

THE IMPACT OF MARKETING MIX AND PATIENT EXPERIENCE ON PUBLIC PATIENT LOYALTY IN HOSPITALS: SATISFACTION AS AN INTERVENING VARIABLE

Livia Zebua¹, Irwandy¹, Syahrir A Pasinringi¹, Fridawaty Rivai¹, Indahwati Sidin¹, Andi Agus Mumang²

1. Hospital Administration Study Program, Faculty of Public Health, Hasanuddin University, Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

2. Graduate School of Hasanuddin University, Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia

Correspondence: livia1408@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

BACKGROUND:

In maintaining patient loyalty, one of the marketing strategies that can be carried out is the use of Marketing Mix. Marketing Mix can improve the perceived quality of patient discernment, namely the patient assessment of a service. If the patient's perception on the quality of services provided by the hospital is good, then the patient's experience on the hospital will be positive. This condition can increase patient satisfaction which continues in the formation of patient's loyalty. This study aims to analyze the effect of Marketing Mix and patient's experience through satisfaction on patient loyalty.

METHODS:

This study is a quantitative study using an observational approach with a cross-sectional study design. The sample in this study was 358 general patients at Stella Maris Hospital, Makassar, Indonesia using total or purposive sampling. The instrument used in data collection is a questionnaire that has been tested for validity and reliability. Multivariate data analysis used path analysis.

RESULTS:

There was direct effect of Marketing Mix ($\beta=2.218$, $p=0.027$) and indirect effect through satisfaction ($\beta=2.417$, $p=0.016$) on loyalty. There was no direct effect of patient's experience ($\beta=0.398$, $p=0.691$). However, the indirect effect was very significant through satisfaction ($\beta=10.651$, $p<0.001$). In addition, there was also direct effect of satisfaction on loyalty ($\beta=5.161$, $p<0.001$).

CONCLUSION:

There is a direct effect of the Marketing Mix on patient loyalty. Patient satisfaction is a significant intervening factor for both the Marketing Mix and the patient's experience, which in turn affects patient loyalty.

KEYWORDS

Marketing Mix, patient's experience, loyalitas, satisfaction, hospital.

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INTRODUCTION

Customer loyalty is a key factor in dominating business competition. Loyal customers can promote the service and remain committed to the product through regular, long-term buying behavior. It is important to maintain customer loyalty through excellent service and product quality [1].

The high competition among hospitals makes them compete to increase patient loyalty so that they do not move to other hospitals. It will indirectly affect the hospital in maintaining market share, so a hospital must work hard in maintaining patient loyalty. For this reason, the effort to maintain patient loyalty is an important thing that must always be carried out by the hospital. Patient loyalty is based on patient satisfaction and behavior. Patient's loyalty to a hospital is a parameter for the success of the process of health services [2].

Marketing Mix is one of marketing strategies to share information widely, introduce a product of goods and services, persuade consumers to give and even create personal preferences for the image of product. Therefore, the Marketing Mix is considered as one of the most potential strategic elements in selling products. Tifirlobi and his colleagues [3] stated that Marketing Mix can improve the patient's perceived quality, namely the patient's evaluation of the service. If the patient's perception of the quality of services provided by the hospital is good, then the patient's experience of the hospital will be positive. This condition can increase patient satisfaction which continues in the formation of patient loyalty.

Marketing Mix can also affect customer loyalty. Marketing Mix is a combination of four or more variables or activities that become the core of company marketing system. The Marketing Mix commonly used by hospitals in Indonesia is 7Ps, namely: product, price, place, promotion, people, physical evidence and process. From the patient's point of view, Marketing Mix is a way to solve patient problems, costs that must be paid by patients, getting pleasant and comfortable service as well as good communication from the hospital to customers [4].

Every patient desires high-quality health service because healthcare is a fundamental need. Quality healthcare is achieved when the services provided meet the expectations of the customers, resulting in satisfaction.

Currently, users of public health services not only seek healing but also evaluate their experience during treatment [5].

Over the past four years, Stela Maris Hospital (RSSM) Makassar, Indonesia has experienced a decrease in patient visits for inpatient care. **This decrease may be attributed** to low patient loyalty and interest in hospital services. As consequence, affect the general finance of the hospital. It is important to note that patient decisions to use inpatient care at Makassar RSSM remains low. To address this issue, the hospital may need to focus on improving patient loyalty and satisfaction.

Therefore, the researchers aimed at conducting analysis on the influence of Marketing Mix and patient experience through satisfaction on general patient's loyalty at inpatient facilities of Stella Maris Hospital.

METHODS

LOCATION AND RESEARCH PLAN

This study was conducted at Stella Maris Hospital Makassar. The type of research used is analytic observational with cross sectional design.

POPULATION DAN SAMPLE

The population in this study consists of general inpatients at this hospital. The participant sample was enrolled using total sampling, with 358 participating patients included.

INSTRUMENT AND PROCEDURE

The instrument used in data collection is a questionnaire which consist of Marketing Mix questionnaires, patient's experience, satisfaction and loyalty. All questionnaires were tested for validity and reliability using bivariate Pearson correlation and Cronbach's alpha (α). Marketing Mix is a hospital activity to design marketing strategies. Patient experience is an entire process of assessing services that have been obtained by patients or their families. Loyalty is the formation of a consumer's attitudes and behaviors toward the purchase and use of a product as a result of the consumer's experience with the service.

Data were collected through face-to-face interviews with respondents. Data collection was carried out after the respondents stated their agreement by signing a written informed consent. The instruments and procedures in this study have received ethical approval from the Ethics Committee of the Faculty of Public Health at Hasanuddin

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University, Makassar, South Sulawesi, Indonesia) (number 8064/UN4.14.1/PT.01.02/2022).

were used to obtain general characteristics and explore associations between variables. A Chi-square test was performed for bivariate analysis. Path analysis was used to conduct the multivariate analysis. The hypotheses developed for this study are listed in Table 1.

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DATA ANALYSIS

Data were analyzed using IBM SPSS (version 25) and SmartPLS (version 3.2.3). Univariate and bivariate analyses

TABLE 1. PATH HYPOTHESES

Path Hypotheses	Definition
Path 1	There is direct relation between Marketing Mix and Loyalty
Path 2	There is direct relation between patient's experience and Loyalty
Path 3	There is indirect relation on Marketing Mix through satisfaction on loyalty
Path 4	There is indirect relation on patient experience through satisfaction on loyalty
Path 5	There is direct relation between satisfaction and loyalty

RESULTS

Table 2 shows the frequency distribution based on the dominant gender was male which is for 196 people (54.7%). The characteristic based on dominant age was at age > 55 for 161 people (45.0%). The characteristic based on

dominant recent education with the education level of Senior/Vocational high school for 148 people (41.3%). The characteristic based on dominant occupation the is entrepreneur for 194 people (54.2%). The most characteristic based on distance >5km is 228 people (63.7%). The characteristic based on dominant visits is the number of visits <3 times for 200 people (54.7%).

TABLE 2. DISTRIBUTION OF PATIENT BASED ON RESPONDENTS' CHARACTERISTIC

Characteristics	Sample of Study	
	Total (n=358)	Percentage (%)
Age		
17-25 years old	16	4.5
26-35 years old	36	10.1
36-45 years old	96	26.8
46-55 years old	49	13.7
>55 years old	161	45.0
Gender		
Male	196	54.7
Female	162	45.3
Last education background		
Elementary School	48	13.4
Junior High School	48	13.4
Senior/Vocational High School	148	41.3
Associate degree	66	18.4
Bachelor	48	13.4
Job		

Characteristics	Sample of Study	
	Total (n=358)	Percentage (%)
Civil Servant	16	4.5
Private Employee	82	22.9
Enterpreneur	194	54.2
Jobless	66	18.4
Total of Visits		
<3 Times	200	54.7
Unlimited visit	158	45.3

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TABLE 3. FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION BASED ON THE CATEGORY IN VARIABLE PATIENT'S EXPERIENCE, MARKETING MIX, PATIENT SATISFACTION AND PATIENT'S LOYALTY AT STELLA MARIS HOSPITAL MAKASSAR IN 2022

Variables	Sample of Study	
	Total (n=358)	Percentage (%)
Marketing Mix		
Good	200	55.9
Not really good	158	44.1
patient's experience		
Good	174	44.1
Not really good	184	55.9
Satisfaction		
Sastisfied	194	54.2
Not really satisfied	164	45.8
Loyalty		
High	189	52.8
Low	169	47.2

Source: Primary Data, 2022

Table 3 shows that the percentage of respondents who stated that the Marketing Mix was in the good category (55.9%), the patient's experience was in the good category (44.1%), the satisfaction category was satisfied (54.2%) and patient's loyalty in the high category (52.8%).

($p < 0.001$) with respect to patient satisfaction.

Table 5 shows that there was significant difference between Marketing Mix ($p < 0.001$) and patient's experience ($p < 0.001$) with loyalty.

Table 4 shows that there was significant difference between Marketing Mix ($p < 0.001$) and patient experience

Table 6 shows that there was difference in patient satisfaction ($p < 0.001$) on loyalty.

TABLE 4. THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN MARKETING MIX AND PATIENT'S EXPERIENCE ON PATIENT SATISFACTION

Variables	Satisfaction				Total		p
	Satisfied		Not really satisfied				
	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Marketing Mix							
Good	148	74.0	52	26.0	200	100.0	<0.001
Not really good	46	29.1	112	70.9	158	100.0	
patient's experience							
Good	159	91.4	15	8.6	174	100.0	<0.001
Not really good	35	19.0	149	81.0	184	100.0	

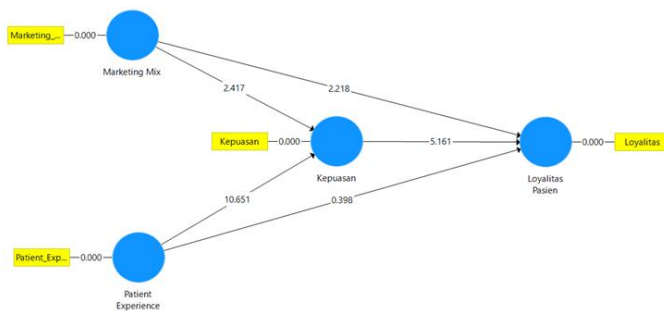
TABLE 5. THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN MARKETING MIX AND PATIENT'S EXPERIENCE ON PATIENT'S LOYALTY

Variable	Loyalty				Total		p
	High		Low				
	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Marketing Mix							
Good	149	74.5	51	25.5	200	100.0	<0.001
Not really good	40	25.3	118	74.7	158	100.0	
patient's experience							
Good	159	91.4	15	8.6	174	100.0	<0.001
Not really good	30	16.3	154	83.7	184	100.0	

TABLE 6. THE ASSOCIATION BETWEEN SATISFACTION AND PATIENT'S LOYALTY

Satisfaction	Loyalitas				Total		p
	High		Low				
	n	%	n	%	n	%	
Satisfied	178	91.8	16	8.2	194	100.0	<0.001
Not really satisfied	11	6.7	153	93.3	164	100.0	

FIGURE 1. ANALYSIS OF ASSOCIATION PATH AMONG MARKETING MIX VARIABLES, PATIENT'S EXPERIENCE, SATISFACTION AND LOYALTY.



There was direct effect of Marketing Mix ($\beta=2.218$, $p=0.027$) and indirect through satisfaction ($\beta_{\text{marketing}\rightarrow\text{satisfaction}}=2.417$, $\beta_{\text{satisfaction}\rightarrow\text{loyalty}}=5.161$, $p=0.016$) on loyalty. There was no direct effect of patient's experience ($\beta=0.398$, $p=0.691$) on loyalty. However, indirect effect was very significant through satisfaction ($\beta_{\text{experience}\rightarrow\text{satisfaction}}=10.651$, $\beta_{\text{satisfaction}\rightarrow\text{loyalty}}=5.161$, $p<0.001$). On the other hand, there was also direct effect of satisfaction on loyalty ($\beta=5.161$, $p<0.001$) (Figure 1).

DISCUSSION

Marketing Mix has great effect on consumer action in using a product or service. This study found direct effect of Marketing Mix on patient satisfaction and loyalty. This was supported by study of Sudarto [6] who found that Marketing Mix has positive and significant effect on patient satisfaction. This study is also in line with research conducted by Yuliantine et al. [7] which shows Marketing Mix has significant effect on patient satisfaction. Study conducted by Junaidi and Sulistiadi [8] found that Marketing Mix component has significant effect on loyalty. Thus, the strategy formulated by RSSM Makassar has influenced the perception of its target market (i.e., patients) so that they decide to visit to get health services at RSSM and the elements of Marketing Mix (e.g., customer solution, customer cost, convenience, and communication) based on what has been applied in RSSM meets the perception and patient expectation so it created customer satisfaction. Furthermore, Leawaty and Sulistiadi [9] states that the purpose of the Marketing Mix is to facilitate transactions and outpatient or inpatient visits by providing good services. Good services lead to patient satisfaction, which in turn fosters loyalty to the company's products.

Furthermore, there is indirect association between Marketing Mix and loyalty through satisfaction. The result of this study is supported by Utami and Achmad [10], which shows that there is a positive effect of Marketing Mix on loyalty through customer satisfaction. Marketing Mix is a set of tools that marketers can use to form the characteristic of services offered to customers. Marketing Mix is expected to increase consumer assessment of product or service. If the consumer's perception on the quality of service provided by the hospital is good, the consumer's image of the hospital will be positive. This condition can increase customer or patient satisfaction.

The impact of patient satisfaction is customer loyalty which is consumer behavior as a result of the service.

There is direct effect of patient experience on patient satisfaction. The service experience is considered to be good by patients where they get the fact that the services can meet the patient's needs to be satisfied. This satisfaction starts from the patient's experience when the acceptance comes at the first arrival until the patient's experience when they leave the hospital. To get customer satisfaction, service providers must first try to always provide positive experiences for customers. However, there is no direct effect of patient's experience on patient loyalty. This is supported by a previous study from Gomoi et al. [11] which claims that customer experience on customer loyalty does not have a direct effect. Research conducted by Pamungkas et al. [12] also shows that customer experience has no significant effect on customer loyalty. However, customer experience is expected to have a significant effect on the formation and maintenance of customer loyalty. Madeleine and Pullman [13] found that due to the experience of good quality then that can create loyalty. A study conducted by Utari [14] shows that patient experience affects patient loyalty.

However, patient experience was found to have an indirect effect on loyalty through patient satisfaction. This is supported by Ray et al. [15] in their study which also revealed that the patient's experience on satisfaction during hospitalization determines more patient loyalty than the experience of satisfaction experienced by patients on outpatient care. The patient experience obtained after getting the service is possibly able to affect the level of patient satisfaction. The more positive experience, the more patient satisfaction will increase [16]. This experience can lead to customers feelings of pleasure so that it affects customer satisfaction positively, which will have an impact on loyalty. Customer experience is one of the personal factors from the actors or users of services and products.

Furthermore, there is also an effect of satisfaction on patient's loyalty. Result of a study which supports this is from Abdullaeva [17] which shows that there is a significant association between satisfaction and loyalty. Also, research conducted by Fatima et al. [18] shows that there is significant and positive effect between patient satisfaction and loyalty at six private hospitals in the capital city, Islamabad, Pakistan. Hospitals are required to always take care of consumers by improving the quality of service

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so that customer satisfaction will increase. Patient satisfaction is the goal of successful marketing programs and the implementation of health services. This affects the patient's desire to return for treatment in the same place. This has an impact on the growth of patient loyalty to healthcare providers, making it easier to attract new customers and increase the efficiency of healthcare delivery. Loyalty is a tangible form of the patient's willingness to reuse services which adds strength and positive attitude towards the hospital [19].

This study has limitations. The study was conducted in a single hospital, and caution should be exercised in generalizing the results to all hospitals in Indonesia. There may be other potential influencing factors that are directly or indirectly related to patient loyalty that were not investigated in the current study.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

There is a direct effect of the Marketing Mix on patient loyalty. Patient satisfaction is a significant intervening factor for both the Marketing Mix and the patient's experience, which in turn affects patient loyalty. **It is recommended that hospital management should encourage all staff or health care providers to continue to pay attention to the patient's experience with the service. In this way, patient satisfaction and loyalty can be maintained and increased.**

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