Are Segmenting, Targeting, and Positioning Necessary for Strategic Marketing?

Pentingkah Segmenting, Targeting, Positioning sebagai Strategi Pemasaran?

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ABSTRACT

Changes in the hospital environment have led to an increasingly competitive market. Marketing strategies are vital ingredients to offer more creative, innovative, and valuable products to customers to compete with other hospitals. Hyperbaric Oxygen Teraphy (HBOT) installation is one of the superior service at Paru Hospital Jember which have a low number of visit for the last three years. Segmenting, targeting, and positioning (STP) strategies will help to identify the most profitable market, which can be used to create the right connection to customers. This research aimed to arrange STP strategies as a base for the hospital strategic marketing plan at Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) installation of Paru Hospital Jember. This research was a descriptive study. The root of the problems was identified using the urgency, seriousness and growth (USG) method and followed by identifying the problem solutions with the capability, accessible, readiness and leverage (CARL) method before finding the solutions. The results of this study show that the five geographic segmentation areas of the target market are Jember, Probolinggo, Lumajang, Bondowoso, and Banyuwangi. The targets are patients older than five years old, middle-high economic class people, patients with diabetic foot, Buerger’s disease, and sudden deafness. The new tagline “Tabik” stands for “Instalasi Hiperbarik,” and the new motto “Jadikan hidup lebih baik bersama Tabik” is a positioning made for STP strategies. Ten-year projection showed a gap visit number as many as 1.958 patients with STP as a strategic marketing plan in HBOT Installation Paru Hospital Jember. The implementation of the marketing mix is one tool to reach the gap. Implementation of the promotion is the first element of the marketing mix to complete to reach number of visits gap.

Keywords: Marketing mix, segmenting targeting positioning, strategic marketing

ABSTRAK


Kata Kunci: Bauran pemasaran, segmentasi target posisi pasar, strategi pemasaran

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INTRODUCTION

Rapid changes in various government policies, economic conditions, technology, and customer behavior, along with the advances of democracy, decentralization, and globalization have made health implementation development increasingly complex. Hospitals, as health service providers, are now also growing and causing increasing competition among hospitals. Each hospital is required to enhance its competitiveness by improving the service quality and providing satisfaction to all patients, patients' families, and the community (1). This notion is in line with the opinion of Kotler (2) that companies have to be more effective compared to the competitors. The effectiveness includes creating, delivering, and communicating customer value to selected target markets (2).

The success of a company in achieving organizational goals is determined by the company's ability to meet the needs and desires of customers. Various strategies need to be applied for fulfilling the satisfaction of customers or patients, both customers who have used the products/services and new customers who have never used the products/services (3). One of the care services provided by hospitals is outpatient services, which have become the primary concern of hospitals throughout the world because of the number of the outpatients is far higher than that of the inpatients (4). The number of outpatients is a source of a significant market share, so it is predicted to be able to offset the income from the inpatients in the future. This will undoubtedly increase hospital financial income.

Paru Hospital Jember is a class B pulmonary hospital owned by the Indonesian government. Paru Hospital Jember has had a Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy (HBOT) installation since 2011. The low number of visits during the last three years on the outpatient HBOT installation Paru Hospital Jember, which was only 1-2 patients per day, was the consideration of research selection. This research aimed to arrange market segmentation, targeting, and positioning as a marketing plan to increase the visit of HBOT installation Paru Hospital Jember.

METHODS

This research is a descriptive study conducted at Paru Hospital Jember. The research was initiated by identifying the root of the problems and followed by identifying alternative solutions. The methods of identifying the root of the problem were managed by collecting literature studies, and then analyzed through a fishbone diagram. Literature studies were used as material to analyze the factors that influence the low number of visits and the efforts that can be made to increase outpatient visits. Fishbone diagrams helped classify the problems found in the low HBOT number of visits. The method of identifying alternative solutions was done by focus group discussion (FGD). The FGD was conducted with six people from the management of Paru Hospital Jember to determine one selected solution. The FGD was carried out with the capability, accessible, readiness and leverage (CARL) approach. The selected solution planning includes collecting primary data in the form of utilization (number of patient visit) of HBOT Paru Hospital Jember over the last three years, patient characteristics, determining segments, targets, and market positions, and calculating projections of HBOT utilization for the next ten years and efforts to increase HBOT utilization through the preparation of a marketing mix strategy.

RESULTS

Planning the market segmentation, targeting, and positioning of HBOT installation was started by analyzing the patient characteristics during the past three years. Based on the analysis, the geographic segmentation of HBOT installations includes Jember, Probolinggo, Lumajang, Bondowoso, and Banyuwangi. Considering the specific characteristic of HBPT service, the targeted segment follows differentiated type. Those are the age group of older than five years with the assumption that hyperbaric therapy service users start from the age of five years and over. In addition, the service also targeting people with middle and upper economic levels with the assumption that they afford to purchase hyperbaric therapy services, and patients with diabetic ulcer, Buerger's Disease, and sudden deafness. Positioning strategy was performed through a new service tagline that is easy to remember since the highest age group of HBOT installation patients is 45-65 years. With the new tagline and service motto, HBOT services are expected to be more familiar in the community, which in turn can give an idea of hyperbaric installation services that are closely linked to a reduced risk of disability. The tagline is the "Tabik" (Hyperbaric Installation) with a service motto of "Jadikan hidup lebih baik bersama Tabik" (better life with Tabik).

After composing market segments, targets, and positions, the projected patient visits for the next ten years are calculated as an illustration of potential HBOT installation visits if marketing were carried out optimally. The description of the projected visits of HBOT installation in the next ten years can be seen in Table 1.

The calculation of projected visits in 2019 is 2,576 patients, while the visits in 2018 were 591 patients, so there is a gap of 1,985 patients. To increase the visits according to the calculation of projections made, strategic marketing planning needs to be done with a marketing mix approach. Table 2 explains the efforts that can be made with the seven marketing mix indicators.

DISCUSSION

Of the seven indicators, the promotion effort is the first step to take by Paru Hospital Jember. Through promotion,
it is expected that the public will know the hyperbaric therapy service at Paru Hospital Jember and its function which will influence purchasing decisions.

### Segmenting, Targeting, Positioning for Strategic Marketing

The perspective calculation of the HBOT number of patients in 2019 resulted in 2,576 patient visits. If compared with the figure in 2018 (591 patients), HBOT unit needs to increase the visits by 1985 patients or as many as eight patients per day. One of the marketing strategies used to promote services to increase visitor is by market segmentation, targeting, and positioning (6). Previous studies perform similar marketing method to understand the marketing strategy of hospital services such as inpatient and laparoscopic services (6,7). In addition, Munandar identified market segmentation, targeting, and positioning in the Home Care service as a marketing effort at Al-Islam Hospital Bandung (8). Nursa et al, conducted a study to identify the segmentation and to determine the target market to increase outpatient installation visits of Universitas Andalas Hospital. Study by Nursa et al determined market segmentation to plan effective marketing program which could aim specific characteristic of target market. With this marketing strategy the hospital could tailored the with patient need and want relevant to patient centered care, and eventually increase outpatient visits (9).

### Marketing Mix implementation

The implementation of marketing mix is an integrated marketing strategy and a set of tools that marketers can use to shape the characteristics of services offered to customers which will influence the quality of service provided (10). Companies must be able to adjust the marketing mix, product, price, promotion, people, process, physical evidence, and place, with the needs and desires of consumers to satisfy the customer in order to gain more prospective service user and customer (11,12). Hospital product is a bundle of service and good produce to meet the specific need of each patient and other indirect users such as physician. The price of hospital service not just representing service cost but also influence perceived quality and act as competitive advantages. The promotion component of marketing mix includes various methods to communicate hospital service benefits to its intended customers. Next, hospital place and location is also important for hospital marketing as it is influence the ease of access to services, one of the important hospital quality indicator. Furthermore, hospital manager must determine what is expected from their employees in the interactions with patients since people are the vital element in the marketing mix. In addition, process resembled the procedure in providing patient care and services. Physical evidence is an effort to reduce the level of risk of consumers’ perceptions of services. Last, facility represents the total quality of services perceived by the customer (10).

The implementation of marketing mix in hospitals will affect transactions or visits to outpatient or inpatient installations due to service quality. Service quality will satisfy patients and let them use more services. Eventually, the patient will be loyal and rebuy the company’s product; this is known as customer loyalty (10). From all of seven marketing mix indicators explained, promotion is the priority step to introduce products to customers (12). The promotion will provide information, persuade, and remind consumers to know, understand, change attitudes, like, believe, buy, and remember the product so that it will ultimately increase sales (13). The purpose of promotion is to change consumers in the lowest level of brand awareness (unaware of a brand) into brand recognition that is the minimum level of brand awareness (14). The introduction of the brand to consumers will influence the purchase decision on a product. Several studies have shown a significant relationship between brand awareness and product purchasing decisions, such as research by Krisnawati (14) that putting brand awareness as top of mind so is very influential in purchasing decisions. Research by Wahid (15) confirming that increasing brand awareness will create positive image leading to product recognizing and loyalty. In health care services, loyalty could mean as compliance for long term or sustainable care that is very important to ensure care outcomes.

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### Table 2. Efforts to increase visits through marketing mix strategies

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<th>Marketing Mix</th>
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| Product       | Free doctor consultation before or after therapy about patients’ problem or illness  
Special price for packages of visits, for example for autism patients  
Promotional package: free one therapy session for bringing four new visitors to HBOT  
Special discounts for members (obtained after ten therapy sessions)  
Periodically maintain hyperbaric installation for keeping the good quality of service |
| Price         | Special pickup facility for patients living in Jember city  
A public seminar held by physician and patient who had undergone a complete therapy session to share the experience in HBOT therapy  
Scientific seminars held for doctors to add insight into the benefits of hyperbaric oxygen services  
Broadcasting information of the hospital through television in the waiting rooms and pharmacy  
Renew information board on the highway as a guide and information media  
Repairing the “hyperbaric health” signpost on the hyperbaric installation building  
Collaborating with special communities, such as the elderly community and children with an autism spectrum disorder community |
| Distribution  | WhatsApp groups for patients who have received therapy services to obtain new information or to get consultation services  
Patients reminder to control, via telephone, WhatsApp, or SMS |
| Place         | A comfortable waiting room for families and also convenient for pediatric patients  
Competent and certified hyperbaric services through WhatsApp or phone call |
| Promotion     | A public seminar held by physician and patient who had undergone a complete therapy session to share the experience in HBOT therapy  
Scientific seminars held for doctors to add insight into the benefits of hyperbaric oxygen services  
Broadcasting information of the hospital through television in the waiting rooms and pharmacy  
Renew information board on the highway as a guide and information media  
Repairing the “hyperbaric health” signpost on the hyperbaric installation building  
Collaborating with special communities, such as the elderly community and children with an autism spectrum disorder community |
| Process       | WhatsApp groups for patients who have received therapy services to obtain new information or to get consultation services  
Patients reminder to control, via telephone, WhatsApp, or SMS |
| Physical Evidence | Easy to access the information and registration of hyperbaric services through WhatsApp or phone call |
| People        | Friendly service staff |
especially in chronic disease.

Similarly, promotion as a marketing mix element is the first important step for HBOT installation Paru Hospital Jember. A good hospital service promotion strategy will form hospital-patient communication about services offered. Through this program, public will aware about hospital care offered and the expected benefit. Hence, when more people aware of the existence and benefits of HBOT services, the number of service utilization will increase.

The preparation of STP at the HBOT installation of Paru Hospital Jember is vital as a basis for planning a marketing strategy aimed to optimize service utilization and access to care. To achieve the target number of visits based on STP calculation, a marketing mix has to be carried out in the form of promotion to gain brand awareness.

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