

## Perceived Services Quality in Private Healthcare Institutions

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**Abstract:** One of the regular activities in the developed countries of the world is an evaluation of the degree of healthcare sector services qualities, as perceived by the patients. This evaluation has been carried out in regular time spans and many methods are being used to measure the degree of certain services' quality increase, as well as to spot certain downsides that need to be improved in a timely manner. Unfortunately, measuring the healthcare sector services quality, regarding both the state and the private one, is not sufficiently present. The concept of marketing in the healthcare institutions business is not particularly developed, especially regarding public healthcare institutions.

Unlike state healthcare institutions, private healthcare institutions have become aware of the great necessity of implementing both internal and external marketing modes in business, with the ultimate goal being reflected in a better customer experience and in the creation of long-term loyalty. The work is based upon research among the citizens on the perceived quality of the provided healthcare services. By means of a comprehensive perception of the healthcare sector's state, the aim was to contrast the quality of the provided services in the private healthcare institutions to the same services provided by the state ones. Apart from the quality of services, another aim of the research was getting an insight into the level of the marketing conception utilization within the private healthcare institutions business, based upon the customer perception of the services' quality and its determinants, and the market orientation of the healthcare institutions, as well.

**Keywords:** quality, healthcare services, patient, marketing conception, private healthcare institutions.

**JEL classification:** M31, P36

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### INTRODUCTION

The healthcare system of every country is heavily dependent upon the country's development degree, as well as upon its share in the GDP. Something typical for the Republic of Srpska is the fact that its healthcare system is considerably run by credits. Consequently, the quality of the provided service, together with the investments in the research and development of the healthcare sector are at a particularly low level.

Taking the above mentioned into account, one can infer that, due to the high level of indebtedness, the state healthcare sector is rather devoid of the increased inclination towards the realms of research and development. The same stands for certain faster economic transformations within the healthcare sector.

Periodic research on the degree and quality of the provided service within the healthcare sector, as well as certain improvements regarding the internal<sup>1</sup> and external<sup>2</sup> Public health marketing in the Republic of Srpska is not on a remarkable level at the moment. One of the factors that influence the particularly low level of research and development, and the utilization of the concept of marketing in the healthcare sector, together with the provided service quality is the fact that Bosnia and Herzegovina's institutions do not spark changes.

Similarly, significant reforms in the healthcare sector haven't been labeled directly as one of the necessary conditions for the beginning of European integration (Mujkić, 2011). By all odds, all efforts aimed at the introduction of a more innovative healthcare institutions business mod-

<sup>1</sup> The notion of internal marketing is considered to be initially used by Leonard Berry who defines it like "utilization of the theory and practice of marketing in the process of providing services to the external customers, in a way that implies employment and keeping of the best personnel and their readiness to fulfill their tasks in the best way (Little, 2003)."

<sup>2</sup> The notion of external marketing implies different modes of communication aimed at the targeted market, utilized by means of advertising, sales improvement, sponsorship, public relations, direct marketing and personal sale (Domazet, 2011).

el can only result from an initiative. That initiative is more obvious in the realm of the private healthcare sector where the competition grows and where numerous institutions are involved in a constant contest for a certain market position (Mujkić, 2011).

The assumption is that the dedication to the quality of the services provided is bigger within the private healthcare sector than within the state one (Mehran Alijanzadeh, 2016). Private healthcare institutions are the ones who have become considerably aware of the vast advantages that the utilization of the concept of marketing in their businesses brings. Likewise, they have become aware of the importance of the periodic research activities on the quality of the provided services to the patients and on customer satisfaction. The degree of correlation between marketing and healthcare is beyond assumption.

The first aspect shared by both of these realms is human needs satisfaction. An indicator of the worldwide importance of healthcare marketing that is increasing is reflected in the fact that the interest in a study of the distinctions, connections and relations between marketing and healthcare has seen an increase (Stremersch, 2008).

At universities all over the world, experts discover a high degree of correlation among psychology, economy, business, and medicine, which ultimately leads to the increase of the healthcare marketing significance. Certain distinctions characterize the healthcare realm specifically and are reflected in the difference between the healthcare customers' behavior and the other ones. The reason is the fact that, sometimes, the need for treatment is "the matter of life and death" (Cazacu, 2015). Therefore, emotions influence decision making to a great extent. Another distinction involves a third party represented by doctors who provide products and services to the customers (Radulescu, 2012).

Based on all that has been mentioned so far, the need for health remains essential for the existence of each individual. The cost of treatment has very little effect on the decision to seek medical help. The assumption is that the quality factor has a greater influence on the aforementioned decision than before, along with a number of other factors that define the concept of quality. Therefore, the focus will be on the perceived quality of services provided, especially in terms of treatment in private health care institutions in Republika Srpska, which is also the aim of this study. In addition, the contribution of the work is reflected in the results on the interdependence of the decision on treatment in public health institutions and the standard of living and purchasing power. Look-

ing at the area where the research was done and the demographic characteristics of the population, one of the secondary goals was to identify which means of communication patients trust more.

## LITERATURE PREVIEW

According to the author named Ikechukwu (Ikechukwu E Obi, 2018) and according to the definition of the World Health Organization, "health is defined as a state of complete physical, mental, and social welfare, not only the absence of diseases and exhaustion." It is possible to infer from the previous definition that the health of an individual gets worse even due to the absence of mental and social well-being. The absence of mental and social well-being hinders the urges to fulfill other needs – the need for self-actualization, for instance, which represents personal and intellectual growth. All of this leads to the conclusion that the need for quality healthcare and quality healthcare services are some of the basic existential needs. In the light of the previous statement, one country can not aspire towards a higher degree of social welfare if it's devoid of a relatively quality healthcare system and adequate health protection.

The healthcare realm represents a service agency whose primary objective is providing health protection services. According to Došen and Škare (Došen, 2010), customer satisfaction with the aforementioned services depends not only on the mere service provided, but also on the quality of the healthcare system as a whole. The healthcare system quality is country-specific and is directly related to the degree of that country's development. Pilić (Pilić, 2018) claims that the success of many healthcare systems is reflected in the quality of the services provided.

There are a number of different definitions of quality. According to Sekulić, quality means an opinion created by service users about the quality and quantity of benefits they received when buying a certain service (Sekulić, 2013). The notion of satisfaction is also highly correlated with the quality of services provided. According to Veljković, satisfaction can be considered a certain type of emotional response of service users, which arises as a result of the expected performance of a particular service and the experienced performance during or after use (Veljković, 2009).

One of the important models for measuring the quality of services provided is the SERVIQUAL model, which finds its application in both the for-profit and non-profit sectors, taking into account healthcare, hospitality and the like (Rodić Lekić, 2015).

The model is conceived through a multidimensional scale, which compares the perceptions of users and their expectations of the quality of delivered services.

In this model, the scale most often used is the Likert scale, which consists of 7 points, with one point being the first extreme, ie „I do not agree at all“ and the other „completely agree“.

Through this model, the research is segmented into two questionnaires, where in the end, by comparing the answers, the level of perceived quality of service by the service user is obtained (Veljković, 2009).

The final result on the achieved customer satisfaction is measured as the difference between the expected and received level of service.

According to the last publications of the European Health Consumer Index, which encompassed 35 countries ranked by healthcare quality, the Republic of Srpska wasn't even a part of the analysis. Most of the neighboring countries became a part of the study, and the Republic of Srpska achieved great progress, which is reflected in the following: since 2012, the Republic of Srpska managed to considerably improve the quality of the healthcare services, which led the entity from the last 35<sup>th</sup> place to the 18<sup>th</sup> place (Professor Arne Björnberg, 2018).

A great number of factors can influence healthcare quality. One of them is the lack of state funds, which results in salary reductions and in a less number of employees, and which has a negative impact on the business environment (Turkalj, 2016).

When it comes to healthcare products, they are authentic due to the specific outcome of the treatment and that is the reason why Thomas considers them to be a complex combination of services (Thomas, 2011). At the very place of its beginning, the healthcare service begins to be used and the same stands for any other service.

The evaluation of services is defined by the criteria of quality, quantity, and service realization. These very criteria will be mentioned throughout the research part of work, as the parameters of evaluation of the healthcare services quality. The quality, mainly perceived by the patients, tends to say about the way the service has been provided, but not about the degree of its technical superiority (Kumaraswamy, 2012). Likewise, Kumaraswamy states that the key determinants of a healthcare institution's service include the healthcare personnel support, the institution's atmosphere, and the operative realization of the service, as well. He considers that the perception of the key factors determining the service's quality is of great importance because, eventually, it influences the pa-

tient-made perception of overall service satisfaction. Authors Hillestad i Berkovitz are of the opinion that the quality of a healthcare service isn't perceived from the clinical quality point of view. Instead, the delivery and providing of service quality actually matter (Hillestad, 2013).

As already stated, the quality of service influences the patient-made perception of overall service satisfaction. For that reason, Čakalić views satisfaction as a multidimensional state that is considerably conditioned by the health, functional, and psychosocial ways of treatment. It is also identified as a relationship between the expected and the real quality of the provided service (Čakalić, 2018).

The continuity established each time with the increasing customer satisfaction with the provided service gradually transforms into a high level of attachment to the treatment in a certain institution, which leads to loyalty of the patient (Herni Justiana Astuti, 2014). What needs to be inevitably mentioned about the functioning of healthcare institutions is that maximization of profit should not be the primary objective of any healthcare institution. The aim of every institution is, to the greatest extent, to serve the interests of people who are the customers of healthcare (Biondić, 2018). In companies, business activity can be conducted in accordance with different business conceptions and, according to Macura (Macura, 2019), they are: conception of production, conception of products, sales and marketing conception. Using the marketing conception, companies become market-oriented. Consequently, some call the marketing conception the market orientation, as well.

However, this notion makes it harder to define the company's aims. For non-profit organizations whose goal is not the maximization of profit but the achievement of broad social interests, the market orientation would place the focus on the maximization of profit. Therefore, most authors claim that the notion of social orientation suits the non-profit organization better (Širola, 2017). However, some authors, including Kurrasch, claim that there is evidence proving that the healthcare institution's primary goal is the market goal, i.e. the maximization of profit, which shifts their focus from their patients to the market (Kurrasch, 2009). Based on the above, the following research hypotheses will be tested in this paper. Something definitely needs to be highlighted about the healthcare sector, and that's the fact that, all over the globe, the healthcare industry is characterized as a globally competitive industry with the tendency to become one of the leading world industries in most countries. Peo-

ple often travel to developed and distant countries in order to get satisfactory and high-quality healthcare service. According to Jabnoun and Chaker (Jabnoun, 2003), an increasing number of patients choose private healthcare institutions as they consider the quality of service to be bigger in the private than in the state sector. One can define the first research H1 hypothesis based upon the quotes of the aforementioned authors.

**H1: *The quality of the provided services is bigger in private than in the state institutions.***

According to Eroglu (Eroglu, 2014), the patients' behavior isn't independent from the thoughts and behavior of other people whatsoever. Similarly, he thinks that people are greatly influenced by the attitudes and opinions of people in their surroundings. In most cases, people don't want to expose their damaged health to further dangers of an inadequate treatment, so they highly appreciate the recommendation of a successfully treated patient of a certain healthcare institution instead. They prefer that kind of recommendation to their independent decision on the choice of the healthcare institution where they'll get the treatment. That is related to the following hypothesis.

**H2: *The recommendations of close people have a positive effect on patients' decisions regarding the choice of the health institution.***

The author named Jović (Jović, 2017) considers that the patient's financial situation is one of the factors that influence the choice of healthcare service providers, be it in the state or in the private healthcare sector, along with the price of the service. A great number of patients (the healthcare services customers) sometimes can't choose the type of healthcare institution in which they will receive their treatment. Instead, they choose the one in which they will be properly observed. Even though quality is the key factor that will influence the patient to choose a certain healthcare institution, another important one is the patient's financial power. The same stands for both private and state institutions. The financial power is primarily reflected in a limited possibility of choice between the private and the state healthcare institutions. Therefore, the following work hypothesis comes forward:

**H3: *The decision on getting treatment in private healthcare institutions depends on the standard of living and the buying power of the population.***

Statistic methods that will be used during the research results analysis and the testing of the aforementioned hypotheses are the Z test and the X2 test. Z

test will be used to analyze the received answers to the three research questions and the results of each will be analyzed separately. According to the analysis results, the test statistics and the critical Z value will be compared which will result in a decision on whether to accept or decline the zero hypothesis. At the same time, the large sample condition will be fulfilled, along with the reliability being 95% and the risk of error possibility will be at 5%. Another statistics method used during the results analysis represents the X2 test, with the standard risk of error possibility being 5%.

The decision to apply the X2 test during the research results analysis is reflected in a very practical way of identifying if certain frequencies in responses considerably deviate from the frequencies that can be expected within the research hypothesis. By means of the test and the statistical method, validation or rejection of the posed hypothesis in one research question whose goal is to identify whether one response's frequency is bigger when compared to other possible responses will be possible.

## **THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENT AND METHODS OF RESEARCH**

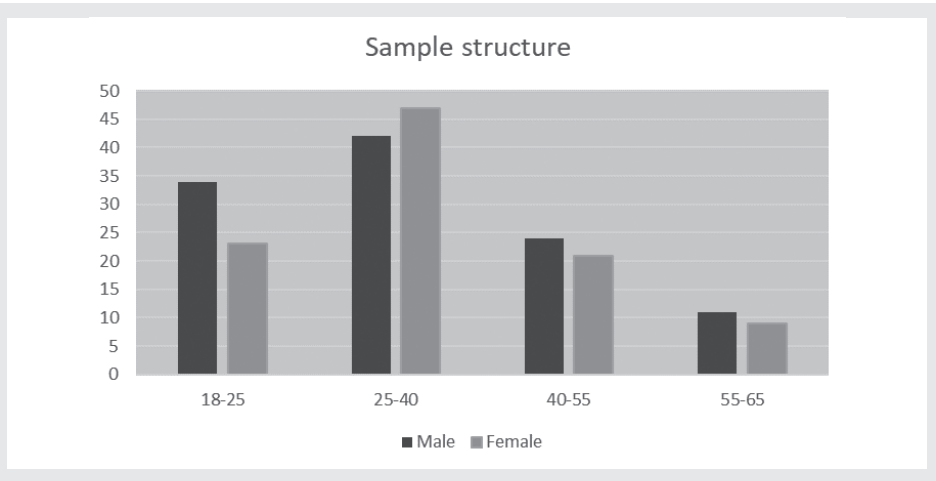
### **The Research Results**

The research is based on obtaining the results of the opinions of perceived patients on the quality of treatment in public and private health care institutions, on several determinants of quality and on the application of the concept of marketing in the business of private institutions. The goal was a double:

- to get acquainted with the contrast in the quality of treatment between private and state health institutions;
- determining the level and intensity of the use of the marketing concept in private health care institutions.

The research was conducted in December 2020. For the purposes of conducting the research, the first need consisted of the identification and description of the sample. The type of research was an online survey made in the final form of a Google Forms questionnaire consisting of 9 questions. The age of the examined population ranged from 18 to 65 years. The persons who participated in the research come from the territory of Republika Srpska, the largest concentration of them is in Banja Luka.

**SAMPLE 1.**



SOURCE: the author's research

The sample included 210 respondents, of which 102 were male, while the remaining 108 respondents were women. The following graph shows the age structure of the respondents, where when taking the respondents in the samples, an attempt was made to achieve the share of each age structure in an approximate proportion.

The research questionnaire was closed. It consisted of 9 research questions, with 5 questions having a yes / no wording, and for the others, also of the closed type, the respondents had more answer options.

Putting the emphasis on the population, in the first place, 89% of 210 respondents used the services of private health institutions at least once. Accordingly, a large percentage of the population used or continuously used the services of private health care institutions in Srpska.

The crucial factor that makes patients decide to look for treatment in a particular healthcare institution is the provided service quality, according to the research conducted among the population. In the marketing theory, service quality is mainly a subjective category (Kotler, 2008), depending upon the customer perception of it. Exactly 77.3% of the examinees who chose quality as the most important factor influencing their choice of a particular healthcare ser-

vice. After them, 16.4% of the examinees consider the doctor's reputation to be of paramount importance, and only 6.3% of them choose a healthcare institution because of the affordable price. Similarly, the research results show that 70.95% out of 210 healthcare services customers who participated in the research are definitely convinced that the healthcare services quality is higher in private institutions than it is in public ones. On the other hand, 29.047% of the examinees prefer public healthcare institutions for higher service quality.

Based on the quoted statements from the conducted research results, the same will be checked by means of testing the statistical hypotheses – in this instance, by using the Z test. With the  $(1-\alpha) = 95\%$  reliability, the error risk being  $\alpha = 0,05$ , the following hypothesis will be tested. It contains the following question:

“Do over 50% of the examined healthcare customers share the opinion that the service quality in the Republic of Srpska is higher in private than in the public healthcare institutions?”

The zero and alternative hypotheses quote:  $H_0: \pi \leq \pi_0 (= 0,50)$ ;  $H_1: \pi > \pi_0 (= 0,50)$ .

The criterion for testing the sample's size needs to meet the following requirement:

$$n\pi_0 \geq 5 \text{ i } (1 - \pi_0) \geq 5.$$

TABLE 1. The services quality in healthcare institutions

The services quality is higher in the private than in the public healthcare institutions		
Answers	Number of answers	Frequencies of answers
Yes	149	0,70952381
No	61	0,29047619
Total	210	1

SOURCE: the author's research

**TABLE 1.1** The healthcare services quality analysis by means of the Z test

Value	Amount	Value	Amount	Value	Amount	Value	Amount
N	210	1- $\alpha$	0,95	P value	0,709524	$n\pi_0 \geq 5$	105
n1	149	$\alpha$	0,05	$\pi_0$	0,50	$n(1-\pi_0) \geq 5$	105
Sp	0,034503	Z $\alpha$	1,64	Z value	20,56396		

SOURCE: the author's research

Taking into account that the Z value is bigger than the Z $\alpha$  ( $Z > Z\alpha$ ), the zero hypothesis will be rejected, meaning that services quality in private healthcare institutions is indeed higher than in state healthcare institutions, based on the 210 examinees sample.

Perhaps, one of the reasons lies in the fact that this is about people and, first and foremost, about their health. Therefore, the low price of a poor-quality treatment which might inflict negative consequences on the individual's health can't be compared with the high quality of services quality, even though they are more expensive.

This fact reveals that the population already being treated in private healthcare institutions isn't affected by the price of the service when they are supposed to decide where to look for help. It's obvious that this is about the patients whose financial power didn't influence their decision to get treated in private healthcare institutions considerably.

However, a certain number of patients who participated in the research process used the private healthcare institutions services at least once, highlighting that the treatment quality is higher there, but looks like they didn't continue with their treatment in the private institutions due to their limited financial power.

According to the hypothesis and the author Jović's quotes, limited financial power can be a serious obstacle for those wishing to get treated in a particular healthcare institution. The financial power of each citizen is in a direct relationship with the GDP and wealth of a country. That also confirms the research results, according to which 85.2% of the research participants were forced to stop the treatment in a particular private healthcare institution due to the limited financial power of the Republic of Srpska's citizens, even though they would receive a more quality treatment in the private healthcare institution than in a state one.

Patients choose private healthcare institutions primarily due to the provided service quality, but they leave them and continue with their treatment in state healthcare institutions as a result of their insufficient financial power.

The methodology of the statistical hypotheses testing by means of the Z test was used in this instance, in order to prove the hypothesis. The aim of the second hypothesis is to prove the following:

"Does the decision on getting treatment in private healthcare institutions depend on the population's standard of living and their financial power?"

**TABLE 2.** The treatment decision being conditioned by life standard

The decision on getting treatment in private healthcare institutions depends of the population's life standard level		
Answers	Number of answers	Frequencies of answers
Yes	179	0,852380952
No	31	0,147619048
Total	210	1

SOURCE: the author's research

**TABLE 2.1.** Analysis of the life standard's influence on the decision to get treated by means of the Z test utilization

Value	Amount	Value	Amount	Value	Amount	Value	Amount
N	210	1- $\alpha$	0,95	$\pi_0$	0,5	$n\pi_0 \geq 5$	105
n1	179	$\alpha$	0,05	p value	0,85238095	$n(1-\pi_0) \geq 5$	105
Sp	0,03450328	Z $\alpha$	1,64	Z value	10,2129711		

SOURCE: the author's research

The zero and alternative hypotheses read:  $H_0: \pi \leq \pi_0 (=0,5)$   $H_1: \pi > \pi_0 (=0,5)$ .

As the Z test value equals 10,2129711 and is bigger than the  $Z_\alpha$  value at the same time, the zero hypothesis is rejected, which proves that the aforementioned decision depends upon the population's life standard.

The first patient's cognition about a certain healthcare institution results from various information sources. Some of the highly possible situations include the one in which the healthcare services customer gets to know about a certain institution way before they actually consider they do. In professor Ognjanov's words (Ognjanov, 2013), a subliminal perception takes place and is reflected in situations during which an individual reacts to only the second exposure to a particular advertising message or recommendation. That means that an individual can hear a certain institution's name in one moment, see a TV advertisement or something similar, and become aware of it when it gets broadcasted.

At any rate, the obtained research results say that customer-conducted marketing is the key factor thanks to which patients get to know about a certain healthcare institution and continue their treatment there. Out of the total of 210 examinees, 138 of them support the recommendations (the customer-conducted marketing), which means that their initial cognition was the other people's recommendation who had already got treated in that institution, as its customers.

Twenty four examinees learned about a certain private healthcare institution by means of paid marketing and social networks, whereas 13 of them answered that they learned about it thanks to the different TV ads, banners etc. The rest of the sample examinees got to know about a particular institution in other ways.

All these research results underwent the statistical methods of data processing in order to infer a conclusion that would either reject or confirm the posed hypotheses. The X2 test was used to analyze the result of this research question. In order to reject the zero hypothesis and to accept the alternative one, the X2 value needs to be bigger than its table value that was inferred by means of the appropriate freedom degrees and the defined error risk.

The question being asked during the hypothesis proving is: "Is the patients' recommendations based marketing one of the main factors influencing the decision to get treated in a particular healthcare institution?"

The zero and alternative hypotheses read:

$H_0$ : There are no significant differences in the survey participants' answers to the research question.

$H_1$ : There are significant differences in the answers to the given research question.

The freedom degree number equals 3 in this instance, and the standard error risk level  $\alpha$  amounts 0.05.

**TABLE 3.** A patient's cognition of a certain healthcare institution

<b>A patient's cognition of a certain healthcare institution</b>	
The patient's recommendations based marketing	138
Paid advertising on social networks	24
TV ads, banners, fliers	13
Rest	35
Total	210

SOURCE: the author's research

**TABLE 3.1.** A patient's cognition of a healthcare institution analyzed by means of the X2 test

	<b>Odgovori</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Fi</b>	<b>fi*</b>	<b>(fi-fi*)</b>	<b>(fi-fi*)<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>(fi-fi*)<sup>2</sup>/fi*</b>
The patient's recommendations based marketing	138	65,71%	138	52,5	85,5	7310,25	139,2428571
Paid advertising	24	11,43%	24	52,5	28,5	812,25	15,47142857
TV ads, banners, fliers	13	6,19%	13	52,5	-39,5	1560,25	29,71904762
Rest	35	16,67%	35	52,5	-17,5	306,25	5,833333333
Total		100,00%					190,2666667

SOURCE: the author's research

According to the results of the gathered data statistical processing, it can be seen that the inferred  $X^2$  value amounts to 190,2666667, which obviously means that it's much bigger than its table value that equals 7,815. Therefore, the zero hypothesis is rejected and it's established that there are significant differences in the possible answers to the research question. Recommendations of the patients who already used a particular healthcare institution's services are much more significant than paid advertising, fliers, banners, or TV advertisements.

## CONCLUSION

No business system can function without a properly developed marketing conception, be it internal or external marketing. Wherever the service delivery is aimed at the end-user, a great dedication of the service provider is necessary in terms of the service delivery pace, kindness, dedication and, most importantly, extremely high quality, which eventually leads to long-term loyalty.

Even though it's still developing, the healthcare institution's marketing is increasingly important. When it's about the marketing concept utilization within the healthcare institutions in the Republic of Srpska, one can conclude that it's still rather underdeveloped in the state ones. On the other hand, according to the research results, that concept is more present in the private healthcare institutions, which are rather market-oriented nowadays – their business is characterized by a high level of proactivity and entrepreneurial orientation.

A higher level of the service quality is identified in the private healthcare institutions than in the state ones by means of the research results analysis. That implies that the private institutions are capable of remarkably quick development of customer loyalty. Based on the research sample consisting of 210 examinees from the territory of the Republic of Srpska, it was identified that the patients' recommendations

are one of the best examples of a certain healthcare institution's service quality check. Those recommendations also help to develop a sense of the patients' trust in the institution, even before they begin using its services.

Similarly, one of the main reasons that make the customers of the private healthcare institutions give up on that kind of treatment and go back to the state healthcare institutions is the insufficient financial power of the Republic of Srpska's population. By means of the last research question, an initial cognition of the patients' recommendations was formed, as one of the most important factors influencing the customers to look for their treatment in a particular private healthcare institution. Different means of presence around the patient are significantly visible in the private healthcare institutions. That presence primarily involves the physical one, but also the virtual ways of presence, which means that the private healthcare institution wants their customers to be updated. Accordingly, a great number of healthcare institutions created their official websites, social networks profiles and the like. Similarly, a great deal of them make use of different ways of paid internet advertising. Therefore, the research results confirm a high level of the market orientation with patients (the healthcare services customers) being in focus, which reflects a rather quality marketing conception being implemented in the Srpska's private healthcare institutions business.

The intention of the authors was to examine how respondents perceive the quality of services provided in the public and private health sectors. The contribution of the work is reflected in the identification of the potential interdependence of the quality of living standard and purchasing power and the decision on treatment in private health care institutions in relation to public ones.

In addition, the goal was to find out which means of communication most influenced the creation of a positive opinion on the decision on treatment in a certain type of health institution.

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## Apstrakt

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### Percipirani kvalitet usluga u privatnim zdravstvenim ustanovama

Nevena Kljajić

Jedna od redovnih aktivnosti u razvijenim zemljama svijeta jeste ta da se evaluacija stepena kvaliteta usluga u zdravstvenom sektoru percipiranom od strane pacijenata vrši redovno, tačnije u kontinuiranim vremenskim intervalima, te se mnogim metodama mjeri stepen rasta kvaliteta određenih usluga, ali isto tako i uočavaju određeni nedostaci koje je potrebno blagovremeno korigovati i raditi na njihovom unaprijeđenju. Nažalost, mjerenje kvaliteta usluga zdravstvenog sektora, kako i javnog i privatnog u Republici Srpskoj nije prisutno u zadovoljavajućoj mjeri. Konceptija marketinga u poslovanju zdravstvenih ustanova nije razvijena na zavidnom nivou, prije svega kada je riječ o javnim zdravstvenim ustanovama. Za razliku od javnih zdravstvenih ustanova, privatne zdravstvene ustanove postaju svjesne velike neophodnosti implementacije internog i eksternog

marketinga u poslovanju, a sve u cilju boljeg korisničkog iskustva i stvaranja dugoročne lojalnosti. Rad se temelji na istraživanju stanovništva o percipiranom kvalitetu pruženih zdravstvenih usluga, te se kroz sagledavanje stanja zdravstvenog sektora u RS nastojalo doći do rezultata o razini na kojoj je kvalitet pruženih usluga privatnih u odnosu na javne zdravstvene ustanove. Pored kvaliteta usluga, cilj istraživanja je bio dobiti uvid u nivo primjene marketinške konceptije u poslovanju privatnih zdravstvenih usluga na osnovu percepcije pacijenata o kvalitetu usluga i njegovim determinantama, ali i tržišnoj orijentisanosti zdravstvenih ustanova.

**Ključne reči:** *kvalitet, zdravstvene usluge, pacijent, marketinška konceptija, privatne zdravstvene institucije.*

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