfaction: The Case of RHU-Buug

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### ABSTRACT

In the contemporary landscape of public health, the quality of healthcare services stands as a fundamental pillar in promoting the welfare and well-being of the people. The objectives of the study are to determine the level of healthcare service quality of the Rural Health Unit (RHU)-Buug, the level of citizens' satisfaction as perceived by the residents, and the relationship between the variables. This study used a descriptive-correlational design and was conducted among 76 residents of Pulog, Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay using a survey questionnaire who were selected based on the inclusion criteria: (1) at least 18 years old; (2) resident for at least 6 months; and (3) availed the services of the RHU-Buug. The data gathered were analyzed through the use of descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean, standard deviation, percentage, and Spearman's Rank Correlation. The study revealed the following findings: (1) most of the respondents used general consultation services serving as the primary reason for visiting health facilities; (2) the level of healthcare service quality is "excellent"; (3) the level of citizens' satisfaction is "highly satisfied"; and (4) there is a highly significant relationship and strong positive correlation between the healthcare service quality and the citizens' satisfaction on the services offered by the RHU-Buug with a Spearman's  $\rho$  of 0.855 and a p-value of  $<.001$ . These findings underscore the critical role that healthcare service quality plays in shaping citizens' satisfaction. This implies that when services meet or exceed expectations, satisfaction levels tend to rise; when they fall short, satisfaction decreases. Moreover, these findings can be utilized for coming up with intervention plans to continue in improving healthcare services to maintain high satisfaction, which is essential for building trust in public health systems.

**Keywords:** citizen satisfaction, healthcare service quality, SERVQUAL model

### 1 INTRODUCTION

Efficient and effective healthcare delivery not only ensures timely access to medical interventions but also plays a crucial role in reducing disease burden, enhancing life expectancy, and fostering overall societal development. The World Health Organization emphasizes that high-quality healthcare systems are essential for achieving universal health coverage and sustainable development goals, particularly SDG 3, which aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages (WHO, 2023).

Understanding the multifaceted nature of healthcare service quality and its direct impact on citizen satisfaction is vital for shaping responsive health policies and improving service delivery models that meet the diverse and evolving needs of

communities. Despite the critical importance of healthcare service quality, many regions, especially rural and underserved areas, continue to face significant challenges. Localized settings such as the Rural Health Unit (RHU) in Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay, exemplify the complexities involved in delivering consistent and high-quality healthcare. These challenges often stem from inadequate infrastructure, limited availability and competency of healthcare personnel, and administrative inefficiencies that impede effective service provision. Such constraints not only affect health outcomes but also diminish public trust and satisfaction with the healthcare system.

Addressing these systemic issues is imperative to improve both the accessibility and quality of care, thereby enhancing

overall community health and well-being. However, there remains a lack of detailed studies focusing on the unique contextual factors influencing healthcare service quality in Buug, creating a critical knowledge gap that this research seeks to fill. Existing literature identifies several key determinants of citizen satisfaction with healthcare services, including accessibility, affordability, quality of care, and patient experience (Ferreira, et.al 2023).

The municipality of Buug, characterized by its rural setting and diverse population, faces frequent health service challenges that underscore the urgency of this research. Issues such as insufficient medical supplies, understaffed health facilities, and limited health education contribute to suboptimal health outcomes and low patient satisfaction. Additionally, administrative hurdles and resource constraints further complicate the delivery of comprehensive healthcare services. By investigating the quality of healthcare services at RHU-Buug and examining their impact on citizen satisfaction, this study aims to provide a nuanced understanding of the barriers within this specific context.

Furthermore, this study aligns with national and global efforts to strengthen primary healthcare systems as a foundation for equitable and sustainable health development. Insights derived from this research will inform policymakers, health administrators, and local government units in crafting targeted strategies that enhance healthcare delivery efficiency, promote patient-centered care, and optimize resource allocation. By addressing the unique challenges faced by RHU-Buug, the findings will contribute to broader health system improvements, supporting the achievement of universal health coverage and improved health equity in rural communities.

Ultimately, this research endeavors to bridge existing knowledge gaps by providing evidence-based recommendations that can guide the development of effective health interventions and policies. Through a comprehensive assessment of healthcare service quality and citizen satisfaction, the study seeks to foster a more responsive, accessible, and high-quality healthcare environment that meets the aspirations and needs of the local population.

### 1.1 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Expectation Confirmation Theory and the Service Quality (SERVQUAL) Model.

The Expectation Confirmation Theory, originally introduced by Richard Oliver and cited by Shukla, Mishra, and Dwivedi (2024). This theory explains that satisfaction is largely influenced by whether an individual's expectations are confirmed after experiencing a service. When the actual performance of a service meets or goes beyond what was initially expected, it leads to a sense of satisfaction referred to as positive confirmation. Conversely, when the service does not meet expectations, it leads to dissatisfaction as a result of negative confirmation. This concept has been widely used to examine satisfaction levels in public service settings. In the context of the study, it suggests that when healthcare services align with or exceed what residents anticipate, they tend to express greater satisfaction with the healthcare services provided to them.

The Service Quality Model, proposed by Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) as cited by Tulaytay, Fonte, and Basallo (2024), serves as the foundation for assessing citizens' satisfaction with healthcare services. This model identifies five dimensions of service quality: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. These dimensions provide a comprehensive framework for evaluating the quality of healthcare services and understanding citizens' satisfaction levels.

### 1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study was conducted to determine the significant relationship between the healthcare service quality of the Rural Health Unit (RHU)-Buug and the Citizens' Satisfaction as perceived by the residents of Pulog, Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the services offered by RHU-Buug availed by the residents of Pulog, Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay?
2. What is the level of healthcare service quality with the services offered of RHU- Buug as perceived by the residents of Pulog, Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay?
3. What is the level of citizen satisfaction with the services offered by RHU-Buug as perceived by the residents of Pulog, Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay?
4. Is there a significant relationship between healthcare service quality and the citizen satisfaction with the services offered by RHU- Buug as perceived by the residents of Pulog, Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay?

### 1.3 Hypothesis

H<sub>0</sub> - Healthcare service quality of the RHU-Buug and the citizens' satisfaction as perceived by the residents of Pulog,

Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay have no significant relationship.

#### 1.4 Scope and Limitations of the Study

The study focused on determining the level of healthcare service quality of the Rural Health Unit of Buug and the level of citizens' satisfaction as perceived by the residents of Pulog, Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay. Moreover, this study endeavors to explore the significant relationship between the healthcare service quality of the Rural Health Unit-Buug and the citizens' satisfaction. Assessment of healthcare service quality is limited to the five dimensions of the SERVQUAL Model: (1) reliability, (2) responsiveness, (3) empathy, (4) assurance, and (5) tangibility. On the other hand, citizens' satisfaction is only limited to the perception of the residents regarding their satisfaction with the services offered by the RHU-Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay.

## 2 LITERATURE REVIEW

Health has a central role in the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) endorsed by the United Nations, emphasizing the integral part they play in building a sustainable future. SDG #3 explicitly calls for ensuring healthy lives and promoting well-being for all at all ages. This goal encompasses a wide range of health objectives, from reducing maternal and child mortality rates, combatting disease epidemics, to improving mental health and well-being. The World Health Organization (WHO) defines health and well-being as a state of a complete physical, mental, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. The WHO conceptualizes health as a human right requiring physical and social resources to achieve and maintain. Well-being refers to a positive rather than a neutral state, framing health as a positive aspiration (Schramme, 2023).

Healthcare services are fundamental pillars of societal well-being, serving as a cornerstone of maintaining and improving public health. Accessible, adequate, and relevant healthcare services play a pivotal role in ensuring that individuals and communities receive the care they need to lead healthy lives. Understanding the multifaceted dimension of healthcare service provision, from accessibility and affordability to quality and relevance is essential for addressing the diverse needs and challenges faced by the population worldwide.

The 1987 Constitution of the Philippines, contains several provisions related to health services. Article II, Section 15 states that "The State shall protect and promote the right to health of the people and instill health consciousness among

them". Article XIII, Section 11 mandates the state to adopt an integrated and comprehensive approach to health development, which shall endeavor to make essential goods, health, and other social services available to all people at affordable cost (Philippine Constitution, 1987). This provision aims to provide all Filipinos with access to quality and affordable healthcare services. It establishes the Universal Health Care (UHC) Program, which seeks to ensure that every Filipino is entitled to receive the full spectrum of health services they need without suffering financial hardship. This law created the Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PhilHealth) and established the National Health Insurance Program. It mandates the government to ensure that all citizens, especially the indigent, are provided with the necessary health services without financial burden. The primary function of the department is the promotion, protection, preservation, or restoration of the health of the people through the provision and delivery of health services and through the regulation and encouragement of providers of health goods and services.

Access to healthcare services is paramount for ensuring equitable distribution of resources and mitigating disparities among diverse population groups. Ning, Deng, and Chen (2025) underscores the critical role of accessibility in improving health outcomes, particularly for marginalized communities. Similarly, McMaughan, Oloruntoba, and Smith (2020) advocate for targeted interventions to dismantle barriers to healthcare access, such as geographical remoteness and socioeconomic status, to foster equitable healthcare delivery.

Quality and the relevance of healthcare extend beyond accessibility to encompass the quality-of-care relevance of healthcare services provided and its alignment with patient needs and preferences. Hill, et. al (2020) highlighted the profound impact of healthcare quality on patient outcomes, underscoring the imperative for continual improvement and accountability in service provision.

Citizen satisfaction is the ultimate goal of government with public service, which is an indicator of successful governance (Gupta and Lamsal 2022). Today public services including the health institution face an ever-increasing demand for providing the finest and efficient services compared to the past (Hailu, 2019.) Health institutions have a duty for providing high-quality services to citizens in accordance with their expectations and demands. Expected to deliver quality service in a fair, transparent, reliable, and responsive manner for citizen satisfaction. Although

citizens' demand for improved healthcare service is increasing, the government is not always able to respond effectively. Failure to meet citizens' expectations leads to dissatisfaction with public services. Improved institutional performance leads to citizen satisfaction; for which, citizens provide a higher rating in government. Increasing citizen satisfaction with public services is the basis for public sector governance.

Understanding factors influencing citizen satisfaction with healthcare services is crucial for improving the overall quality of care. Ferreira, et. al (2023) conducted a comprehensive study to explore these factors. Their findings revealed that access to care, effective communication with healthcare providers, and perceived service quality are key determinants of citizen satisfaction levels. Access to care encompasses factors such as geographical proximity to healthcare facilities, affordability of services, and timely availability of appointments. Effective communication between healthcare providers and patients fosters trust, enhances understanding of medical conditions and treatment options, and contributes to overall patient satisfaction. Additionally, perceived service quality, including factors like waiting times, cleanliness of facilities, and professionalism of staff, significantly influences citizen satisfaction levels. It underscores the multifaceted nature of factors contributing to citizen satisfaction and highlights the importance of addressing these factors to enhance the overall patient experience.

### 3 METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Research Design

This study employed a descriptive- correlational research design to determine the significant relationship between healthcare service quality and citizens' satisfaction with the services offered by RHU- Buug as perceived by the residents of Pulog, Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay. A quantitative method was utilized to collect and analyze data relevant to the study's objectives.

#### 3.2 Locale of the Study

The study was conducted in Barangay Pulog which is situated in the Municipality of Buug, located in the province of Zamboanga Sibugay. Buug is classified as a 2<sup>nd</sup> class municipality in the province of Zamboanga Sibugay and is home to a diverse population, including indigenous groups such as the Subanen people, which adds to its cultural richness. The municipality of Buug is well-known for its agricultural activities, with Pulog recognized as a key

agricultural hub. The residents of Pulog actively engage in both upland farming and lowland fishing, highlighting the community's significant contribution to the economy of Buug.

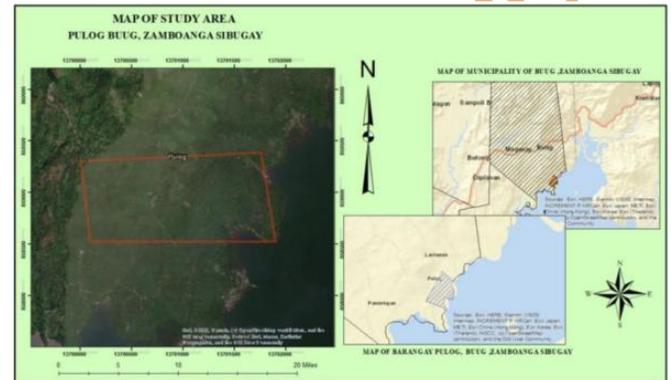


Figure 1. Map Showing the Location of Pulog, Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay

#### 3.3 Respondents of the Study

The respondents of this study are the residents of Pulog, Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay. To ensure relevance and alignment with the research objectives, only individuals who met the following inclusion criteria were considered: (1) at least 18 years of age; (2) a resident of Pulog for a minimum of six months; and (3) availed the services provided by the Rural Health Unit (RHU) of Buug. Furthermore, to avoid redundancy and ensure equitable representation across households, the study was limited to one respondent per household.

#### 3.4 Data Collection

The study employed a total enumeration sampling technique to include all eligible households with one qualified respondent representing each household.

The data collection was conducted using a questionnaire that is structured into 3 parts: (1) the services offered by RHU- Buug availed by the residents; (2) a healthcare service quality assessment questionnaire; and (3) citizens' satisfaction questionnaire. The questionnaires were tested for validity and reliability. In determining the services availed by the residents, the researchers created a checklist of the services offered by the RHU-Buug which are provided by the personnel of the said rural health unit. In measuring the level of healthcare service quality, a modified questionnaire from the study of Cruz, Masecampo,

Villarante, and Raquel (2019) was used based on the five service quality dimensions of the SERVQUAL Model (reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and quality) with a  $k^*$  of 0.91 which means “excellent” in terms of validity and a Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.962 which means “excellent” in terms of reliability. While in measuring the level of citizens’ satisfaction, a self-constructed questionnaire was used with a  $k^*$  of 0.91 which means “excellent” in terms of validity, and a Cronbach’s Alpha value of 0.977 which means “excellent” in terms of reliability.

### 3.5 Research Ethics

Ethical considerations form a major element in research. Imparting original knowledge is the main aim of research for truth and the prevention of error. This ethical consideration requires accountability, trust, mutual respect and fairness among all the parties involved in the study. In data gathering, ethical treatment of participants was considered. Some of the ethical considerations that this study has observed: (1) guaranteeing that information provided were unidentifiable by anybody other than the researcher; (2) informed consent was requested from the respondents ensuring that they fully understand the nature of the study and the information that they have given in the survey was held in utmost confidentiality; (3) ensured that responses were not associated with the identity of the respondents, the survey employed respondent’s anonymity assurance indicated in the informed consent; (4) the researchers ensured that the respondent’s contribution was completely voluntary and that they may withdraw from the research anytime; and all participants were treated with great respect.

Moreover, this study was free of bias and political interest. This study was conducted solely to determine the significant relationship between healthcare service quality and the citizen satisfaction of the residents of Pulo, Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay.

### 3.6 Data Analysis

The data gathered were statistically tallied and analyzed using statistical tools. The data were analyzed based on the specific problems of the study. The study employed descriptive statistics such as frequency, mean, standard deviation, and percentage to describe the services offered by the RHU-Buug availed by the residents, the level of healthcare service quality and the level of citizens’ satisfaction. Moreover, the study employed the Spearman’s Rank Correlation in determining the correlation between healthcare service quality and the citizens’ satisfaction due to the nature of the data not meeting the parametric

assumptions. The Spearman rho correlation was utilized to test the relationship without assuming normality of data.

## 4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results are organized into 4 parts based on the study objectives: (1) services offered by RHU- Buug availed by the residents of Pulo; (2) level of healthcare service quality; (3) level of citizen satisfaction; and (4) relationship between healthcare service quality and the citizen satisfaction.

### 4.1 Services Offered by the RHU-Buug Availed by the Residents

Table 1. Services Offered by the RHU-Buug Availed by the Residents

Services Offered	No. of Responses	Percent
Family Planning Services	7	9.21%
Immunization	22	28.95%
Birthing Home	15	19.74%
Ante Natal and Post Natal Care	3	3.95%
General Consultation	36	47.37%
Issuance of Medical Certificate	5	6.58%
Dental Services	7	9.21%
Laboratory Services	5	6.58%
Adolescent Health Services	1	1.32%
Animal Bite Treatment Services	16	21.05%
Pharmacy Services	8	10.53%
Radiologic Services	1	1.32%
Ambulance Services	3	3.95%
<b>Total Number of Respondents -76</b>		

Table 1 presents the services offered by the RHU- Buug availed by the residents of Pulo, Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay. The table shows that nearly half of the respondents used general consultation services, indicating this is a primary reason for visiting health facilities. Immunization and birthing home services also had notable usage, reflecting the demand for preventive care and maternal services. Services such as animal bite treatment, pharmacy, family planning, and dental care had a moderate level of use. Laboratory, medical certificates, ante/post-natal care, ambulance, adolescent health, and radiologic services had low usage.

The data suggest that while basic health services like general consultation, immunization, and birthing services are well-utilized, more specialized or auxiliary services are accessed less frequently. This pattern may reflect the primary health

concerns of the population, availability of services, or barriers to access (e.g., awareness, cost, or location).

These findings support the study of Labid, et.al. (2024) titled, “Awareness, Availment, and Satisfaction on various Health Services among Residents of a Rural Community in Samar, Philippines”, which found out that the participants showed high awareness and availment for only two services namely, free general consultation and the free medicine program. Labid et.al (2024) also stressed that the residents showed low availment on services for communicable diseases, basic dental/oral hygiene, and reproductive health. This implies that rural communities in the Philippines mostly availed the general consultation services of their respective health units, and low availment in other services. As such, this finding implies that the RHU shall ensure that other services less availed by the residents should be expanded to reach even the far-flung areas of the community.

#### 4.2 Level of Healthcare Service Quality

Table 2. Level of Healthcare Service Quality of RHU-Buug as Perceived by the Respondents

Interval	Descriptive Interpretation	Frequency	Percent
1.00-1.74	Poor	0	0.00
1.75-2.49	Good	0	0.00
2.50-3.24	Very Good	24	31.58
3.25-4.00	Excellent	52	68.42
<b>Total</b>		<b>76</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>		<b>3.55</b>	
<b>Standard Deviation</b>		<b>0.426</b>	
<b>Remark</b>		<b>Excellent</b>	

Table 2 presents the level of healthcare service quality of the RHU-Buug as perceived by the residents of Barangay Pulog, Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay. The table shows that the majority of the respondents (68.42%) responded that the level of healthcare service quality of the RHU-Buug is “excellent”. Moreover, the table shows the computed mean score of 3.55 which falls within the “excellent” category, confirming that, on average, the residents believe that RHU-Buug provides high-quality and excellent healthcare services.

This means that the level of healthcare service quality by the RHU-Buug is “excellent”. This suggests that RHU-Buug is effectively meeting the healthcare needs of the residents, with well-delivered services, competent healthcare professionals, and adequate resources.

It shows a similar result with Calong Calong and Comendador (2020) which revealed that healthcare quality was rated as good in terms of approachability, availability, affordability and acceptability. As such, assessment of healthcare services is an important measure of health care equity and quality. This finding will suggest to the RHU to continue in providing quality services to the people and the community it serves.

#### 4.3 Level of Citizens’ Satisfaction

Table 3. Level of Citizens’ Satisfaction

Interval	Descriptive Interpretation	Frequency	Percent
1.00-1.74	Least Satisfied	0	0
1.75-2.49	Less Satisfied	0	0
2.50-3.24	Moderately Satisfied	26	34.21
3.25-4.00	Highly Satisfied	50	65.79
<b>Total</b>		<b>76</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Mean</b>			<b>3.56</b>
<b>Standard Deviation</b>			<b>0.448</b>
<b>Remark</b>			<b>Highly Satisfied</b>

Table 3 presents the level of citizens’ satisfaction with the services offered by RHU-Buug as perceived by the residents of Pulog, Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay. It shows that the majority (65.79%) of the residents responded “highly satisfied” on the level of citizens’ satisfaction with the services offered. It also shows that the computed mean score of 3.56 falls under the “highly satisfied” category. This suggests that the majority of respondents have positive experiences and high satisfaction among the residents of the healthcare services offered indicating effective service delivery, responsiveness, and accessibility.

This further indicates that the healthcare facility not only meets basic expectations but exceeds them, leading to an overall sense of satisfaction among those who utilize its services. The absence of lower satisfaction ratings such as less satisfied or moderately satisfied is particularly noteworthy. This could suggest that RHU-Buug has effectively addressed key factors contributing to citizens’ satisfaction, such as the responsiveness of healthcare staff, the accessibility of services, the quality of care, and the communication between staff and patients. These aspects likely play a pivotal role in shaping positive experiences and contributing to the high levels of satisfaction reflected in the responses.

This finding contradicts the study of Tulaytay, Fonte, and Basallo (2024) which revealed an overall dissatisfaction among residents of the identified mountain barangays in Cebu City regarding healthcare services. While, Labid, et.al (2024) which indicated a generally high level of satisfaction among citizens with the provided health services. This implies that the level of citizens' satisfaction on the healthcare service varies from one community to another and it is noteworthy to find out that in the municipality of Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay, the RHU has attained a high satisfaction in terms of healthcare services. This underscores the strong commitment of the health unit to provide quality and responsive services to the people.

#### 4.4 Relationship between the Healthcare Service Quality and the Citizens' Satisfaction

Table 4. Relationship between the Healthcare Service Quality and the Citizens' Satisfaction

Variables	Spearman's rho	Remark	p-value	Interpretation
Healthcare Services Quality and the Citizen Satisfaction	0.855	Strong Positive Correlation	<.001	Highly Significant

n =76

Note: Correlation Size:  $\pm .00$ = No correlation;  $\pm .01 - \pm .09$ = Very weak positive/negative correlation;  $\pm .10 - \pm .29$ = Weak positive/negative correlation;  $\pm .30 - \pm .49$ = Moderate positive/negative correlation;  $\pm .50 - \pm .99$ = Strong positive/negative correlation;  $\pm 1.00$ = Perfect positive/negative correlation

The table shows the test of relationship between the healthcare service quality and citizen satisfaction on the services offered by the RHU-Buug as perceived by the respondents. As reflected in the table, the test yielded to a Spearman's rho of 0.855 with p-value less than .001 which signified to reject the null hypothesis and established a highly significant relationship between the variables at 0.05 level of significance.

Furthermore, the Spearman's rho of 0.855 also signified a strong positive correlation between the said variables. This means that the increase of the level of healthcare service quality was related to the increase of the level of citizen satisfaction and the decrease of the level of healthcare service quality was related to the decrease of the level of citizen satisfaction on the services offered by RHU-Buug as perceived by the respondents. Therefore, it can be concluded from the results that there was a highly significant relationship between the healthcare service quality and citizen satisfaction with the services offered by the RHU-Buug as perceived by the respondents.

This finding underscores the critical role that healthcare service quality plays in shaping citizens' satisfaction. When services meet or exceed expectations, satisfaction levels tend to rise; when they fall short, satisfaction decreases. This highlights the importance of continually improving healthcare services to maintain high satisfaction, which is essential for building trust in public health systems.

The finding highlights the critical role of healthcare service quality in influencing citizen satisfaction. It affirms the study of Hijazi, Harvey, and Parahoo (2018) which states that by focusing on quality improvements, healthcare providers can enhance patient experiences and satisfaction, and thereby foster greater community trust and engagement. This finding reinforces the results of this study, which suggest that enhancing healthcare service quality can improve public trust and encourage greater use of services, particularly in underserved rural areas like Pulog, Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay.

Moreover, this findings affirms the study of Ferreira, et. al (2023) which revealed that access to care, effective communication with healthcare providers, and perceived service quality are key determinants of citizen satisfaction levels.

## 5 CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the services delivered by the RHU-Buug as perceived by the residents are generally effective, satisfactory, and able to meet the standards in terms of service quality based on the five dimensions of SERVQUAL model: reliability, assurance, responsiveness, empathy, and tangibility. The Rural Health Unit of Buug has demonstrated excellent service quality and has been consistent and ensures accuracy in service delivery, provides competent healthcare staff, assures confidence in service delivery, continuously observes responsiveness and willingness to help residents, provides care and attention, and has a well-maintained facility and equipment. Furthermore, the study found a high positive correlation and highly significant relationship between the perceived healthcare service quality and the citizens' satisfaction. This underscores that higher service quality is associated with greater satisfaction levels among residents, which may lead to increased utilization and sustained engagement with RHU services. In other words, the more the residents perceive the healthcare services to be effective, reliable, and responsive, the more satisfied the residents are, and more likely to engage and continue to avail health services. Additionally, the findings of this study contribute to the broader discourse on healthcare service

enhancement and can guide policy decisions to continue providing a more satisfactory and comprehensive healthcare experience for the community. Moreover, the research findings have important implications for policymakers, healthcare providers, and local government units in further improving healthcare services in rural communities. The study provides valuable insights into citizens' satisfaction levels, allowing for targeted interventions and the development of strategies to address the identified areas of concern particularly on the least availed healthcare services.

## 6 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following recommendations are proposed. The Rural Health Unit (RHU) should continue to provide excellent healthcare services to foster continued high satisfaction and engagement among the residents. It should strengthen its partnerships with local government units (LGUs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and international health agencies. These collaborations can support the RHU in securing additional funding, technical assistance, and resources for sustainable health programs. It shall provide more accessible services to the residents especially on mostly availed services and should maintain service consistency, continue staff training programs, and ensure that the physical environment remains clean and organized. Moreover, RHU should regularly assess and upgrade medical equipment to keep pace with service demand and explore additional funding or grants for modernizing tools and technologies to maintain a high level of citizen satisfaction. The study also recommends to the officials of the Local Government Unit (LGU) to continue to support the healthcare services of the RHU especially on services mostly availed by the residents to continue in enhancing the overall well-being and quality of life of the residents. Lastly, future researchers should conduct follow-up qualitative studies to reinforce the findings of this study and capture the opinions, sentiments, the lived experiences of the residents and should conduct similar studies to be conducted involving other barangays to ascertain and reinforce the findings of the study.

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