

Possibility Customer : Analyze Segmentation, Targeting and Positioning in Entrepreneurship Study Program

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Abstract. Competition in higher education today is not only in private universities, but also in universities with legal status which are expected to increase income by increasing the number of students. This study aims to conduct segmentation, targeting and positioning analysis in the Entrepreneurship Study Program of Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia. The research method used is a descriptive qualitative research method using the K-Means analysis technique. The research population was 123 students of the Entrepreneurship Study Program in the 2024/2025 Academic Year. The primary data used as the basis for market segmentation consists of gender, age, region of origin, school of origin and parents' occupation. The results of the study show that the targeting of the Entrepreneurship Study Program is high school students aged 18 years who come from West Java Province and have parents who are entrepreneurs so that the UPI Entrepreneurship Study Program positions itself as one of the Entrepreneurship Study Programs in Indonesia with Excellent accreditation, becoming number 1 in East Priangan which has a competitive advantage where its educational products consist of curriculum, staff, academic activities and facilities and infrastructure that support prospective students to be able to become pioneers and excel in realizing productive and innovative entrepreneurship.

Keywords: Segmentation, Targeting, Positioning, Higher Education

Introduction

The competition for higher education in Indonesia is currently very competitive with the increasing number of universities. Based on data from the PD Dikti page in 2023, the number of universities in Indonesia reached 6,407 universities consisting of State Universities, Private Universities, Civil Service Universities, and Academic Universities. This number is certainly still unbalanced when compared to the number of university applicants in 2024 of 785,058 people (bps.go.id).

The mismatch between the number of universities and the number of applicants is currently a concern considering that the position of state universities and civil service universities is still the first choice compared to other universities (Prastyabudi, Alifah & Nurdin, 2024). Competition in state universities is currently divided into three types, namely State University with Legal Status (PTN-BH), Public Service Agency State University (PTN-BLU) and State University Work Unit (PTN-Satker), the division of which of course has an impact on how prospective students are absorbed. Not to mention what is felt by private universities, where prospective new students will choose the public university they are aiming for when the series of national university selections is complete. Prospective students at universities are like prospective customers for companies (Wilkins, 2019). Considerations of prospective students to enter a university will certainly have many impacts, especially related to the achievement of income expected by the university to finance all its operational costs. The more customers in this case the number of new students, the more income will increase through single tuition fees and development institution fees that will be received by the university. Based on this, of course all universities need to improve their marketing strategies through appropriate branding and provide competitive advantages for higher education (Samir et al, 2020;

Khusnuliawati & Putri, 2021).

Marketing activity strategies in universities include analysis of strengths and weaknesses, market opportunities and threats, competitors, their distinctive features, and based on research conducted and competitive advantage research (Sudarikov et al, 2019). So now, the stages of marketing activities in higher education have reached serious challenges related to promoting and marketing products in the form of all synergies from academics focused on the needs of the labor market and international reputation (Kalenskaya, 2015; Muhchina & Moraru, 2016; Stukalina, 2019). In recent years, higher education institutions have increasingly embraced marketing concepts such as branding, social media, and digital communications, but there is little evidence that they are utilizing the various marketing tools and techniques used in the business world, such as strategy group analysis (Hanover Research, 2014). However, there are different marketing plans currently followed by universities with the aim of attracting prospective students, including traditional marketing strategies and positioning based on segmentation, targeting, and positioning (STP) (Sohail, 2017; Nursetiani & Safaria, 2024) which are used to conduct a critical analysis of the university's market potential (Cheng et al, 2010)

STP was introduced by Kotler and Keller (2016) as a marketing strategy that seeks market segments, identifies target customers, and shows how the product will be offered to customers. Camilleri (2018) added that the best way to do target marketing consists of breaking the market into several groups (segmenting), targeting the most profitable (targeting) and adjusting its marketing position (positioning). This strategy changes the view that the focus of marketing is no longer on the product but on the customer. Research on the use of STP has been conducted several times, such as by Zhang (2008) at the MBA Education Program at the University of China, by Susilo (2016) at three Private Universities in Jakarta, by Wright (2017) at the Athlete College in America, by Sohail (2017) at the University of Derby, conducted by Widikusyanto & Putri (2020) at the University in Banten.

The concept of segmentation was first introduced by Smith in 1956, stating that consumers have unique and different characteristics that require different marketing strategies. There are four variables used in market segmentation, namely 1) geographic-based on region, 2) demographic-based on age, gender, income, etc., 3) psychology-based on consumer personality, and 4) behavior-based on consumer usage and loyalty levels (Kotler & Keller, 2012). Market segmentation in higher education has a main point, namely regarding educational marketing that focuses on student segmentation (Story, 2023) so that market segmentation in higher education will be seen based on geography and demographics related to the identity of prospective students. However, there are concerns about market segmentation in higher education that can blatantly result in unfair practices and access to higher education (Brown, 2016).

Target marketing is the process of evaluating the attractiveness of each market segment and selecting one or more segments to enter (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012). Lewison (2006) identified target marketing in higher education as a need to explore the need to adopt a marketing orientation to an increasing degree, and the relative merits of mass marketing. A targeted marketing approach requires focusing on one or more selected market segments, and developing separate marketing programs for each segment that are likely to respond to its educational services that market segments vary in their response tendencies to educational services (Cavanagh, 2002; Rindfeish, 2003; and Thomas, 2004).

Positioning is the act of designing a company's offering and image to occupy a distinctive place in the minds of the target market (Kotler, 2016). So far, many prospective students choose universities with big names and have a good reputation (Wernick, 1991), even so, some universities still cannot attract prospective students due to the lack of a clear positioning strategy (Rana et al, 2020; Rana et al, 2022). Determining your own positioning is an effort that cannot be completed in one go, but requires a process of continuous evaluation, change and improvement considering the complexity of higher education (Rana et al, 2022).

The Entrepreneurship Study Program of the Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI) is a study program that was just established in 2018 and is one of 142 Entrepreneurship Study Programs in Indonesia whose existence is certainly very competitive, especially when compared to its two predecessors, namely the Entrepreneurship Study Program at the Institut Teknologi Bandung (established since 2013) and Brawijaya University (established since 2015). In 2024, the number of applicants for the UPI Entrepreneurship Study Program is 690 prospective students with an accepted quota of 140 so that the level of tightness is only 1:5. Of course, this value is very small when compared to its competitors, so a marketing strategy is needed to increase the level of tightness through segmentation, targeting and positioning analysis. Thus, the purpose of this study is to conduct a segmentation, targeting and positioning (STP) analysis on the Entrepreneurship

Study Program of the Indonesian Education University as one of the State Universities with PTN BH status.

Methods

This study uses a descriptive qualitative research type which is a study conducted to determine the value of a variable without connecting or comparing it with other variables (Sugiono, 2013). This study focuses

2

on analyzing the marketing strategies of segmentation, targeting and positioning in the Entrepreneurship Study Program, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia with the object of research related to information about new students consisting of demographics (age, gender, school of origin and parents' occupation) and the geographical location of the student's residence (region and province) for the purpose of determining segmentation.

The population of this study was the total number of new students of the UPI Entrepreneurship Study Program for the 2024/2025 Academic Year, totaling 123 students consisting of new students from the SNBP, SNBT and independent pathways. The data collection technique used was the observation technique on primary data sources related to new student biodata which can be accessed on the sidimas.upi.edu page using an SSO account. The data analysis to determine the segmentation strategy used K-Means Analyze with the help of a data mining application, then determined targeting and positioning based on the results of determining segmentation.

Result and Discussion

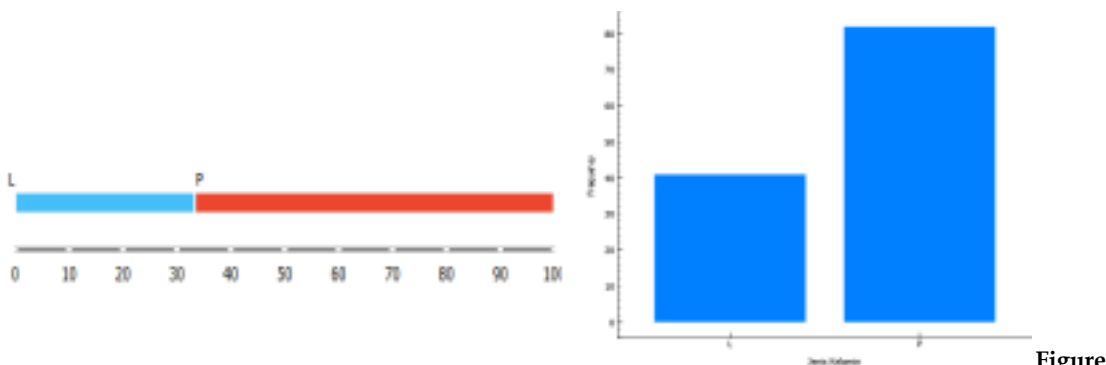
Result

4.1. Segmentation

Market segmentation for new students of the Entrepreneurship Study Program for the 2024/2025 Academic Year is differentiated based on gender, age, region of origin, school of origin and parents' occupation. The following are the results of data processing using distribution, box plot and K-Means using data mining applications.

4.1.1. Gender

The number of new students of the Entrepreneurship Study Program for the 2024/2025 Academic Year who are female is greater than the number of students who are male. This statement is illustrated in the following data processing results.

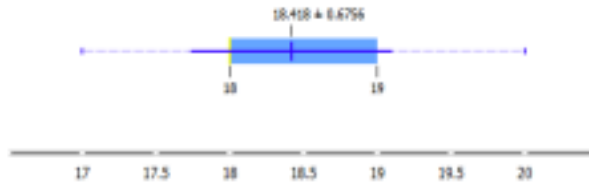
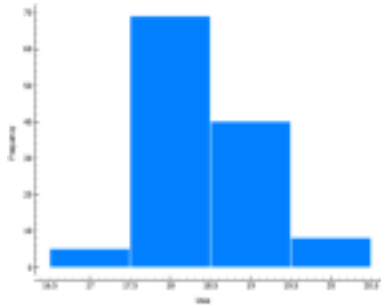


1. Gender Distribution Figure 2. Gender Box Plot

Based on Figure 1 and Figure 2, the number of female students is 82 students (66.67%), while the number of male students is 41 students (33.33%).

4.1.2 Age

The normal age of new students is between 17 and 18 years old. The following is the average age data for new students in the Entrepreneurship Study Program for the 2024/2025 Academic Year.



3

Figure 3. Age Distribution **Figure 4.** Age Box Plot

The number of new students aged 17 years is 5 people (4.10%), aged 18 years is 69 people (56.56%), aged 19 years is 40 people (32.79%) and aged 20 years is 8 people (6.56%). Based on these results, it can be concluded that the majority of new students in the Entrepreneurship Study Program for the 2024/2025 Academic Year are 18 years old with an average of 18.418 years.

4.1.3 Region of Origin

Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia as one of the universities has students with diverse regional origins considering that there is a national entrance selection as one of the entry routes. The following is the distribution of regional origins of students in the Entrepreneurship Study Program for the 2024/2025 Academic Year.

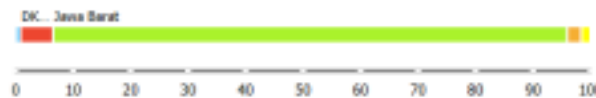
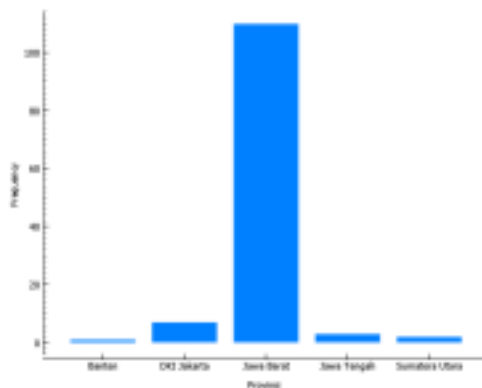


Figure 5. Regional Origins Distribution **Figure 6.** Regional Origins Box Plot Asal Daerah

The majority of students come from West Java Province spread across the areas of Tasikmalaya City, Tasikmalaya Regency, Ciamis Regency, Pangandaran Regency, Bandung City, Bandung Regency, Bekasi City, Bogor Regency and surrounding areas. The number of students from West Java Province is 110 students (89.43%), followed by DKI Jakarta area as many as 7 people (5.69%), from Central Java Province as many as 3 people (2.44%), from North Sumatra Province as many as 2 people (1.63%) and from Banten Province as many as 1 person (0.81%).

4.1.4 School of Origin

The origin of students' schools is categorized into the origin of Senior High Schools (SMA), Vocational High Schools (SMK) and Madrasah Aliyah (MA). The following are the origins of new students of the Entrepreneurship Study Program for the 2024/2025 Academic Year.

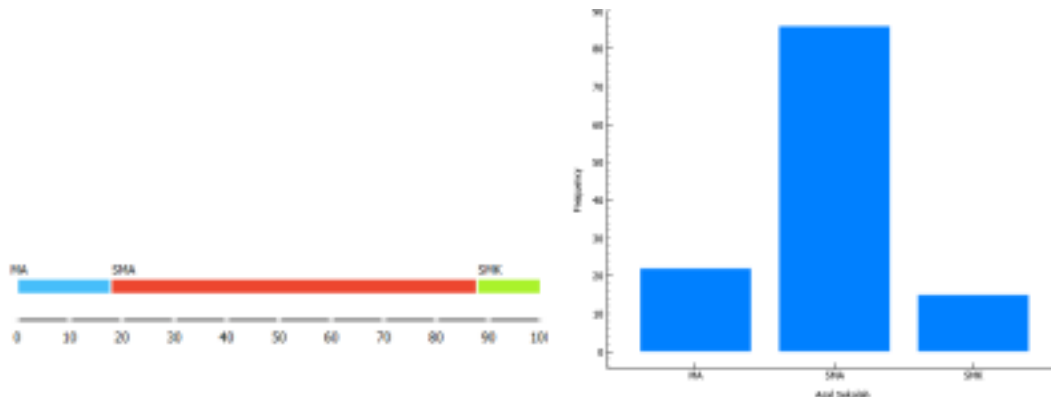


Figure 7. School of Origin Distribution **Figure 8.** School of Origin Box Plot

4

The school of origin with the largest number was from Senior High Schools (SMA) as many as 86 people (69.92%), followed by those from Madrasah Aliyah (MA) as many as 22 people (17.89%) and those from Vocational High Schools (SMK) as many as 15 people (12.20%).

4.1.5 Parents' Occupation

Parents' occupations are divided into 5 categories, namely 1) Civil Servants/TNI/Polri, 2) Private Employees, 3) Self-Employed, 4) Laborers and 5) Others who are not included in the previous four categories. The following is data on the occupations of parents of students of the Entrepreneurship Study Program for the 2024/2025 Academic Year

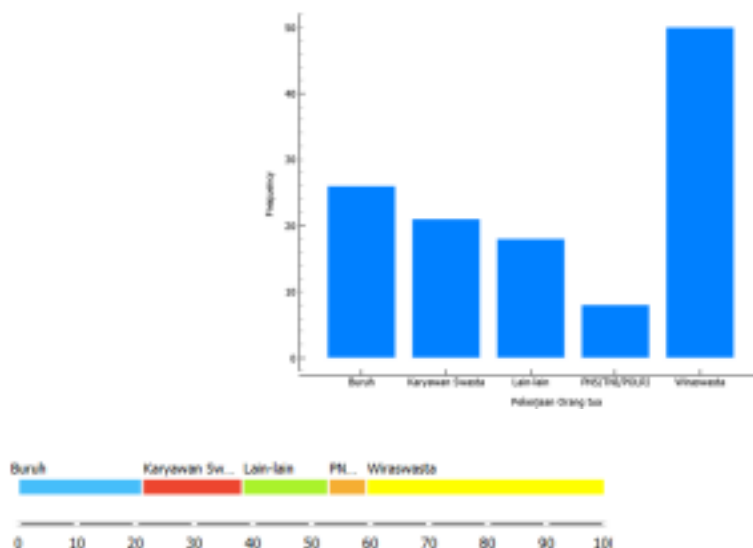


Figure 9. Parent's Occupation Distribution

Gambar 10. Parent's Occupation Box Plot

Most students have parents who work as entrepreneurs with a total of 50 people (40.65%), then there are students with parents who work as laborers with a total of 26 people (21.14%). Meanwhile, students with parents who work as private employees with a total of 21 people (17.07%), students with parents who work as civil servants/ TNI/ Polri with a total of 8 people (6.50%) and the rest are students with parents who work in other professions with a total of 18 people (14.63%)

4.1.6 K-Means

K-Mean analysis is conducted through Scatter Plot to see the distribution of market segmentation. The following are the results of K-Mean analysis through Scatter Plot which illustrates the market segmentation of the Entrepreneurship Study Program.

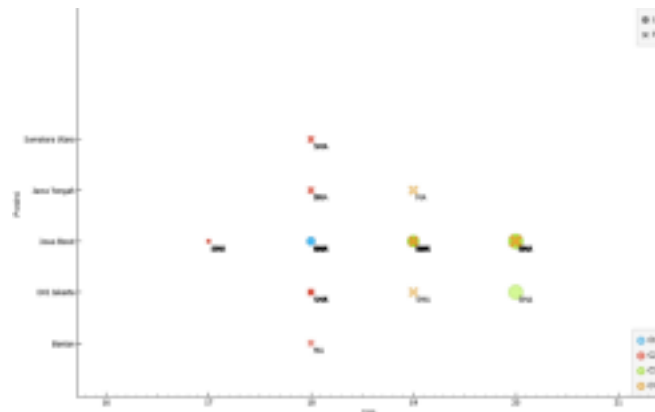


Figure 11. Scatter Plot Market Segmentation Entrepreneurship Study Program

4.2 Targeting

Based on the determination of the market segmentation of the Entrepreneurship Study Program depicted in Figure 11, the focus of the Entrepreneurship Study Program's marketing targeting is high school students aged 18 years who come from West Java Province and have parents who are entrepreneurs.

5

4.3 Positioning

To identify market position, Entrepreneurship Study Program UPI positions itself as one of the Entrepreneurship Study Programs in Indonesia with Excellent accreditation, becoming number 1 in East Priangan. In addition, UPI Entrepreneurship Study Program determines competitive advantages where its educational products consist of curriculum, staff, academic activities and facilities and infrastructure that support prospective students to be able to become pioneers and excel in realizing productive and innovative entrepreneurship.

Discussion

The results of the study indicate that in an effort to increase the competitiveness of the Entrepreneurship Study Program at Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI) is through determining segmentation, targeting and promotion for prospective new students for the 2025/2026 academic year. The focus of the Entrepreneurship Study Program UPI marketing targeting is high school students aged 18 years who come from West Java Province and have parents who are entrepreneurs.

The position of the Entrepreneurship Study Program UPI in Tasikmalaya City which is located on a regional campus and not in the center of the Indonesian Education University in Bumi Siliwangi is one of the reasons why prospective students do not choose this study program. Therefore, the results of the study indicate that the Entrepreneurship Study Program UPI must utilize its competitive advantages to attract prospective students from West Java who come from entrepreneurial family backgrounds. Related research supports the importance of innovation and differentiation in entrepreneurship education. Currently, the latest literature notes that successful entrepreneurship programs integrate creativity, ecosystem support, and lifelong learning to strengthen the features that provide competitive advantages that come from productive and innovative entrepreneurs (Nexford University, 2024).

One of the things that can be done such as a creativity and innovation-based approach allows educational programs to provide training that is relevant to market needs, including system operations, product development, operations, and so on (Baltezarevic, 2023). In addition, there has been an increase in interest in entrepreneurship programs over the past decade, especially during global crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic. In fact, student demand for entrepreneurship education grew 66% in 2020, meaning that students see new businesses as a solution to economic challenges (AACSB, 2023).

Recent research results provide an overview that mentorship in entrepreneurship education provides a great opportunity for students to translate theoretical concepts into practical business skills (Lein, 2024).

This approach will provide direct guidance, constructive criticism of the business plan that has been prepared, and professional networks that can help students develop their businesses better through the process of aligning academic and professional goals that are certainly in accordance with the needs of the industrial world.

Networking is determined to be an important aspect, where mentorship activities help students connect with industry players, potential investors, and fellow entrepreneurs. Such strategies increase the chances of students' success in becoming independent entrepreneurs (Duriana, 2015; Valentinov & Thompson, 2019). Educational institutions are advised to adopt well-planned mentoring programs, including a mentor

student matching process based on interests and industry focus, to maximize the effectiveness of the program. Thus, UPI Entrepreneurship Study Program can highlight its innovation-based curriculum, access to professional mentors, and educational infrastructure that supports students in creating relevant and innovative business solutions. This will strengthen its position as a leading program in the West Java region.

Conclusion

In this study, the method of data processing and grouping uses K-Mean analysis which is carried out to identify market segmentation precisely with the aim of improving marketing strategies and competitive advantages in the Entrepreneurship Study Program. Specifically, market segmentation is focused on segmentation based on geography and demographics consisting of gender, age, region of origin, school of origin and parents' occupation. The results of the K-Means analysis show that the focus of the UPI Entrepreneurship Study Program's marketing targeting is high school students aged 18 years who come from West Java Province and have parents who are entrepreneurs. The UPI Entrepreneurship Study Program determines competitive advantages where its educational products consist of curriculum, staff, academic activities and facilities and infrastructure that support prospective students to become pioneers and excel in realizing productive and innovative entrepreneurship.

6

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