

Determinat factors influenced consumer's decision: a study in a regional public hospital

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ABSTRACT

Nowadays, there are lots of hospitals both managed by the private and public sectors. It is a fact that patients have an excellent opportunity to choose the hospital they want to be treated in, which will lead to higher competition between hospitals. Hospitals must be ready to compete with public and private hospitals. The strategy is carried out as well as possible for the success of the services offered by the hospital. One that can be done is using the 7Ps marketing mix theory (product, price, place, promotion, people, physical evidence, and process), which aims to increase the number of visits to the hospital. This research is quantitative research, descriptive-analytic with a cross-sectional approach. The sample size in this study was 110 people, chosen from outpatients in the studied hospital. The sampling technique in this study used purposive sampling with criteria determined by the researcher. The analysis used in this study is multivariate analysis. In this study, it was found that all variables influence consumer decision-making. However, from the seven variables that have been tested, three variables greatly influence consumer decisions partially in using services in the studied hospital. These variables are promotion, process, and physical evidence.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The world of health in Indonesia is currently growing very rapidly [1]. When viewed from the number, the development of this hospital has increased every year. Based on data from the Central Bureau of Statistics, within 10 years (2011-2021), there has been an increase in the number of hospitals by 80.8%, so in 2021 the total number of hospitals in Indonesia will be 3,112 units. This does not only occur in big cities but the increase in the number of hospitals is also felt in remote areas of Indonesia.

Hospitals are one of the health facilities to provide health services for the community, so it has a very important role in accelerating the improvement of public health status. This requires the hospital as a service provider to improve the quality of service, not only curative, but also promotive and preventive [2]. The increasing number of hospitals gives the fact that hospitals have an equal opportunity to be chosen by the patients where they want to be treated. This will lead to higher competition between hospitals. The community, as users of health services in hospitals, are now getting more competent in making their choices. With the development of information technology, people can easily access health service information and everything related to hospital services [3].

Therefore, hospitals, like any other organizations, need to use marketing strategies to perform well in delivering medical and treatment services [4]. This strategy must be carried out as well as possible for the

success of the services offered by the hospital to do differentiation [5]. One strategy that can be done is using the marketing mix theory to increase the number of visitors. The marketing mix is a strategy that includes several components, namely product, price, promotion, place, people, process, and physical evidence. All components must be maximized to obtain maximum results as well [6]. All components in the marketing mix are often called 7Ps [7]. These 7Ps can be controlled and combined to produce the desired response. Studies indicate that utilizing a marketing mix is crucial for optimizing service pricing, increasing surgical operations, raising health awareness, changing the attitudes of service providers, generating more financial resources for hospitals, and improving communication between service providers and patients [8]. The primary objective of a hospital is to enhance patient satisfaction, which can promote medication adherence and improve patient patients' health status (a direct outcome of utilizing the marketing mix). Abedi and Abedini [9] investigate that hospitals that implement marketing principles and design their plans and programs around marketing mix components have positive outcomes.

Every marketer has to understand the processes and factors that can influence consumer decisions in buying products or services. Mohanty [10] explains that two factors influence consumer purchasing decisions, namely external and internal factors. External factors consist of the socio-cultural environment. While internal factors include individual characteristics (age, gender, education, occupation, personality, and lifestyle). In addition, it is also important to know consumer behavior as the basis for consumers making decisions. Consumer behavior is also referred to as the buying process, where at that time, consumers carry out activities such as looking for information, doing research, and evaluating products [11].

A previous study was conducted in India to determine the marketing mix strategy in tertiary healthcare. The results show that there is a significant relationship between patients' awareness of health concepts with the health program from the hospital. It is also shown that there is a low tendency from tertiary healthcare to implement the marketing mix strategy. So it is better to formulate a marketing mix strategy to provide better services, which will increase the hospital's income [12]. It is also supported by previous researchers, which stated that marketing mix is significantly related to the number of patients visiting [13] and interest [14]. Based on a review article done by Siripipathanakul and Chana [15], there is a proposed theoretical framework that shows the relationship between the healthcare marketing mix in clinics and patient satisfaction. Therefore, it needs further study to clarify in similar sectors, such as hospitals.

In Indonesia, one of the hospitals affected by the increasing number of hospitals is Regional General Hospital (RSUD) Dr. R. Soedjono Selong, East Lombok, Indonesia. This hospital has several types of services, one of which is outpatient care, with a total of 21 polyclinics. However, based on the results of research studies, there has been a decrease in the number of outpatients from 2017 to 2021, from 99,627 to 98,132. The decrease in the number of outpatients is a problem that must be considered by hospital management. This is because this phenomenon will affect hospital income. Besides, operational activities will be disrupted. So that it is necessary to identify problems to find out the decrease in the number of outpatients based on the duties and functions of the hospital through internal and external problems.

Based on the observations, the problems include a limited area for hospital development, especially for parking areas, the availability of infrastructure and medical equipment facilities is inadequate, nursing and non-medical are still inadequate, the quantity and quality of human resources (HR) medical, nursing, non-medical personnel are still lacking, and the guarantee of service quality standards is still not optimal [16]. From the problem that has been stated, this research aims to know which 7Ps influence the outpatients the most in making the decision to be treated in RSUD Dr. R. Soedjono Selong, East Lombok, Indonesia. The findings of this research could offer important insights to help create effective marketing plans for RSUD Dr. R. Soedjono Selong, East Lombok, Indonesia, and for public hospitals in general, ultimately leading to improved patient satisfaction and increased market share for the hospitals.

2. METHOD

In conducting this research, it has ethical approval from Ethical Research Committee of Universitas Adhmad Dahlan with the number 012207098. This study uses multivariate analysis using the classic assumption test, namely the normality test, multicollinearity test, heteroscedasticity test, and multiple linear regression analysis tests, including the t-test, f-test, and coefficient of determination test. The independent variables in this study are product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence. In contrast, the dependent variable is the decision to use health services at RSUD Dr. Soedjono Selong.

The population in this study were outpatients at RSUD Dr. Soedjono Selong. Based on the average number of outpatients per month in 2021, there were 8,177 outpatients. Sampling in this study used a purposive sampling technique by providing specific requirements to determine which respondents were eligible to be selected and following the criteria determined by the researcher. From the sample calculation, there is a total of 110 outpatients. Variable measurement is based on patient perception so that patients with specific characteristics are needed to measure accurately. The inclusion criteria in this study are general

patients (non-BPJS) who receive treatment at outpatient services at RSUD Dr. Soedjono Selong, has been treated in RSUD Dr. Soedjono Selong for more than three times, and is willing to be a respondent.

Data collection in this study was using a questionnaire and examined with a 5-point Likert scale (1=very weak, 2=weak, 3=moderate, 4=good, 5=very good). There are two sections, demographic information (including gender, patient's age, marital status, level of education, and occupation) and closed questions so that alternative answers can be provided. Questionnaires were distributed to respondents to obtain objective data from opinions, feelings, desires, and patient expectations.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

Table 1 shows the respondent characteristics from this research. There are several demographic variables, such as gender, age, marital status, education, and occupation. Each will be given a frequency and percentage. The table shows that there were 38 male and 72 female (65.5%) patients (N=110). Most of the respondents were aged 26-45 years (62.7%), and most of the respondents 64.5% were married. Over a third (n=40, 36.4%) of the patients had completed high school, and 33.6% were self-employed. After classical assumption tests, such as the normality, heteroscedasticity, and multicollinearity test, the f-test for multi-linear regression analysis is performed. Table 2 presents the result of the ANOVA.

Table 1. Characteristics of study participants

| Demographic variable | N | % |
|----------------------------|----|------|
| Gender | | |
| Male | 38 | 34.5 |
| Female | 72 | 65.5 |
| Age (years) | | |
| < 26 | 13 | 11.8 |
| 26 – 45 | 69 | 62.7 |
| >45 | 28 | 25.5 |
| Marital status | | |
| Single | 30 | 27.3 |
| Married | 71 | 64.5 |
| Divorced and not remarried | 4 | 3.6 |
| Widowed and not remarried | 5 | 4.5 |
| Education | | |
| Elementary school | 37 | 33.6 |
| Primary school | 23 | 20.9 |
| High school | 40 | 36.4 |
| Diploma-2 | 2 | 1.8 |
| Diploma-4 | 4 | 3.6 |
| Undergraduate | 4 | 3.6 |
| Occupation | | |
| Unemployed | 12 | 10.9 |
| Housewife | 21 | 19.1 |
| Governmental employment | 2 | 1.8 |
| Agricultural labor | 1 | 0.9 |
| Daily labor | 1 | 0.9 |
| Farmer | 13 | 15.5 |
| Trader | 3 | 2.7 |
| Self-employed | 37 | 33.6 |
| Driver | 1 | 0.9 |
| University student | 11 | 10 |
| Teacher | 4 | 3.6 |

Table 2. Result of ANOVA

| Model | Sum of squares | df | Mean square | F | Sig. |
|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|-------|
| Regression | 41.073 | 8 | 5.868 | 10.818 | .000a |
| Residual | 55.327 | 102 | .542 | | |
| Total | 96.400 | 110 | | | |

The predictors from Table 2 analysis are physical evidence, price, place, process, people, product, and promotion. While the dependent variable is the patient's decision to be treated in the studied hospital. From the result, it can be seen that if the calculated f-value is 10.818 with a p-value level (significant value) of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), it means that the hypothesis proposed in this study can be accepted statistically. Hence, all

variables in the marketing mix strategy (7Ps) jointly influence consumer decisions to use services at Dr. Soedjono Hospital. After that, the t-test was calculated to know which variable influenced the consumer decision. Table 3 presents the result of the significance of each variable of the marketing mix, such as product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence.

Table 3. Result of multi-linear regression

| Model | Unstandardized coefficients | | Standardized coefficients | t | Sig. |
|-------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | .245 | 2.588 | | .095 | .925 |
| Product | .003 | .032 | .007 | .080 | .936 |
| Price | -.062 | .057 | -.089 | -1.093 | .277 |
| Place | .045 | .030 | .120 | 1.505 | .135 |
| Promotion | .229 | .112 | .199 | 2.045 | .043 |
| People | -.069 | .082 | -.071 | -.845 | .400 |
| Process | .192 | .070 | .224 | 2.764 | .007 |
| Physical evidence | .622 | .162 | .369 | 3.835 | .000 |

From Table 3, it can be seen the significance of each variable in 7Ps. Here is the hypothesis:
 H_0 = there is no influence on the patient's decision to choose RSUD Dr. Soedjono
 H_1 = there is a significant influence on the patient's decision to choose RSUD Dr. Soedjono
 The decision from the calculation is; If the significant value is less than 0.05, H_0 is accepted. In contrast, if the significant value is more than 0.05, vice versa.

Variable "product" (X1) has a t-value of 0.080 with a significance value of (0.936) where the sig. value is more significant than 0.05 (p -value>0.05), which means that the product (X1) is not significant or has no positive influence on consumer decisions to be treated in the studied hospital. The "price" variable (X2) has a t-value of 1.093 with a significance value of 0.277 where (p -value>0.05), which means that price (X2) is not significant or has no influence on consumers' decisions to use RSUD Dr. Soedjono. "Place" variable (X3) has a t-value of 1.505 with a sig value of 0.135 where (p -value>0.05), which means that the place (X3) is not significant or has no influence on consumer decisions to use health services. The "promotion" variable (X4) has a t-value of 2.045 with a sig value of 0.043 where (p -value<0.05), which means it is not significant or has no influence on consumer decisions to choose RSUD Dr. Soedjono as their treatment place. While variable "people" (X5) has a t-value of 0.845 with a sig. value of 0.400 where (p -value>0.05), which means that people (X5) are not significant or have no influence on consumers' decisions. The X6, the "process" variable, has a t-value of 2.764 with a sig. value of 0.007 where (p -value<0.05), which means that the process (X6) is significant or has a positive influence on consumers' decisions on choosing RSUD Dr. Soedjono. The last variable is the physical evidence variable (X7). It has a t-value of 3.835 with a sig. value of 0.000 where (p -value<0.05), which means that the physical evidence variable (X7) is significant or has a positive influence on consumer decisions to use health services. Table 4 aims to explain the extent ability of the independent variable to the dependent variable.

Table 4. Result of the coefficient determinant

| Model | R | R-square | Adjusted R-square | Std. error of the estimate |
|-------|-------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .653a | .426 | .387 | .736 |

Table 4 shows that the R-square value is 0.426. Thus, can be stated that 42.6% of consumer decisions are only able to explain the product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence variables. While 57.4% is explained by other variables that do not exist or are not considered in the research analysis.

3.2. Discussion

3.2.1. Product

Products are everything the company offers consumers by providing various values to achieve goals through customer satisfaction and desires. Product elements in the hospital consist of diagnosis, treatment, and educational training for students and researchers in the medical or medical support fields [12]. Based on the results of data analysis, it was obtained p -value=0.925, which indicated that there was no influence of marketing strategy on the product variable on the consumer satisfaction process using health services at the outpatient installation of Dr. Soedjono Hospital. From this research, the product is insignificant or has no influence, which means that the product does not influence consumer decisions to use the services at

Dr. Soedjono Hospital. From Hailu *et al.* [17], it is shown that the variable 'product' influence the least of doctor's prescribing behaviors in a public and private hospital. Even so, hospitals need to pay attention to these product elements to maintain their patients. This is because if these conditions continue to occur, it will affect the patient's decision process in choosing health services and result in a decrease in the number of patient visits.

3.2.2. Price

Based on the results of data analysis, it was obtained $p\text{-value}=0.936$, which indicated that there was no influence of the marketing strategy on the price variable on the consumer's decision to use health services at Dr. Soedjono Hospital. These results mean that there is no price relationship with consumers' decisions to use services at Dr. Soedjono Hospital because the tariff setting at Dr. Soedjono Hospital has been stipulated in East Lombok regent regulation Number 43 of 2021, which is used by the hospital and does not change every year. The results of this study follow the results of a study conducted by Lai *et al.* [18], which stated that patients are likely to compare poor services with the cost incurred to ascertain the worthiness of the money that has been spent. The price variable is related to the costs that will be incurred by patients in obtaining services at the hospital. In utilizing health services, patients will reconsider the suitability of service rates with the drugs obtained by patients. The suitability of service tariffs for the quality and drugs obtained by patients when obtaining services can enable patients to revisit health services.

3.2.3. Place

Based on the results of data analysis, a $p\text{-value}=0.135$ was obtained, which indicated that there was no influence of the marketing strategy on the place variable on the consumer's decision to use services at the outpatient installation of Dr. Soedjono Hospital. The results of this study follow the results by Tarihoran *et al.* [19], that there is no effect of place variables on the decision to revisit the hospital. The place where the transaction occurs has quite an essential meaning because of the environment where the customer perceives the service. In this variable, hospitals can be interpreted as a place where health services are provided.

It is known from a geographical point of view that the location of RSUD Dr. Soedjono is in the middle of the city of Selong, East Lombok, where not only the people around Selong use health services at the hospital but some from outside the Selong sub-district use health services at Dr. Soedjono Hospital, such as sub-districts. Who access the location far from the hospital as in the characteristics of the respondents based on the address that patients who visit more Terara where the distance between Terara and RSUD Dr. Soedjono is 17.3 km so that the distance from the hospital location can be a consideration for the community to take treatment at the RSUD Dr. Soedjono.

3.2.4. Promotion

Hospital promotional activities are generally related to communicating and persuading customers. The essence of this promotional activity is a form of marketing communication that seeks to disseminate information, influence, and remind target markets to be willing to accept, buy, and be loyal to the products offered by the company. The concept of hospital promotion is how patients know about the types of services available at the hospital, how they are motivated to use them, then use them on an ongoing basis and disseminate this information to their relatives. Hospital promotion efforts can be carried out by providing information and promoting services through electronic media, print media, the hospital environment, and public relations activities such as collaborations and events.

Based on the results of data analysis, a $p\text{-value}=0.043$ was obtained, which indicated that there was an influence of the promotion variable on consumer decisions to use services at Dr. Soedjono Hospital. The results of this study are also following research conducted by Yaghoubian *et al.* [20], which shows that there is an influence between the promotion mix on patient decisions in choosing health services at Iran's Hekmat Hospital. The results of this study are also under the theory of research [21], which states that promotion can influence customer decisions because the purpose of promotion is to inform and remind potential customers about the advantages and benefits of service products from hospitals. Things that need to be promoted can be in the form of types of products/services, prices, quality, and ease of access to places of service. By doing the promotion, it can influence patients in choosing health services easily.

RSUD Dr. Soedjono is one of the health service facilities organized by the government. Currently, competition between hospitals is very tight in attracting consumers to access health services in hospitals. This can be seen from the increasing number of hospitals. One way that hospitals can do to attract consumers' interest in their products is to carry out promotional activities. The current promotions carried out by Dr. Soedjono Hospital are pretty good, including carrying out promotions through health outreach through brochures, leaflets, websites, YouTube, and collaborations, with midwives and puskesmas in terms of patient referrals.

3.2.5. People

Based on the results of data analysis, a p -value=0.400 was obtained, which indicated that there was no influence of marketing strategy on the officer variable on consumer decisions to use services at Dr. Soedjono Hospital. This result is supported by Ahmad *et al.* [22], which stated that even though it influences patient satisfaction, compared to other variables, it is very low. It can be because they are more product oriented. As long as the service is good enough, then the customers will likely continue to go. Hence, this result does not follow the result of the research by Pinanggih *et al.* [23], which analyzed that the health workers (people) affected patient retention in RSUD Datu Beru Takengon, with a p -value<0.05.

Chana *et al.* [24] found that variable people influence patient satisfaction in Thailand's healthcare services. It includes the excellent knowledge, good attitude, and qualifications of the doctors and all the supporting staff. This theory also follows research conducted by Liu *et al.* [25], which states that to increase patient loyalty, it is important to have a continuous relationship with the patients. It can be done by having good quality doctors and supporting staff. Although other marketing strategy variables influence the patient's decision process, it does not rule out the possibility that unfavorable staff evaluations can make patients not choose health services at the hospital. Therefore, RSUD Dr. Soedjono needs to recruit and retain officers with the ability, attitude, and commitment to building good patient relationships.

3.2.6. Process

Based on the results of data analysis, a p -value=0.007 is obtained, which indicates that there is an influence of process variables on consumer decisions to use services at the outpatient installation of Dr. Soedjono Hospital. Understandably, respondents seek a sense of security and comfort while being treated at a hospital to accelerate recovery from their illness. This result is supported by Amriza and Susanto [26], which shows that the process variable significantly influences the patient's decision to choose health services at hospital X. Examples of suitable processes in the hospital include the queues, professional medical action efforts by doctors and nurses, as well as timely examination processes that will influence the patient's decision to utilize health services in a hospital. According to Octivanny and Berlianto [27], there is an influence of the process on patients' intention to revisit the healthcare service.

The process in the hospital is interpreted more as a standard operating procedure (SOP). So that if the SOP is carried out in an orderly manner, there will be few complaints from customers due to the variety of services obtained. Existing SOPs must be communicated to customers so that they do not cause misunderstandings.

3.2.7. Physical evidence

Based on the results of data analysis, a p -value=0.000 is obtained, which indicates that there is an influence of physical evidence variables on consumer decisions to use services at the outpatient installation of RSUD Dr. Soedjono. Ravangard *et al.* [28] supports this result because, in Iran, physical evidence was the most crucial factor affecting the selection of patients' hospitals. Besides, it is also supported by Salim [29], which states that partially, physical evidence influences patients' decisions in selecting Bengkulu regional general hospital positively.

Physical evidence can influence the customer's decision to use the health services at Dr. Soedjono Hospital. Physical evidence in service companies such as hospitals can be in the appearance of service facilities and staff to assess the quality of the service concerned a comfortable and beautiful hospital atmosphere, a large and safe parking area, and an adequate and comfortable space waiting room for patients influence the decision to use services at Dr. Soedjono Hospital. It should be noted that respondents seek a sense of security and comfort while being treated at a hospital to accelerate recovery from their illness [30].

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the result, it can be stated that the marketing mix or the 7Ps (product, price, place, promotion, people, process, and physical evidence) influence consumer decisions to be treated in the studied hospital with a p -value of 0.000. Even though it was partially, it has a different result. From the analysis that has been done, variable product, price, place, and person do not influence the consumer's decision with a p -value >0.05. While promotion, process, and physical evidence have influenced the outpatients to have treatment in RSUD Dr. Soedjono, with a p -value <0.05 respectively, 0.043, 0.007, and 0.000. This result suggests the hospital should pay attention to the promotion, process, and physical evidence individually, as they positively might increase the number of outpatients.

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