

# **The Influence of Marketing Mix and Expectations on Student Loyalty Through Student Decisions at State Vocational High Schools in Barru Regency**

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## **Abstract**

*The aims of this study were (1) to partially test and analyze the effect of the marketing mix and expectations on student satisfaction (2) to partially test and analyze the effect of the marketing mix and expectations on student loyalty. (3) To test and analyze the effect of satisfaction on student loyalty. (4) To test and partially analyze the effect of the marketing mix and expectations on student loyalty through student satisfaction at State Vocational High Schools in Barru District. The research location was at the State Vocational High School in Barru Regency with a population of 2689 students and a sample of 348 students. The sampling method uses purposive sampling. Methods of data collection using a questionnaire. The analytical method uses the Structural Equation Model (SEM). The study's results prove that: (1) The marketing mix and expectations partially have a positive and significant effect on student satisfaction. (2) The marketing mix has a positive and insignificant effect on student loyalty. (3) Expectations have a positive and significant effect on student loyalty. (4) Student satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on student loyalty. (5) Marketing mix and expectations partially have a positive and significant effect on student loyalty through student satisfaction at State Vocational High Schools in Barru District.*

**Keywords:** *Marketing Mix, Expectations, Student Satisfaction and Student Loyalty*

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## **I. Preliminary**

The development of science and technology requires society to be able to make changes and keep abreast of existing educational developments. The community must also be able to compete in a more competitive world of work. Education is a strategic tool to improve the quality of community resources. Education is also a science that can be learned and can make humans intelligent, have the ability, a good attitude and can interact well in the community (Tangilisan et al, 2014). Educational institutions, especially schools, are a means to increase knowledge. A large number of vocational high schools with all the offers, of course, makes the community as consumers who want to continue to a higher level such as SMA or SMK have to think with a lot of considerations in determining various school choices to the process of choosing the appropriate major for themselves. Vocational high schools are a bridge for students to study and train their skills to become qualified human resources. SMK is a school to provide ready-to-work provisions to students who are skilled at the middle level in accordance with the requirements demanded by the world of work (Wati, 2014). The object of this research is all State Vocational High Schools (SMKN) in Barru Regency. The number of SMKN in Barru Regency is five schools (SMKN 1, SMKN 2, SMKN 3, SMKN 4, SMKN 5). The efforts made by each school are related to how to build student loyalty. Student loyalty is important for schools because good relationships with students can make a school last long and strong (Dharmmesta, et. al., 2012). Loyalty is a form of consumer commitment to a product/service based on a very positive attitude and is reflected in repeat purchases that occur consistently (Buchari, 2014). For a school, students who have a highly loyal attitude will be something that must be considered and maintained so that this sense of loyalty does not decrease (Tjiptono, 2015). Consumers who have loyalty will make references, cooperation, use loyalty, resistance to negative influences, and trust (Kotler and Keller, 2012; Gies, 2017). Various efforts have been made by schools to improve services to create student loyalty through reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Table 1 shows the development of acceptance of new students at all State Vocational Schools in Kab. The new data for 2020 to 2022 are as follows:

**Table 1** Data on New Student Admissions at State Vocational Schools in Kab. Barru

No	School Name	Year			Number of Students
		2020	2021	2022	
1	SMKN 1 Barru	334	338	346	1,008
2	Barru	220	252	259	731
3	Barru	82	86	72	240
4	SMKN 4 Barru	104	109	121	334
5	SMKN	3	2	5	Barru
<b>Total</b>		857	899	933	2,689

Source: PPDB Data of State Vocational High Schools of Barru Regency (2022)

Based on table 1, it can be seen that the development of the number of students in 2022 is only 34 students or 3.78% compared to 2021. Meanwhile, the development of the number of students in 2021 is 42 students or 4.90% compared to 2020. Furthermore, these conditions indicate a theoretical gap where it was found that the growth in the number of students in 2021-2022 is still lower than in 2020-2021. The low growth in the number of students in 2021-2022 is indicated to be related to low student satisfaction which has an impact on student loyalty. Satisfaction is one of the factors that influence loyalty because satisfaction is the impact of a comparison between expectations and the results obtained (Tjiptono, 2014). Student satisfaction is always the expectation of a school. With satisfaction, it can be used as a benchmark for a school to know if the product is made and can be well received in the market. Students who are satisfied with the products obtained tend to have loyal behaviour. Based on the results of observations and data obtained through documentation, shows that the form of student dissatisfaction has an impact on loyalty as shown in Table 3. Students who feel dissatisfied with the learning process at SMKN in Barru Regency give rise to various forms of responses that differ from one another in constructive/destructive and active dimensions. /passive.

**Table 3** Kidapawan Student Data for 2022

No.	Response	Name of school				
		SMKN 1 Barru	SMKN 2 Barru	SMKN 3 Barru	SMKN 4 Barru	SMKN 5 Barru
1	Exit	9	7	5	10	11
2	Voice	11	11	14	7	8
3	Loyalty	9	8	16	9	6
4	Neglect	7	5	8	4	7

Source: Quote from SMKN Barru report (The year 2022)

Table 3 shows that students' responses to dissatisfaction in the learning process were dominated by exits. Dissatisfied students will choose to leave school and move to another school. The results of research from Douglas and Paul (2015), Subandi and Muda (2021), Hardi et al (2020), and Nurul et al (2020) prove that satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on loyalty. However, the findings from Ady et al. (2019), Mohammed & Hilda (2015), Douglas & Paul T. (2015), Zhaohua et al. (2019), Venkatesh et al. (2019), Vithya (2017), Nurul & Maha (2019), Nuriye & Sevil (2014), Dadang (2017), Acai et al. (2019) proved that satisfaction has a positive and significant impact on loyalty. Furthermore, to build loyalty, schools need to make various efforts and even take time, effort, and of course costs (Wati, 2014). Loyalty will be formed when students go through the stages of the buying cycle including having awareness of the product by means of marketing (Ningrum & Tresna, 2018). Marketing is one of the driving qualities for school progress. Effective marketing strategies can be used to introduce schools to prospective students (Jamal Ma'mur Asmani, 2015). One form of marketing strategy that can support product marketing to create satisfaction and loyalty is the use of a marketing mix. The marketing mix is related to a set of marketing tools to achieve the goals of the marketing agency (Missouri, 2014). Effective implementation of the marketing mix will provide the best marketing product (Tjiptono, 2014). Alienation theory (Oliver, 2004 cited in Tjiptono and Gregorius, 2016) explains that students who feel dissatisfied will experience several situations. Students in situations of powerlessness, their dissatisfaction cannot affect the school, students in situations of meaninglessness when students feel they are unable to make decisions about choosing a school wisely due to the lack of information about the school to be chosen. Whereas students in a situation of normlessness reflect students' beliefs that schools tend to behave unethically and practice unfair marketing mixes. They also feel lied to or tricked by the school. Usually, normlessness will lead to scepticism and distrust of schools. This would be dropping out of school, complaining to the school or third parties and negative word-of-mouth. Discrepancy theory (Porter, 1961 cited in Missouri, 2014) explains that student satisfaction can be obtained by comparing what is expected or desired with reality. Students feel satisfied if the elements of the school's marketing mix (product, price, place, promotion, physical evidence, people, and process) meet or exceed their expectations. The marketing mix is a strategy for creating

value, satisfaction and student loyalty. A clear understanding of the marketing mix can attract potential students and current students to become loyal students (Mohammed, 2021).

The results of the researchers' observations showed that out of 348 students it was found that 73% of students chose schools due to educational costs/competitive prices, 74% effective promotion, 69% ease of access to schools, 70% attitudes and competence of teaching staff, 78% learning process, and 82% evidence physique. Research results from Arizal et al. (2018), Kennedy (2018), Dewi et al. (2018), Syarifatul et al. (2021), Mukarromah et al. (2021), Wahyu Hardyanto, Suwito Eko Pramono (2021) proved that the marketing mix has a positive and significant effect on satisfaction. Meanwhile, the results of research from Arizal et al. (2018), Kennedy (2018), Syarifatul et al. (2021), and Nur et al. (2021), prove that satisfaction has a positive and significant impact on loyalty. However, the findings from Radiman et al (2020) prove that the marketing mix has a positive and insignificant effect on loyalty. Students usually see what they expect to see, and what they expect to see is usually based on past habits and experiences (Pratama, 2009). Expectations related to a hope or belief that is expected to come true in the future in accordance with the desire to achieve it must be done with real action (Tjiptono & Gregorius, 2016). Expectancy value theory (Siagian, 2003) explains that the strength of a person's tendency to act in a certain way depends on the strength of the hope that the action will be followed by a certain result and on the attractiveness of that result for the person concerned. Students who feel satisfied when the reality received exceeds their expectations. Student satisfaction will create loyal behaviour. The results of the researchers' observations showed that out of 348 students it was found that 70% of students chose schools due to needs, 63% experience, 72% external communication, and 78% added value in the learning process. Research results from Samaan (2014), Syarifatul et al. (2021), A. Rodríguez (2016), Tolga & Kursad (2015), Elvera et al. (2019) proved that expectations have a positive and significant effect on satisfaction. Meanwhile, the results of research from Syarifatul et al. (2021), A. Rodríguez (2016), Tolga & Kursad (2015), Elvera et al. (2019) proved that expectations have a positive and significant effect on loyalty. This research is included in development research where researchers develop marketing mix indicators used by researchers from Syarifatul et al (2021) with the title *The Influence of Customer Expectation and Marketing Mix on Customer Loyalty with Customer Satisfaction as Intervening*. The marketing mix indicators used by Syarifuddi et al (2021) consist of product, price, promotion, place, people, process, and physical evidence. Meanwhile, the researchers used product, price, propose place, people, process, physical evidence, display (curriculum arrangement) and performance indicators. The development of indicators indicates the differences and the originality of a study. Based on the phenomena and inconsistencies from the findings of previous researchers which still require confirmation, the main theme of this study is: "The Influence of Marketing Mix and Expectations on Student Loyalty Through Student Satisfaction at State Vocational High Schools in Barru District"

## **II. Research Method**

The research approach is the way of thinking adopted by researchers about how research designs are made and how the research will be carried out. The approach used in this research is a quantitative research approach. The quantitative research approach is based on the philosophy of positivism, which is used in the certain sample or population studies (Sugiyono, 2017; 13). This approach is adapted to the needs of finding answers to the formulation of the problem. Characteristics of a quantitative research approach, consisting of the type of data (phenomena described numerically), analysis (descriptive and inferential statistics), and scope of research (hypotheses or specific questions). However, the main weakness of the quantitative research approach is the superficial understanding of the participant's thoughts and feelings (Suliyanto, 2018).

The type of data used can be seen from various points of view (Suliyanto, 2018). The type of data used in this study is quantitative data with primary and secondary data sources. Quantitative data is data in the form of numbers resulting from the perceptions of respondents as outlined in the questionnaire. Primary data is data collected by the researchers directly from the respondents, while secondary data is data obtained indirectly from research subjects. Data

collection is a process of procuring data obtained from literature studies and field data. Library study is conducted to obtain secondary data which is used as an analogy in the formulation of the theory and basis in analyzing primary data and strengthening conjectures in discussing problems. Field data is carried out to obtain primary data for analysis purposes and the data is obtained in several ways according to Suliyanto (2018: 220), namely:

1. Distribution of questionnaires to the respondents. Questionnaire material is derived from variable operationalization. The statement given is a closing statement. The questionnaire was prepared based on items related to the variables to be studied, using Likert's Summated Rating (LSR) method. The level of measurement used is ordinal, where the numbers given contain the meaning of the level (strongly agree = 5; agree = 4; moderately agree = 3; disagree = 2; strongly disagree = 1).
2. Observation is observing the activities of students. Observations were carried out in a participatory and non-participatory manner. In participatory observation, researchers are directly involved with some of the

respondents in the research environment. Non-participatory observation, researchers only make observations of user behaviour.

Population refers to a group of people or objects that have something in common in one or several ways that form the main problem in a study. The target population is SMKN students in Barru Regency from 2020 to 2022 with a total of 2,679 students. The sample is a portion of the population that is used as the basis for drawing research conclusions (Eng and Achmad, 2017). Sampling is used as the primary means of assessing behaviour in a population. The minimum sample size is determined using the Slovin formula. This formula was first developed by Slovin in 1960 quoted in Suliyanto (2018).

### III. Research Results

Based on the structural model proposed in this study, it is possible to test the hypothesis by testing the path coefficients in the structural equation model. The direct effect can be seen in the following table:

**Table 17** Hypothesis Testing

Hip	Variable			Direct	Indirect	Total	P-Valuse	Ket
	Independent	Intervining	Dependent					
1	Marketing Mix (X1)	-	Student Satisfaction (Y)	0.339	-	0.339	0.010	(+) Significant
2	Expectations (X2)	-	Student Satisfaction (Y)	0.395	-	0.395	0.005	(+) Significant
3	Marketing Mix (X1)	-	Student Loyalty(Z )	0.056	-	0.056	0.585	(+) Not Significant
4	Expectations (X2)	-	Student Loyalty(Z)	0.312	-	0.312	0.008	(+) Significant
5	Student Satisfaction (Y)	-	Student Loyalty(Z)	0.333	-	0.333	0.000	(+) Significant
6	Marketing Mix (X1)	Student Satisfaction (Y) Student	Loyalty(Z)	0.056	0.113	0.169	0.030	(+) Significant
7	Expectations (X2)	Student Satisfaction (Y)	Student Loyalty(Z)	0.312	0.132	0.444	0.022	(+) Significant

Source: Processed data (2022) (Attachment: 3)

#### 1. Effect of Marketing Mix on Student Satisfaction

Marketing mix has a positive and significant effect on student satisfaction ( $P = 0.010 \leq 0.05$  and loading factor = 0.399). So that the statement from the first hypothesis is accepted and this means that the more effective the marketing mix, the more effective it will benefit student satisfaction. This is because students are increasingly satisfied.

#### 2. Effect of Expectations on Student Satisfaction

Expectations have a positive and significant effect on student satisfaction ( $P = 0.005 \leq 0.05$  and loading factor = 0.395). So the statement from the second hypothesis is accepted and this means that expectations provide benefits to student satisfaction. This is because students whose expectations are increasingly fulfilled, they will feel more satisfied.

#### 3. Effect of Marketing Mix on Student Loyalty Marketing

mix has a positive and insignificant effect on student loyalty ( $P = 0.585 \leq 0.05$  and loading factor = 0.056). So the statement from the third hypothesis cannot be accepted and this means that the marketing mix does not provide benefits to student loyalty. This is because the components of the marketing mix used cannot increase student loyalty.

#### 4. Effect of Expectations on Student Satisfaction

Expectations have a positive and significant effect on student loyalty ( $P = 0.008 \leq 0.05$  and loading factor = 0.312). So the statement from the fourth hypothesis is accepted and this means that expectations provide benefits to student loyalty. This is because students whose expectations are increasingly fulfilled, they feel more loyal.

#### 5. Effect of Student Satisfaction on Student Loyalty Student

satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on student loyalty ( $P = 0.000 \leq 0.05$  and loading factor = 0.333). So that the statement from the fifth hypothesis is accepted and this means that satisfaction provides benefits to student loyalty. This is because students who are more satisfied then they become more loyal.

6. Effect of Marketing Mix on Student Loyalty Through Student Satisfaction

Marketing mix has a positive and significant effect on student loyalty through student satisfaction ( $P = 0.030 \leq 0.05$  and loading factor = 0.113). So that the statement from the sixth hypothesis can be accepted and this means that student satisfaction can mediate the effect of the marketing mix on student loyalty.

7. The Effect of Expectations on Student Loyalty Through Student Satisfaction

Expectations have a positive and significant effect on student loyalty through student satisfaction ( $P=0.022 \leq 0.05$  and loading factor = 0.444). So that the statement from the seventh hypothesis can be accepted and this means that student satisfaction can mediate the effect between expectations on student loyalty.

#### **IV. Discussion**

1. Effect of Marketing Mix on Student Satisfaction

The results of hypothesis testing prove that the marketing mix has a positive and significant effect on student satisfaction. Product, price, promotion, place, people, physical evidence, process, student performance, and curriculum arrangement provide benefits for student satisfaction. The results of this study support the findings of Arizal et al. (2018), Kennedy (2018), Dewi et al. (2018), Syarifatul et al. (2021), Mukarromah et al. (2021), Wahyu Hardyanto, Suwito Eko Pramono (2021) which proves that the marketing mix has a positive and significant effect on satisfaction. The expectation disconfirmation theory cited by Tjiptono, 2018 explains that students are satisfied when the elements of the marketing mix consisting of product, price, promotion, place, people, process, physical evidence, student performance, and curriculum structuring can meet student expectations. Conversely, if the marketing mix cannot meet expectations, students will feel dissatisfied. The marketing mix is related to elements of the school organization that can be controlled by the organization in communicating with students and used to satisfy students (Buchari, 2014). Students feel satisfied when the school has an effective marketing mix and is built on the basis of product, price, promotion, place, people, physical evidence, process, student performance, and curriculum structuring.

Research from Kennedy (2020) proves that the marketing mix has a positive and significant effect on satisfaction. Even though Kennedy's findings (2020) provide the same conclusions as the researchers' findings, there are differences. Research from Kennedy (2020) explains the effectiveness of marketing mix elements that can affect student satisfaction consisting of product, price, promotion, place, people, physical evidence, and process. Meanwhile, the researchers found that the effectiveness of the marketing mix was also influenced by student performance and good curriculum management, thus influencing student satisfaction.

2. The Effect of Expectations on Student Satisfaction

The results of hypothesis testing prove that expectations have a positive and significant effect on student satisfaction. Individual needs, experience, external communication, and the added value of the learning process provide benefits to student satisfaction. The results of this study support the findings from Samaan (2014), Syarifatul et al. (2021), A. Rodríguez (2016), Tolga & Kursad (2015), Elvera et al. (2019) which proves that expectations have a positive and significant effect on satisfaction. Discrepancy theory (Porter, 1961 quoted in Assauri, 2014) explains that a student's satisfaction can be obtained by comparing what is expected or desired with achievement or reality. The difference will be positive if what students get is greater than expected, otherwise, the difference will be negative if what students get is smaller than expected. Students whose expectations are fulfilled will feel that the school can meet their individual needs, the learning experience is useful, the external communication is effective, and the learning process adds value.

Individual needs are everything that is felt by a person or group of students as a necessity to be fulfilled immediately. If not fulfilled, this can cause tension which ultimately affects the attitude and behaviour of a student in the teaching and learning process. The individual needs of students are also related to the desires of a student who is shaped by the surrounding environment. Students' needs are reflected in the form of physical, social, status, independence, achievement, and wanting to be loved and loved and must be fulfilled by the school to support the development and formation of students' moral attitudes.

The results of research from A. Rodríguez et al (2016) prove that students feel satisfied when expectations built based on formal recommendations, images, and informal recommendations are met. However, the findings from the researchers indicate that students feel satisfied when their expectations are met which are built based on meeting individual needs, past experiences, external communication, and the added value of the learning process.

3. Effect of Marketing Mix on Student Loyalty

The results of hypothesis testing prove that the marketing mix has a positive and insignificant effect on student loyalty. Product, price, promotion, place, people, physical evidence, process, student performance, and curriculum arrangement do not provide benefits for student loyalty. The results of this study support the findings of Arizal et al. (2018), Kennedy (2018), Syarifatul et al. (2021), and Nur et al. (2021) which prove that

satisfaction has a positive and significant impact on loyalty. However, the findings from Radiman et al (2020) prove that the marketing mix has a positive and insignificant effect on loyalty. The expectation disconfirmation theory cited by Tjiptono, 2018 explains that students feel loyal when the elements of the marketing mix consisting of product, price, promotion, place, people, process, physical evidence, student performance, and curriculum structuring can meet student expectations. Conversely, if the marketing mix cannot meet expectations, students will feel disloyal. The marketing mix is related to the elements of the school organisation that can be controlled by the organisation in communicating with students and is used to increase student loyalty. Students feel loyal when the school has an effective marketing mix and is built based on product, price, promotion, place, people, physical evidence, process, student performance, and curriculum structuring. Research from Radiman (2020) proves that the marketing mix has a positive and insignificant effect on loyalty. Even though the findings of Radiman (2020) provide the same conclusions as the researchers' findings, there are differences.

Research from Radiman (2020) explains the elements of the marketing mix that influence loyalty consisting of product, price, promotion, place, people, physical evidence, and process. The lack of effectiveness of marketing mix elements does not provide benefits for loyalty. Meanwhile, the researcher explained that not only products, prices, promotions, places, people, physical evidence, and processes do not benefit loyalty, but student performance and poor curriculum structuring can also not benefit student loyalty.

#### 4. The Effect of Expectations on Student Loyalty

The results of hypothesis testing prove that expectations have a positive and significant effect on student loyalty. Individual needs, experience, external communication, and the added value of the learning process provide benefits for student loyalty. The results of this study support the findings of Syarifatul et al. (2021), A. Rodríguez (2016), Tolga & Kursad (2015), Elvera et al. (2019) proved that expectations have a positive and significant effect on loyalty. Discrepancy theory (Porter, 1961 quoted in Missouri, 2014) explains that a student's satisfaction can be obtained by comparing what is expected or desired with achievement or reality. The difference will be positive if what students get is greater than expected, otherwise, the difference will be negative if what students get is smaller than expected. Students whose expectations are fulfilled will feel that the school can meet their individual needs, the learning experience is useful, the external communication is effective, and the learning process adds value. Individual needs are everything that is felt by a person or group of students as a necessity to be fulfilled immediately. If not fulfilled, this can cause tension which ultimately affects the attitude and behaviour of a student in the teaching and learning process. The individual needs of students are also related to the desires of a student who is shaped by the surrounding environment. Students' needs are reflected in the form of physical, social, status, independence, achievement, and wanting to be loved and loved and must be fulfilled by the school to support the development and formation of students' moral attitudes.

Research results from Makrhus (2010) show that expectations built based on certainty, price, individual experience, and the experiences of others can increase satisfaction. However, findings from researchers indicate that satisfaction can be increased when expectations are built based on personal needs, external communication, experience, and process-added value. Learning

#### 5. The Effect of Student Satisfaction on Student Loyalty

The results of hypothesis testing prove that student satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on student loyalty. Reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy provide benefits to student loyalty. The results of this study support the findings from Douglas and Paul (2015), Subandi and Muda (2021), Hardi et al (2020), and Nurul et al (2020) proving that satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on loyalty. However, the findings from Ady et al. (2019), Mohammed & Hilda (2015), Douglas & Paul T. (2015), Zhaohua et al. (2019), Venkatesh et al. (2019), Vithya (2017), Nurul & Maha (2019), Nuriye & Sevil (2014), Dadang (2017), Acai et al. (2019) which proves that satisfaction has a positive and significant impact on loyalty. Expectancy disconfirmation theory (Oliver, 2004 cited in Tjiptono and Gregorius, 2016) explains that post-purchase satisfaction/dissatisfaction is determined by students' evaluation of the difference between initial expectations and perceptions of actual product performance after using the product. When students use an educational service product, they have expectations about how the product functions and product performance. Students who are satisfied if they have an attitude of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy so that students can create a loyal attitude. Reliability is related to the ability of students to help schools according to what has been promised accurately and reliably. Students who have reliability will carry out the learning process consistently. Reliability is reflected through students completing assignments and activities on time, helping other students and the school without mistakes, and having a sympathetic attitude. Reliable students can be trusted to complete school assignments and activities on time as scheduled, have responsibility for the tasks and activities given by the school, and provide information to the school about when the tasks and activities given can be realized.

Research from Zhaohua Deng et al. (2019) proved that satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on loyalty. Even though it gives the same conclusions as the findings of the researchers, there are differences. Research from Zhaohua Deng et al (2019) explains that students are satisfied when schools have quality service and quality educational service products, and this can create student emotions. However, the findings from the researchers indicate that students are satisfied when they have a reliable attitude, responsiveness, certainty, and empathy towards the school.

#### 6. The Effect of Marketing Mix on Student Loyalty Through Student Satisfaction.

The results of testing the hypothesis prove that student satisfaction can mediate the effect of the marketing mix on student loyalty. Students who have a reliable, responsive, certain, and empathetic attitude provide benefits to the influence of the marketing mix on student loyalty. The results of this study support the findings of Arizal et al. (2018) and Dewi (2018) which prove that satisfaction can mediate between the marketing mix and loyalty. The expectation disconfirmation theory cited by Tjiptono, 2018 explains that students are satisfied when the elements of the marketing mix consisting of product, price, promotion, place, people, process, physical evidence, student performance, and curriculum structuring can meet student expectations. Students whose expectations are met will have a loyal attitude. Conversely, if the marketing mix cannot meet expectations, students will feel disloyal.

Empathy is related to students' ability to understand what other students and teachers feel, see things from their point of view, and also imagine themselves in that person's position. Empathy plays an important role in building and maintaining relationships between fellow students and teachers. Empathy is also a student's response to the feelings of students and teachers. Empathy includes thinking, feeling, and even physical reactions that students can do to other people as if the student feels the same way. Students who have empathy are reflected by being good at really listening to what other people are saying, other people often tell about their problems, are good at capturing other people's feelings, and often think about how other people feel. Students who have empathy can improve the relationship between the marketing mix and student loyalty.

#### 7. The Effect of Expectations on Student Loyalty Through Student Satisfaction

The results of hypothesis testing prove that student satisfaction can mediate the effect of the marketing mix on student loyalty. Students who have a reliable, responsive, certain, and empathetic attitude provide benefits to the influence of the marketing mix on student loyalty. The results of this study support the findings of Syarifatul (2021) which prove satisfaction can mediate between expectations of loyalty. The expectation disconfirmation theory cited by Tjiptono (2018) explains that students are satisfied when they have a reliable, responsive, certain, and empathetic attitude that matches their expectations. Satisfied students will increase the relationship between expectations and student loyalty. Reliability is related to the ability of students to help schools according to what has been promised accurately and reliably. Students who have reliability will carry out the learning process consistently. Reliability is reflected through students completing assignments and activities on time, helping other students and the school without mistakes, and having a sympathetic attitude.

Empathy is related to students' ability to understand what other students and teachers feel, see things from their point of view, and also imagine themselves in that person's position. Empathy plays an important role in building and maintaining relationships between fellow students and teachers. Empathy is also a student's response to the feelings of students and teachers. Empathy includes thinking, feeling, and even physical reactions that students can do to other people as if the student feels the same way. Students who have empathy are reflected by being good at really listening to what other people are saying, other people often tell about their problems, are good at capturing other people's feelings, and often think about how other people feel. Students who have empathy can improve the relationship between expectations of student loyalty.

## **V. Research Findings and Limitations**

### 1. Research Findings

Marketing mix has a positive and insignificant effect on student loyalty. Product, price, promotion, place, people, process, physical evidence, student performance, and curriculum arrangement did not affect student loyalty. The expectation disconfirmation theory cited by Tjiptono, 2018 explains that students are loyal when the elements of the marketing mix consisting of product, price, promotion, place, people, process, physical evidence, student performance, and school curriculum structuring can meet student expectations. Conversely, when the marketing mix cannot meet student expectations, students feel disloyal. The findings show that students are disloyal due to several things described as follows:

a. Products related to the majors offered at VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS, it turns out that not all students can be accepted into the majors they are interested in. This is because there is a tendency every year there are certain majors whose applicants exceed the quota they want to be accepted so that some students are forced to be accepted in the second or third choice. However, after one or two years, some students move to other schools.

The competence of graduates is also inseparable from the service products of a school. Competence of graduates from an SMK It can be seen from the aspect of attitude, knowledge and skills that there are still many SMK alumni who do not yet have the competencies expected by the business and industrial world.

b. Prices are related to all costs incurred to obtain the educational services offered. Schools are allowed to solicit funds from students only in the form of non-binding donations. This is because several school activities are not funded by BOS. However, even though the request for funds is non-binding, it creates a negative perception among some students. Meanwhile, the lack of seriousness of students in participating in the education process is due to the absence of an element of sacrifice in the form of payment of tuition due to the existence of the South Sulawesi provincial government policy regarding free education.

c. The place is related to the location where a school is located. In general, the average location of SMK is on a mountain and is not accessible by public transportation.

d. Promotion is related to activities communicating product sales in the market that are directly related to the community. The tendency of schools to carry out promotions is due to recruiting new students. The absence of cooperation between schools and companies that provide employment has resulted in many SMK alumni being unemployed. This also has a detrimental impact on the school in addition to what is felt by students. However, working alumni are also an effective promotional medium for schools.

e. People are related to the people involved in the process of delivering education services. The availability of civil servants, especially educators and educational staff, is still lacking. This is because there are several retired PNS employees and the lack of recruitment to replace retired PNS.

f. Physical evidence relates to the physical environment in which services are created and directly interact with their students. On average, Vocational Schools do not have complete and adequate practical equipment, this is an obstacle in the teaching and learning process, especially in terms of practical learning.

g. The process is related to the educational process that supports the implementation of the process of teaching and learning activities to form the desired product/graduate. The lack of practical equipment owned by schools causes the practical learning process to be less effective. Meanwhile, practical learning carried out in the business world, industrial world and offices sometimes the practical material provided is not in accordance with the student's competency skills. Likewise, there is a lack of industry that recruits alumni according to the competency skills that exist in schools and there is a learning model that teachers feel is still relatively new. This is because teachers only teach based on the old curriculum. In the end, there is still a lack of involvement of practitioners from the world of business and industry in the practical learning process at Vocational Schools due to a lack of time and the lack of funds budgeted by schools related to the payroll of practitioners.

h. Student performance is related to the award given by the school or other parties related to student achievement either in the form of a charter or certificate or in the form of a scholarship. Scholarships are only for those who can't afford them and for students with very limited achievements.

i. The arrangement of the curriculum is related to the arrangement of the learning curriculum in accordance with the profile of Pancasila students. There is still a lack of schools that carry out curriculum structuring based on strengthening competence, character and work culture in accordance with the profile of Pancasila students.

## 2. Research Limitations

Some of the limitations encountered in the implementation of this research are:

a. This research was conducted at State Vocational High Schools in Barru District using students as the unit of analysis, this provides a limitation in generalizing the findings of this study.

b. There is a tendency for bias in the measurement of each question answered to be subjective.

c. The need for further research studies to analyze changes in the relationship between the variables studied in this study.

## Conclusion

1. The marketing mix with product, price, promotion, place, people, process, physical evidence, student performance and curriculum structuring indicators has a positive and significant effect on student satisfaction at State Vocational High Schools in Barru District. The more effective the marketing mix, the more it will benefit student satisfaction.

2. Expectations with indicators of individual needs, experience, external communication and the added value of the learning process have a positive and significant effect on student satisfaction at State Vocational High Schools in Barru Regency. Students whose expectations are met will feel more satisfied.

3. Marketing mix with indicators of product, price, promotion, place, people, process, physical evidence, student performance and curriculum arrangement has a positive and not significant effect on student loyalty at State Vocational High Schools in Barru District. The marketing mix does not provide benefits to student loyalty.

4. Expectations with indicators of individual needs, experience, external communication and the added value of the learning process have a positive and significant effect on student loyalty at the State Vocational High School in Barru Regency. Students whose expectations are increasingly fulfilled feel more loyal.
5. Student satisfaction with indicators of reliability (reliability), responsiveness (responsiveness), assurance (assurance) and empathy (empathy) have a positive and significant effect on student loyalty at State Vocational High Schools in Barru District. More satisfied students then they become more loyal.
6. Marketing mix with indicators of product, price, promotion, place, people, process, physical evidence, student performance and curriculum structuring has a positive and significant effect on student loyalty. Student satisfaction can mediate the influence of the marketing mix on student loyalty.
7. Expectations with indicators of individual needs, experience, external communication and the added value of the learning process have a positive and significant effect on student loyalty through student satisfaction at State Vocational High Schools in Barru District. Student satisfaction can mediate the effect between expectations on student loyalty.

### **Suggestions**

1. Schools need to have a strategic location, comfortable and easy to reach to increase student satisfaction and loyalty.
2. Schools need to improve communication externally related to efforts to promise something to students to get students to feel satisfied and loyal.
3. Schools need to improve reliability related to the school's ability to provide services according to what was promised accurately and reliably so that students feel satisfied and loyal.
4. Schools need to increase cooperation with related students regardless of background to achieve a goal so that students feel satisfied and loyal.

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