

Pricing Strategy for Services Using the Tripod Method at the Tutoring Study Point

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Abstract

This research aims to analyze the service pricing strategy at the Tutoring Learning Point using the Tripod method, which is expected to provide benefits for tutoring pioneers in a more structured and data-based prices setting. Many new business actors, including those in the education sector, often set prices based only on estimates without careful calculations regarding costs and market value. A qualitative approach with descriptive analysis was used to explore the factors that influence price determination, by collecting data through in-depth interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with managers, teachers and students. The research results show that cost analysis (Cost-Based Pricing) produces a minimum price of IDR 360,000 per student per month, which includes operational costs such as tutor salaries, place rental and learning material costs. Value analysis (Value-Based Pricing) shows that the majority of respondents consider a reasonable price for tutoring services to be between IDR 400,000 to IDR 600,000 per month, with superior facilities that increase the perception of value. Meanwhile, competition analysis (Competitor-Based Pricing) found that the average price of competitors was in the range of IDR 350,000 to IDR 450,000. Taking into account the superiority of the services offered, the price of IDR 450,000 per student per month is considered optimal and reflects a balance between operational costs and customer perceived value.

Keywords

Tripod Method, Pricing, Tutoring Learning Points



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INTRODUCTION

In today's era of globalization, education is a key factor in improving the quality of human resources. Tutoring (bimbel), a form of non-formal education, is gaining increasing popularity as a way to improve students' understanding and academic achievement. Titik Belajar Bimbel, as an institution providing supplemental educational services, has a significant responsibility in designing programs that are not only effective but also affordable. A crucial aspect in this regard is the pricing strategy, which must be carefully considered, as the price

offered can influence consumer decisions regarding the services provided. An appropriate pricing strategy is crucial to ensuring the sustainability of tutoring institutions amidst increasingly fierce competition. Each tutoring institution has different characteristics and market segments, so the pricing approach implemented must also be tailored to these conditions. This is where an in-depth analysis of factors influencing pricing, such as operational costs, perceived customer value, and competitor strategies, is crucial. By understanding these three aspects, Titik Belajar Bimbel can develop a pricing strategy that is not only attractive but also sustainable.

The Tripod Method, which consists of three main pillars: cost, value, and strategy, is an appropriate approach to analyzing the pricing of services at Titik Belajar Bimbel. This method helps develop a systematic framework for assessing the various factors that influence pricing. First, a cost analysis will provide an understanding of all expenses associated with the operation of the tutoring center, including teacher salaries, teaching materials, and facilities. Second, the value aspect will measure customers' perceptions of the benefits they receive compared to the price they pay. Finally, a strategy analysis will consider the actions taken by competitors in the market, allowing Titik Belajar Bimbel to adjust its offerings to remain competitive.

Implementing the Tripod method will not only help Titik Belajar Bimbel determine optimal pricing but also enable the institution to adapt to ever-changing market dynamics. In this context, accurate market analysis is essential to understand the preferences and needs of prospective students. By gathering relevant data and information, Titik Belajar Bimbel can formulate an appropriate pricing strategy, thereby attracting more students and increasing customer satisfaction. This, in turn, will positively impact the institution's reputation and overall performance. Pricing strategy is a crucial aspect of marketing management that plays a crucial role in determining the success of an organization, including educational institutions. Pricing is not only about determining the amount consumers must pay, but also reflects the value of the service provided and the institution's position in the competitive market. In the context of tutoring institutions, price refers to the amount students must pay to obtain the educational services offered. Therefore, pricing must be carefully considered, considering various factors to ensure profitability for the institution while remaining affordable for consumers.

According to Lovelock, service pricing strategies can be explained through the Tripod Pricing concept, which describes three main factors that form the basis for determining prices: cost, customer value, and competition. These three factors are

likened to three interrelated supporting legs and must be considered in a balanced manner. The set price should not be below operational costs because it can threaten the sustainability of the organization, but also should not exceed the perceived value of customers because it has the potential to reduce consumer interest. In addition, prices must take into account competitive conditions to remain competitive in the market. Thus, the Tripod method provides a comprehensive framework for determining service prices effectively.

The first aspect of the Tripod method is cost-based pricing. This approach emphasizes that prices must cover all costs incurred in providing the service. These costs include fixed, variable, and semi-variable costs incurred during the operational process. At a tutoring institution like Titik Belajar Bimbel, cost components that need to be calculated include tutor and administrative staff salaries, building or classroom rental fees, electricity and internet costs, promotional costs, and learning material development costs. Through accurate cost calculations, the institution can determine a minimum price that ensures operational continuity while generating the expected profit. The second aspect is value-based pricing, or customer value-based pricing. This approach emphasizes that prices should reflect the benefits perceived by customers. In educational services, the value customers receive extends beyond the learning service itself, including the quality of tutors, the effectiveness of learning methods, the comfort of the learning environment, academic support, and student success in achieving educational goals. The higher the perceived value, the greater their willingness to pay. Therefore, institutions need to understand customer perceptions of the quality of services provided to set prices that reflect the benefits received.

The third aspect is competition-based pricing. In a competitive business environment, institutions need to consider competitors' prices when determining their pricing strategy. Competitive analysis can be conducted by comparing registration fees, program costs, facilities, number of meetings, and the quality of tutors and support services provided. This information helps institutions determine the right pricing position to compete without compromising the quality of service provided. The Tripod method at Titik Belajar Bimbel is implemented by simultaneously integrating these three aspects. The institution first identifies all operational costs to determine a minimum price limit, then evaluates customer perceived value for the services provided, and analyzes competitive conditions in the market. The results of these three analyses serve as the basis for determining prices that cover costs, reflect service quality, and remain competitive. With this approach,

Titik Belajar Bimbel can set prices more rationally, increase competitiveness, and maintain long-term business sustainability.

This research aims to gain a better understanding of how the Tripod method can be implemented in pricing services at Titik Belajar Bimbel. Furthermore, it aims to identify potential challenges encountered in this process and how they impact customer satisfaction and enrollment rates. By providing data-driven recommendations, the results of this study are expected to serve as a reference for Titik Belajar Bimbel management in formulating effective and sustainable pricing strategies, while also positively contributing to the development of the non-formal education sector in Indonesia.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach with descriptive analysis to explore and analyze the pricing strategy of services at Titik Belajar Bimbel, applying the Tripod method. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows for in-depth information regarding the perceptions and experiences of stakeholders, such as managers, teachers, and students. Data will be collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions (FGDs) involving various stakeholders. This data collection process is expected to provide comprehensive insights into the factors influencing pricing.

In-depth interviews will be conducted with Titik Belajar Bimbel management and teaching staff to understand the cost components involved in the course's operations and the perceived value to customers. Questions will focus on elements such as instructor salaries, the cost of teaching materials, and the facilities provided. Furthermore, these interviews will explore how management assesses the value of the services they offer compared to the price paid by students. This way, the research can identify any gaps between costs incurred and perceived value by customers. Next, focus group discussions (FGDs) will be held with students and their parents to gather their perspectives on the pricing offered. These discussions will include questions about service satisfaction, the appropriateness of price to quality received, and their expectations of tutoring services. This method is expected to reveal unexpected insights related to customer perceptions of price and value. FGDs also provide an opportunity for participants to share their views, which can enrich the data analysis.

After data collection, the next step is data analysis using a triangulation approach. Triangulation will be conducted by comparing information obtained from interviews, focus group discussions (FGDs), and relevant secondary data, such as

tutoring center financial reports and market surveys. This method will help ensure the validity and reliability of the data and provide a more comprehensive picture of the pricing strategy implemented. Furthermore, this analysis will also consider market competition by examining the prices offered by other similar tutoring centers. Finally, the analysis results will be compiled into a report that covers key findings related to Titik Belajar Bimbel's pricing strategy. This report will include strategic recommendations for tutoring managers based on the analysis. With this systematic and in-depth approach, it is hoped that this research will significantly contribute to the development of better and more sustainable pricing strategies for educational services and serve as a reference for other tutoring institutions in addressing challenges in the education market.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Pricing is a key element of business strategy that significantly impacts an organization's competitiveness, sustainability, and success. In the context of educational services, such as tutoring, pricing strategies become increasingly important because they must balance consumer needs, profitability goals, and competitive advantage. This study examines the pricing strategy of services at Titik Belajar Bimbel using the Tripod method. This method combines three main approaches: cost-based pricing, market-based pricing, and value-based pricing, to ensure pricing is not only competitive but also relevant to market needs and able to create added value for customers.

The analysis shows that Titik Belajar Bimbel's cost-based pricing approach provides an initial framework for determining minimum prices that encompass both operational costs and profit margins. With this approach, management ensures the sustainability of the tutoring center's operations without compromising efficiency. However, this method has limitations because it does not take into account customer purchasing power and perceived value. Therefore, this approach should only be used as a starting point before integrating elements from other approaches. Meanwhile, the market-based pricing approach allows Titik Belajar Bimbel to adjust prices to the dynamics of competition in its surrounding environment. Data collected from competitors indicates that tutoring centers' prices must be within a certain range to remain competitive. This reflects the importance of understanding market structure, customer segmentation, and prevailing price perceptions. However, the market-based approach carries the risk of being caught in a price war if used exclusively, which can compromise service quality.

A value-based pricing approach is a key component of Titik Belajar Bimbel's pricing strategy, primarily because it focuses on the perceived benefits to customers. Research shows that students and their parents are willing to pay more for services perceived to provide significant benefits, such as improved academic performance or the opportunity to attend a top school. By combining the three approaches in the Tripod method, Titik Belajar Bimbel is

able to set prices that are not only competitive and fair but also reflect the value and quality of the services provided. This strategy builds long-term relationships with customers and increases trust in the tutoring brand. Based on research conducted on service pricing strategies using the TRIPOD method at Titik Belajar Bimbel, the following results were obtained:

Cost Analysis (Cost-Based Pricing)

Cost-based pricing is a pricing approach that focuses on calculating production or operational costs as the primary basis for determining the selling price of a product or service. In the context of educational services, such as tutoring, this approach begins by calculating the total costs required to run the operation, including fixed costs such as building rent and employee salaries, as well as variable costs such as teaching materials and stationery. Once the total costs are known, a certain profit margin is added to determine a selling price that allows for business sustainability. This approach has the advantage of providing a clear structure and minimizing the risk of losses due to pricing below production costs. By using cost analysis, institutions such as tutoring can ensure that the prices offered at least cover all operational costs. Therefore, researchers can conclude from the cost analysis (Cost-Based Pricing) after obtaining data from interviews with the management of Titik Belajar Bimbel that:

1. Total monthly operating costs are calculated to include tutor salaries, rental fees, administrative fees, and procurement of learning materials. These costs are estimated at Rp.
2. 15,000,000 per month.
3. With a maximum capacity of 50 students per month, the operational costs per student are calculated to be IDR 300,000. Adding a 20% profit margin results in a minimum price of Rp 360,000 per student per month.

Value-Based Pricing

Value-based pricing is a pricing approach that focuses on the perceived value or benefits of the product or service offered by customers. In this approach, prices are determined based on the extent to which customers are willing to pay for the benefits they receive, rather than solely on production costs or competitors' prices. In the context of educational services such as tutoring, customer-perceived value can encompass various factors, such as teaching quality, tutor credibility, relevant curriculum, comfortable facilities, and measurable learning outcomes, such as improved academic performance or admission to a top school. Therefore, value-based pricing places the customer at the center of the pricing strategy, with the goal of creating a price that reflects a balance between the benefits provided and the customer's ability to pay. Therefore, researchers can conclude in value-based pricing after obtaining data from interviews with Titik Belajar Bimbel management that:

1. The results of a survey of 100 students and parents showed that 75% of respondents considered a reasonable price for tutoring services with the facilities offered to be in the range of IDR 400,000 to IDR 600,000 per month.
2. Premium features, such as technology-based instruction and access to online materials, increase the value of the service in the eyes of customers, enabling premium pricing.

Competitive Analysis (Competitor-Based Pricing)

Competitive analysis (competitor-based pricing) is a pricing approach based on the prices offered by competitors in the market. In this method, institutions set prices by considering how their prices compare to competitors offering similar products or services. In the context of tutoring (bimbel), this approach aims to ensure that the prices set are not only competitive but also attractive to consumers comparing various options in the market. Tutoring institutions can choose to set prices lower, the same, or higher than competitors, depending on their competitive advantages, such as service quality, facilities, or reputation. By understanding competitors' pricing structures, institutions can be more strategic in positioning themselves in the market and attracting desired customer segments. Therefore, researchers can conclude in the competitive analysis (Competitor-Based Pricing) after obtaining data from interviews with the management of Titik Belajar Bimbel that:

1. Analysis of three competing tutoring centers in the regionThe same shows that the average competitor price is in the range of IDR 350,000 to IDR 450,000 per month.
2. Titik Belajar Bimbel has advantages in innovative teaching methods, experienced tutors, and strategic locations.This supports pricing slightly higher than the average competitor.

Final Pricing

Final pricing is a crucial stage in a pricing strategy that integrates various approaches to achieve an optimal selling price. This process involves comprehensive thinking that simultaneously considers cost, value, and competitive analysis to achieve a balance between business profitability and customer satisfaction. At this point, tutoring institutions (bimbel) such as Titik Belajar Bimbel combine data from a cost-based approach to cover all operational expenses, a value-based approach to ensure prices reflect customers' perceptions of quality, and a competition-based approach to maintain competitive pricing in the market. Final pricing must create maximum value for customers while ensuring business sustainability and growth. Therefore, final pricing is not simply the sum of price components, but the result of a carefully considered strategy to align market and business needs.

In the final pricing process, tutoring institutions must consider both external and internal factors that influence pricing. External factors can include macroeconomic conditions, educational trends, and the public's general perception of tutoring services. Internal factors include fixed and variable costs, desired profit margins, and the capacity to provide added value. The final price set must be able to adapt to various possible market scenarios, such as changes in consumer purchasing power or government policies related to education. This process requires ongoing monitoring and evaluation to ensure prices remain

relevant and competitive. Institutions should periodically review their prices to ensure they remain aligned with market conditions and customer expectations.

In addition to rational considerations related to cost and competition, the psychological aspect of final pricing is also an important factor. Price is often perceived by customers as an indicator of quality, so pricing too low can lead to negative perceptions of the quality of the service offered. Therefore, institutions need to develop an effective communication strategy to explain the value and benefits of their pricing. For example, if prices are higher than those of competitors, it is important for institutions to clearly communicate the reasons, such as superior teaching quality, more experienced tutors, or better facilities. Final pricing should be complemented by a marketing strategy that builds customer trust and ensures that the price is perceived as a value-added investment. This strategy aims to build long-term loyalty and create a positive image in the market. Based on TRIPOD's analysis, the set price is IDR 450,000 per student per month. This price takes into account minimum costs, perceived customer value, and competitive positioning.

Compliance with Operational Costs

The monthly price of Rp 450,000 per student is based on careful calculations to cover all operational costs, including fixed costs such as building rent and teacher salaries, as well as variable costs such as teaching materials and learning support tools. This price also takes into account a reasonable profit margin, ensuring not only operational sustainability but also contributing to the institution's development. Thus, each enrolled student contributes enough to cover the costs of providing services while generating profits that can be reinvested in improving service quality or developing facilities. This pricing demonstrates a measured and professional approach to managing the financial aspects of the tutoring institution.

The cost-based pricing approach implemented ensures that the minimum price set does not result in financial losses for the institution. By accounting for all relevant cost elements, this approach provides a solid basis for determining prices that reflect operational efficiency without sacrificing service quality. This approach not only ensures short-term financial stability but also provides flexibility to address future fluctuations in operational costs. While this approach has limitations in adapting prices to market dynamics or customer value perceptions, it provides a solid foundation for building a more integrated pricing strategy, such as combining it with value and competitive analysis.

Service Value Enhancement

Survey results revealed that customers are willing to pay more if the service offered offers significant added value. Factors such as the availability of qualified tutors with extensive experience and expertise, as well as the implementation of innovative and relevant learning methods, are key elements customers perceive as valuable. For example, interactive and technology-based learning methods tend to be more appealing to students and parents, as they are perceived to increase learning effectiveness and student motivation. Customers also place a high value on tangible results, such as improved academic performance or

student success in top school selection exams, so services that clearly deliver a positive impact are seen as worthwhile investments.

With a value-based pricing approach, Titik Belajar Bimbel can set prices at a level that reflects the maximum perceived value for customers. This strategy not only ensures competitive pricing but also provides room to highlight service excellence that differentiates it from competitors. Value-based pricing enables institutions to build customer trust and loyalty, as they perceive the price they pay as commensurate with the benefits they receive. Furthermore, this strategy encourages institutions to continuously innovate and improve service quality, ensuring the added value provided to customers remains relevant and meets their expectations. Therefore, this approach is a crucial pillar in strengthening Titik Belajar Bimbel's position in the market while ensuring sustainable growth.

Competitiveness in the Local Market

Learning Point Bimbel's prices are slightly above the average price offered by competitors in the market. However, this competitive position is supported by the superior service that is the institution's main selling point. These advantages include high-quality tutors, effective and innovative learning methods, and facilities that support a conducive learning environment. By providing a better learning experience than the average competitor, customers tend to view the higher price as an investment in achieving optimal results, such as improved academic performance or success on entrance exams to top schools. This pricing position allows the institution to attract a customer segment that prioritizes quality over low prices alone.

This approach aligns with a competitor-based pricing strategy, where institutions not only consider the prices offered by competitors but also leverage service quality as a key differentiator. In this strategy, slightly higher prices can be justified if supported by customers' perceptions of greater value. By setting prices above the average of competitors, Titik Belajar Bimbel avoids getting caught up in a price war that can reduce profit margins and service quality. Instead, this strategy allows the institution to position itself as a premium option in the market, offering superior service to customers willing to pay more for the best benefits. This approach helps create a high-quality image of the institution while supporting long-term business sustainability.

Sustainability of TRIPOD Strategy

The combination of the three approaches in the TRIPOD method—cost, value, and competition analysis—gives Titik Belajar Bimbel high flexibility in adjusting prices according to market dynamics. If operational costs increase, such as an increase in tutor salaries or the cost of learning materials, the institution can rely on a cost-based approach to recalculate the minimum price required to maintain operational sustainability. Conversely, if there is a change in customer perception of value, for example due to new innovations in learning methods or improvements in service quality, the institution can optimize the value-based approach to adjust prices to reflect the additional benefits perceived by customers. Similarly, in situations of changing market competition dynamics, such as the emergence of new

competitors or price changes from existing competitors, the competition-based approach allows the institution to maintain its competitiveness while maintaining service excellence.

This flexible strategy also opens up opportunities for Titik Belajar Bimbel to implement price adjustments based on specific market segments, in order to attract more customers while retaining existing ones. For example, the institution could offer special discounts to new students as an initial incentive to encourage them to try the service. Furthermore, loyalty programs for repeat customers, such as discounts for families enrolling more than one child or discounts for service renewals, can increase customer retention and create long-term, mutually beneficial relationships. With this adaptive strategy, Titik Belajar Bimbel can not only navigate market changes more effectively but also strengthen its position as an institution responsive to its customers' needs and preferences.

Implications for Business Growth

With optimal pricing, Titik Belajar Bimbel has a significant opportunity to attract more students without sacrificing profitability. Strategically designed pricing, based on a combination of cost, value, and competitive analysis, allows the institution to maintain a healthy profit margin despite an increase in student numbers. Competitive pricing ensures that services remain affordable for the target market segment, while still allowing the institution to increase investments in service quality, such as recruiting high-quality tutors or developing innovative learning methods. With more students joining, the institution can also leverage economies of scale, increasing operational efficiency, ultimately strengthening financial stability and business sustainability.

Furthermore, competitive pricing that reflects the value of the service has a positive impact on brand image and customer loyalty. When customers perceive that the price they pay is commensurate with the benefits they receive, such as improved student performance or an enjoyable learning experience, they are more likely to recommend the service to others. This helps expand market reach through positive word-of-mouth. Furthermore, customers who are satisfied with the balance between price and service quality are more likely to return to the same service in the future, fostering long-term loyalty. With a combination of strategic pricing and consistent service quality, Titik Belajar Bimbel can strengthen its position as a leading tutoring provider while building strong customer relationships amidst increasingly fierce competition.

CONCLUSION

Research on the pricing strategy for services at Titik Belajar Bimbel using the Tripod method shows that effective pricing cannot be based on a single approach, but must consider the balance between operational costs, customer perceived value, and market competition. The cost analysis results indicate that the minimum price that can cover all operational costs and provide a reasonable profit is IDR 360,000 per student per month. Meanwhile, the value analysis results indicate that most customers consider the services provided to be of equivalent value in the price range of IDR 400,000 to IDR 600,000 per month. In terms of

competition, prices offered by similar tutoring institutions range from IDR 350,000 to IDR 450,000 per month. Based on the integration of these three components, a price of IDR 450,000 per student per month is considered the most appropriate alternative because it accommodates the institution's operational needs, reflects the quality of the services provided, and remains competitive in the market. These findings demonstrate that the Tripod method can be an effective tool in helping non-formal educational institutions set prices in a more rational, measurable, and sustainable manner. Titik Belajar Bimbel needs to periodically evaluate its pricing, taking into account changes in operational costs, evolving customer needs, and competitive dynamics. Improving service quality, strengthening tutor competencies, utilizing learning technology, and developing promotional and customer loyalty programs can also enhance perceived value for customers. Thus, the implemented pricing strategy will not only support student growth but also strengthen the institution's position in the competitive educational services sector.

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