

The Correlation Between Marketing Mix And Patient Loyalty At Sentra Medika Hospital North Minahasa Outpatient Unit

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ABSTRACT

The healthcare industry in Indonesia has experienced rapid development over the past few decades. As of 2023, there are 2,636 general hospitals (RSU) and 519 specialty hospitals (RSK) across Indonesia, reflecting the high demand for access to healthcare services. An appropriate hospital marketing strategy, such as the implementation of the marketing mix, is crucial for sustaining services and enhancing hospital competitiveness. Based on the background described, the research problem is formulated as follows: Is there a relationship between the marketing mix and outpatient loyalty at Sentra Medika Hospital North Minahasa? The research aims to examine the relationship between the marketing mix and patient loyalty in the outpatient unit at Sentra Medika Hospital North Minahasa. This research employed a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional study design, focusing on a sample of non-BPJS outpatient unit patients visiting Sentra Medika Hospital Minahasa Utara. The findings revealed a significant positive relationship between the marketing mix and patient loyalty at Sentra Medika Hospital North Minahasa. The conclusion drawn from this study is that there is a significant relationship between the marketing mix and patient loyalty in the outpatient unit of Sentra Medika Hospital Minahasa Utara. As a recommendation, the hospital should conduct further research by incorporating additional variables that may influence patient loyalty and continue to develop marketing strategies in line with evolving trends over time.

Keywords: Healthcare, Marketing, Loyalty, Hospital, Competitiveness

1. INTRODUCTION

The healthcare industry in Indonesia has experienced rapid growth in recent decades. According to the 2023 Indonesian Health Profile data from the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Indonesia (Kemenkes RI), the number of hospitals in Indonesia increased by 9.7% between 2019 and 2023. In 2019, there were 2,877 hospitals, which increased to 3,155 in 2023. As of 2023, the total number of hospitals in Indonesia consisted of 2,636 general hospitals (RSU) and 519 specialized hospitals (RSK). This increase not only reflects the high demand for healthcare access but also the growing expectations for service quality that meets patient needs. In today's era of intense competition and technological advancements, hospitals are required not only to focus on the quantity of services but also to enhance the quality of care provided. Therefore, an appropriate hospital marketing strategy, such as the implementation of the marketing mix, is crucial to sustaining service continuity and increasing competitiveness in the healthcare sector (Kolibu, 2021).

Healthcare marketing strategy is one of the most critical aspects of hospital management, particularly the application of the hospital marketing mix. The marketing mix, which includes elements such as product, price, place, promotion, personnel, process, and physical evidence, is a strategic concept that plays a significant role in improving the patient experience. Research conducted by Sari et al. (2023)(1) found that 70.4% of patients expressed a willingness to return to the same hospital if they were satisfied with the physical facilities and quality of service received. This finding aligns with the theory proposed by Zeithaml et al. (2017), which states that several marketing mix elements—such as place, process, and physical evidence—affect customer loyalty, as reflected in their continued use of hospital services. Furthermore, this is consistent with a study by Leawaty & Sulistiadi (2018), which examined the relationship between the marketing mix and healthcare service loyalty, concluding that physical facility elements and service quality have a significant correlation with patient loyalty.

Patient loyalty is an essential indicator of a hospital's success in retaining its users. A study conducted by Liu S. et al. (2021) on the effect of patient satisfaction on trust and loyalty among outpatients revealed that 85% of loyal patients tend to return for treatment and recommend the hospital

to their relatives. In Indonesia, outpatients represent one of the most frequently interacting segments with hospital services. According to the 2023 Health Statistics Profile from the Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS), 35% of the population received outpatient treatment at various private and public healthcare facilities throughout the year.

Sentra Medika Hospital North Minahasa, as one of the private hospitals in North Sulawesi, recognizes the importance of maintaining patient loyalty, particularly in its outpatient unit, which serves an average of 15,000 patients annually. To address this, the hospital has implemented various marketing mix strategies, such as improving physical facilities, promoting services through social media, and providing training for medical staff. However, there has yet to be a comprehensive evaluation of how effectively these marketing strategies influence outpatient loyalty at this hospital.

Patient loyalty is also a crucial aspect of hospital sustainability, particularly in increasing repeat visits and word-of-mouth recommendations. Hospitals that successfully retain loyal patients have a greater chance of sustaining and expanding their healthcare services in a competitive environment. Therefore, a structured and well-targeted marketing mix approach is necessary to enhance the patient experience. This study aims to examine the correlation between the marketing mix implemented by Sentra Medika Hospital North Minahasa and patient loyalty in the outpatient unit. The findings of this research are expected to provide strategic insights for hospital management in developing more effective marketing strategies to enhance patient satisfaction and loyalty.

2. METHOD

The type of research used in this research is quantitative research using an analytical survey design with a cross-sectional study design. The implementation of this study was carried out on outpatients of Sentra Medika Hospital North Minahasa. The research period is from November 2024 to January 2025. The number of samples in this research are calculated with slovin calculation amounted to 96 respondents. The research instrument used was a questionnaire. The data collected is in the form of primary data and secondary data. Data analysis was carried out univariate and bivariate. Univariate data analysis on the distribution of respondent characteristics as well as the marketing mix and patient loyalty; Bivariate analysis uses the Spearman Rank correlation test to determine the strength of the relationship between the two variables. This research has been approved and allowed by the ethics committee and the board of directors of the Sentra Medika Hospital North Minahasa with letter number 078/Eks-Dir/SMH-MINUT/1/2025.

3. RESEARCH FINDINGS & DISCUSSION

3.1 Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

The characteristics of respondents in this study encompass various demographic aspects such as gender, age, highest level of education, and occupation. The presentation of these characteristics aims to provide a general overview of the profile of respondents participating in the study and their relationship with the variables being examined. The results of the study conducted at Sentra Medika Hospital North Minahasa show the following respondent characteristics:

Table 1. Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

Characteristic of Respondent	n	(%)
Gender		
Male	36	36,8
Female	60	63,2
Age		
18-20	9	9,4
21-30	58	60,4
31-40	21	21,9
41-50	8	8,3
Last Education		
DI, DII, DIII, S1	68	70,8
SMA	22	22,9
SMP	6	6,3
Occupation		
Wiraswasta	47	49
Banker	16	16,7
Karyawan Swasta	16	16,7
IRT	10	10,3
Mahasiswa/i	5	5,2
Personal Assistant	2	2,1

The majority of respondents fall within the age range of 21-30 years, totaling 58 people (60.4%). The next dominant age group is 31-40 years, with 21 respondents (21.9%). Meanwhile, respondents aged 18-20 years amount to 9 people (9.4%), and the 41-59 age group is the least represented, with only 8 people (8.3%). These findings indicate that younger and economically active patients are more likely to use outpatient services at the hospital. According to Kotler's (2016) psychographic theory, younger age groups tend to have high demands for modern, technology-based services that align with their dynamic lifestyles. Research by Puji et al. (2024) supports this finding, as their study showed that young adults (25-40 years old) are more likely to utilize healthcare services for preventive and maintenance purposes. Additionally, this age group is more responsive to health promotions via digital media, which is a key element of hospital marketing strategies. Therefore, these results highlight the importance of technology-based marketing strategies to attract the productive-age population.

The gender distribution data shows that the majority of respondents in this study are female, totaling 60 people (63.2%), while male respondents amount to 36 people (36.8%). This indicates that outpatient patients at Sentra Medika Hospital North Minahasa during the study period were predominantly female. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), gender is one of the demographic factors influencing consumer behavior. Women tend to focus more on practical aspects such as accessibility and service efficiency, which may explain their dominance in this study. This finding aligns with Rahman's (2020) research on Consumer Behavior in Choosing Healthcare Services Based on Demographic Factors, which found that women are more likely to use healthcare services when the facilities offer emotional and interpersonal aspects, such as easy and quick communication with medical personnel. This suggests that Sentra Medika Hospital has successfully attracted female patients through suitable marketing strategies, although a more personalized approach may be needed to enhance female patient loyalty. These findings indicate that the hospital should consider these characteristics when designing marketing strategies and services to be more responsive to the needs of both male and female patients.

The education level data shows that the majority of respondents have a diploma (DI, DII, DIII) or a bachelor's degree (S1), totaling 68 people (70.8%). Meanwhile, 22 respondents (22.9%) have completed high school, and 6 respondents (6.3%) have completed middle school. This indicates that most outpatients at Sentra Medika Hospital North Minahasa have a relatively high level of education. A higher education level influences patients' understanding and perception of the importance of healthcare services and the information provided by the hospital. These findings suggest that the hospital should ensure that its communication strategies and information delivery align with the health literacy levels of the majority of patients to improve patient loyalty and satisfaction.

The occupation data shows that the majority of respondents are self-employed, totaling 47 people (49%). This indicates that self-employed individuals have a high hospital visit rate, likely due to their flexible working hours, which allow them to access healthcare services more easily. Meanwhile, respondents working in banking and private sector jobs each total 16 people (16.7%), indicating that workers in the formal sector are also significantly represented in the data.

Table 2. Distribution Table of Marketing Mix

Marketing Mix	n	(%)
Very Good	93	96,9
Good	3	3,1
Bad	0	0
Very Bad	0	0
Total	96	100

Based on Table 2, The research findings indicate that the majority of respondents, 96.9% (93 individuals), rated the marketing mix implemented at Sentra Medika Hospital Minahasa Utara as "Very Good." Meanwhile, 3.1% (3 individuals) gave a rating of "Good," with no respondents rating it as "Less Good" or "Very Bad." These findings illustrate that the hospital's marketing mix strategy has been received very positively by most patients.

This is reflected in the high sense of security patients feel regarding the medical products and services provided, the cleanliness and accessibility of service areas, promotions that align with patient needs and the ease of accessing hospital promotions, the competence and professionalism of both medical and non-medical staff, as well as patient satisfaction with the building's interior, toilet cleanliness, availability of a cafeteria and ATM center, the presence of a comfortable waiting room equipped with entertainment facilities accessible to outpatients, and patient satisfaction with the visual appearance and grooming of staff, nurses, and doctors who consistently present themselves in a neat and professional manner.

These findings align with a comparative study by Sari et al. (2021), which also found that the implementation of the 7P marketing mix has a significant relationship with patient loyalty. In that study, various dimensions of the marketing mix, such as superior healthcare services and well-supported physical evidence, contributed to positive patient perceptions. Another similarity revealed that promotional mix and pricing often pose challenges in attracting patient loyalty; however, these results indicate that Sentra Medika Hospital Minahasa Utara has successfully addressed these challenges. Thus, the research findings support the view that a well-designed marketing mix not only enhances positive perceptions but also fosters long-term relationships with patients.

Table 3. Distribution Table of Marketing Mix

Loyalitas Pasien	n	%
High Loyalty	91	94,8
Moderate Loyalty	5	5,2
Low Loyalty	0	0
Very Low Loyalty	0	0
Total	96	100

Table 3 ,The research conducted at Sentra Medika Hospital Minahasa Utara shows that the majority of respondents exhibit high loyalty toward the hospital's services, with 91 respondents (94.8%) demonstrating strong commitment. These findings align with a comparative study by Sari et al. (2021),

which reported that 261 (70.4%) outpatient respondents displayed high loyalty to the services of St. Carolus Summarecon Serpong Hospital.

The results indicate that most patients are satisfied with the services provided by Sentra Medika Hospital Minahasa Utara, leading them to remain committed to using its services in the future, recommend the hospital to their close contacts as advocates, and trust the quality of care delivered. This reflects the hospital's success in building long-term relationships with patients, which is one of the primary goals of hospital marketing management.

The high level of patient loyalty suggests that Sentra Medika Hospital Minahasa Utara has met patient expectations regarding its marketing mix, thanks to the quality of services, adequate facilities, and effective communication. The hospital's ability to create positive patient experiences has been a key factor in enhancing loyalty. Although a small portion of respondents fall into the moderate loyalty category, this presents an opportunity for the hospital to evaluate and identify areas for improvement. Strengthening these aspects will help optimize overall patient loyalty, ensuring that the high level of loyalty achieved is maintained while maximizing the hospital's potential to sustain strong relationships with its patients.

Table 4. Bivariate Analysis of The Correlation Between Marketing Mix and Patient Loyalty

	Variable	Marketing Mix	Patient Loyalty
Marketing Mix	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	0.497
	p-value	.	0,001
	N	96	96
Patient Loyalty	Correlation Coefficient	0.497	1.000
	p-value	0,001	.
	N	96	96

The Spearman correlation test results in Table 2 show a correlation coefficient of 0.497 with a significance value (p-value) of 0.001. This indicates a significant positive relationship between the marketing mix and patient loyalty in the outpatient unit of Sentra Medika Hospital Minahasa Utara. This positive relationship suggests that the better the implementation of the marketing mix, the higher the level of patient loyalty. Based on the correlation coefficient of 0.497, the relationship falls into the moderate correlation category according to the Spearman correlation interpretation guidelines. Thus, these findings support the research hypothesis that the marketing mix is associated with patient loyalty, and efforts to enhance the quality of the marketing mix can contribute to increased patient loyalty.

The findings of this research demonstrated that the hospital's marketing mix strategy has been successfully received very positively by the majority of patients. This is reflected in the high sense of security patients feel regarding the medical products and services provided, the cleanliness and accessibility of service areas, promotions that are relevant to patient needs and easily accessible, as well as the competence and professionalism of both medical and non-medical staff. Additionally, patient satisfaction is evident in aspects such as the building's interior, the cleanliness of restrooms, the availability of a cafeteria and ATM center, the presence of comfortable waiting areas equipped with entertainment facilities for outpatients undergoing treatment, and the professional appearance and grooming of staff, nurses, and doctors, who are always neat and well-presented.

The results of this study indicate that most patients are satisfied with the services provided by Sentra Medika Hospital Minahasa Utara, leading them to demonstrate a commitment to continue using these services in the future, recommend the hospital to their close contacts as advocates, and trust the quality of care delivered. This reflects the hospital's success in building long-term relationships with patients, which is one of the primary goals of hospital marketing management. The high level of patient loyalty suggests that Sentra Medika Hospital Minahasa Utara has met patient expectations regarding its marketing mix, as evidenced by the quality of services provided, adequate facilities, and effective communication. The hospital's ability to create positive patient experiences plays a crucial role in strengthening loyalty. Although a small percentage of respondents fall into the moderate loyalty category, this serves as an opportunity for the hospital to evaluate and identify areas for improvement to further optimize overall patient loyalty. By maintaining the high level of loyalty achieved, the hospital can maximize its potential in fostering strong and lasting relationships with its patients.

Based on the findings of this study, the Spearman correlation coefficient of 0.497 indicates that the relationship between the marketing mix and patient loyalty falls within the moderate strength

category. This suggests that while the marketing mix plays a crucial role in building patient loyalty, other factors also influence overall patient loyalty. These factors may include service quality, interpersonal relationships with healthcare professionals, and the overall patient experience. Therefore, the hospital should consider developing a more integrated marketing strategy that aligns with service delivery and management to further optimize patient loyalty.

4. CONCLUSION

The research conducted at the outpatient unit of Sentra Medika Hospital Minahasa Utara yielded the following findings.

1. The assessment of the hospital's marketing mix showed that the majority of respondents rated it as "Very Good," with 93 respondents (96.9% of the total sample) and 3 respondents (3.1%) rating it as "Good." This positive evaluation reflects the effectiveness of the hospital's marketing strategy across various aspects, including product, price, place, promotion, process, people, and physical evidence.
2. Most respondents demonstrated high loyalty to the services provided by Sentra Medika Hospital Minahasa Utara, with 91 respondents (94.8%) expressing strong loyalty.
3. The results of the Spearman rank correlation test indicated a significant positive relationship between the marketing mix and patient loyalty at Sentra Medika Hospital Minahasa Utara, with a correlation coefficient of 0.497 and a significance value (p-value) of 0.001. This finding suggests that an improved implementation of the marketing mix is associated with increased patient loyalty.

5. SUGGESTION

The management of Sentra Medika Hospital Minahasa Utara can implement several strategies to enhance and maintain patient loyalty through the hospital's marketing mix, including:

1. Maintaining and improving innovations in promotions, personalized services, the use of digital technology, and service pricing considerations to retain loyal patients and attract new ones.
2. Developing loyalty programs such as discounts, additional services, or rewards for loyal patients to strengthen post-treatment relationships between patients and the hospital.
3. Regularly evaluating patient satisfaction to improve facilities, staff friendliness, and service efficiency, ensuring a continuously enhanced patient experience and long-term loyalty.

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