

The Strategic Foundation for Competitive Excellent Development in Integrated Islamic Primary Schools in Indonesia

Hifza¹, Juliana², Arika Palapa³, Maskur⁴, Aslan^{5*}

Abstract

This qualitative study analyzes the strategic foundation of developing competitive excellence in integrated Islamic elementary schools in Indonesia. A qualitative approach was used for this multi-site design study. To collect the data, this study used in-depth interview, observation, and documentation techniques. While the data analysis was done by single site analysis and cross site analysis. The finding showed that the strategic foundations for developing competitive excellence in two integrated Islamic elementary schools are: First, religious motivation; to carry out the activities of educational institutions to the fullest in accordance with the concept of Islamic teachings. Second, the internal interests of the school; to improve the quality and image of the institution. Third, the external interests of the school; to meet the expectations and demands of the community towards the existence of superior and competitive Islamic educational institutions. Therefore, future studies analyzing the competitive integrated Islamic primary schools that exist in other institutions in the regions is needed to see challenges in achieving their excellence balance between islamic education competitive and its values for community.

Keywords---Strategic Foundation, Development, Competitive Excellence, Integrated Islamic Elementary School

Introduction

Competing advantage, according to Porter, is the ability of an organisation to achieve economic benefits over the profits achieved by competitors in the same industry or service activity. (Porter, 1994). Competitive advantage is also the ability of an institution to make a product or service offering that is valued more by customers than competitive institutions. (Raymond A. Noe et.al, 2010). In institutional activities, competitive advantage grows from the value that is able to be created for buyers and the cost is greater than the capital that the organisation must incur to create it. The superior value comes from offering lower prices than competitor prices with equivalent benefits or offering unique benefits that exceed the price offered. (Dirgantoro, 2007).

Competitive excellence is at the heart of performance in competitive markets. If an institution can achieve and maintain competitive advantage, it will become an institution that performs above average, especially in the region where the business is run. The fundamental basis of performance over the average in a long time is the main capital for organisations to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. The rules of competition in each business include five competitive forces, namely the entry of new competitors, the threat of substitute products, the power of supply from buyers, the power of supply from suppliers, and competition among institutions in the same business. (Porter, 1994).

Competitive advantage in an institution can be developed by analysing and diagnosing management to determine the strengths and weaknesses of facing opportunities and threats by focusing on marketing and distribution, R&D and engineering, production and operations, resources and employees, as well as financial and accounting advantages. (Glueck & Jauch, 1994). The

¹ Institut Agama Islam Sultan M. Syafiuddin Sambas, Indonesia

² Universitas Potensi Utama, Medan Indonesia

³ Politeknik Ilmu Pelayaran, Semarang, Indonesia

⁴ Setia Walisembilan Semarang, Indonesia

⁵ Institut Agama Islam Sultan M. Syafiuddin Sambas, Indonesia

*Corresponding author: aslanmarani88@yahoo.com

principles of developing competitive advantage include human resources, processes, information technology, strategies, and management knowledge. (Dirgantoro, 2007).

Since 1960, the framework used to achieve sustainable competitive advantage has been to carry out strategies that maximise internal strength through the exploitation of opportunities in the external environment, neutralise threats from the external environment, and minimise the institution's internal weaknesses. (Sridadi, 2013). In the next period, the framework will be increasingly used developing, one of which is the concept of Resource-Based View initiated by Jay Barney with the view that the source of sustainable competitive advantage is the institution which includes all assets, capabilities, organisational processes, institutional characteristics, information, knowledge, and so on. (Purnomo, 2014). According to Barney, competitive advantage an institution must meet several criteria, namely valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-constitutional. (Barney, 1991).

The study of competitive advantage in educational institutions to date has been widely studied by researchers. Mazzarol and Soutar examine the development of mental models in developing sustainable competitive advantage in educational institutions. (Mazzarol & Soutar, 1999). Curran focuses on identifying and exploring things that encourage the formation of competitive advantage in higher education institutions. (Curran, 2000). David Wijaya studies the management of educational human resources based on teacher competency in in order to improve school competitiveness. (Wijaya, 2008). Mainardes focuses on proposing a model that can explain the process of identifying competitive advantage in Higher Education Institutions. (Mainardes, 2009).

Some of the previous studies as described above, more study of the development of competitive advantage in aspects of the model, strategy and implications, then from an institutional perspective more aimed at high schools or colleges. Therefore, the focus of this research is the strategic foundation for developing competitive advantage in elementary schools, particularly the Ar-Raihan Bantul Integrated Islamic Elementary School (SDIT) and Luqman Al-Hakim Yogyakarta SDIT, because to get a strong and sustainable competitive advantage must start from the foundation the strong one.

The development of competitive advantage will not run as it should, if the foundation owned by the school is not strong or intact. The foundation of developing competitive advantage is the basic foundation to build a school in the direction it aspires. SDIT Ar-Raihan Bantul and SDIT Luqman Al-Hakim Yogyakarta became the locus in this study based on several considerations, namely: 1) Both of them are private schools that have achievements and have a good reputation in their respective regions; 2) Both of these schools both started education activities from limited conditions and remain able to survive until now, so as to achieve excellence; 3) Both of these schools have excellent programs that are consistently implemented until now and this is rarely or cannot be done by other schools in their respective regions.

Literature Review

School Motivation

The main motivation of SDIT to have a competitive advantage cannot be separated from the religious foundation. In other words, the school's competitive advantage is a desire driven by a values-based spirit. The values underlying a concept cannot be separated from the study of two basic foundations, namely prescriptive and descriptive.

Prescriptive means to give instructions or provisions, depending on or according to official regulations, while descriptive is to describe what it is. (Nasional, 2008). Prescriptive foundation in the science of education is defined as assumptions about the ideal, expected or aspired human life (dass sellen)) which is suggested to be the starting point for study and educational practice. (Syarifudin, dkk, 2006). The prescriptive foundation is the principle of school direction and policy and is a driving force for the creation of competitive advantage in schools. Motivation the need for competitive advantage based on values can be an effective and beneficial advantage for schools in the delivery of quality education.

The existence of competitive advantage in schools is a motivation for every personnel in it to work optimally. In the context of organizing Islamic educational institutions, the work spirit of a

Muslim does not only develop from the demands of the empirical reality of modern society, but is based on a religious spirit which is a precondition for his piety and godliness. (Effendi, 2008).

Some factors that can be a source of sustainable competitive advantage include maintaining the institution's position as a provider of quality education and building two unique capabilities, namely relatively low cost and good reputation, as well as having cooperative ties with various parties, thus providing benefits strategically for the competitive advantage of educational institutions. (Morrish, 2011).

For schools that are private, they should be more active in collecting quality inputs. This is based on several reasons, namely: 1) schools as educational service institutions for the community as consumers, need to be convinced that the managed educational institutions still exist; 2) managers of educational institutions need to convince the public that the education services provided are relevant to their needs; 3) the types and types of educational services provided are widely known and understood by the public; and 4) the existence of a managed educational institution is not left by a potential community. (Miyono, 2011).

School Internal Interests

David explained that competitive advantage is the core of the strategic management process, because strategic management is about how to obtain and maintain competitive advantage. When an institution can do something that cannot be made by another institution or has something that is highly desired by competitors, then it represents competitive advantage. (David, 2006).

In the aspect of internal organizational interests, this cannot be separated from the study of internal issues, the existence, and the aim of exceeding other educational institutions with their excellence. Schools as an organization that provides a human resource development service from the products produced, must continuously explore and bring up its quality and excellence. School managers at the same time must also be able to maintain the development of educational facilities that support the process of achieving the quality of education, starting from the tools and quality of management. (Goldberg & Cole, 2018).

Seriousness can create many problems for schools. Internal school problems that cannot be resolved will continue to develop, so that they can be a trigger for the weakness of educational institutions. (Bordia, 2010). Therefore, schools must always improve the quality as well as the institutional image, so as to create a competitive advantage for educational institutions.

School's External Interests

From the external side of the organization, it can not be separated from the needs as well as demands on some communities of the existence of a superior Islamic educational institution. In this case, creating a competitive advantage for schools by taking into account the needs and demands of the community is one of the right steps, because the relationship between the school and the community is essentially a very important relationship in determining the successful coaching, growth and development of students in the school. (Haan, 2015).

The relationship between the school and the community must also be constructive, in the sense that the school provides constructive information and good services to the community. On the other hand, not a few of the people who also really need a school or educational institution that can meet their expectations in the context of superior and quality education services.

Schools that succeed in developing competitive advantage include schools that can develop a high academic culture for their students, and establish good interpersonal relationships between students and teachers, and provide educational funding assistance provided to each student, thereby increasing respect the community towards schools. (Jesus & Antrop-Gonzales, 2006). Thus, the strategic foundation related to motivation to respond to the demands of society towards the existence of a superior Islamic educational institution, is one important reason for the process of developing competitive advantage.

Method

This research used a qualitative approach, a type of case study and a multi-site design. Data collection techniques used were in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Data analysis was carried out in two stages; single site analysis and cross site analysis. Single site data analysis used Milles and Huberman interactive analysis techniques consisting of data reduction, data display, and verification/conclusion, (Meleong, 2008), whereas cross-site data analysis used the steps of Robert K. Yin (2000), case study analysis. Checking the validity of the data using four techniques; 1) credibility test by triangulation and member checking; 2) dependability; 3) confirm ability, and 4) transfer ability.

Research Findings

The components related to the strategic foundation of developing competitive advantage in SDIT in this study relate to several aspects, namely organizational motivation, internal interests of the organization, and external interests of the organization.

Research findings at SDIT Ar-Raihan Bantul showed that the strategic foundations for developing school competitive advantage are: 1) Beliefs originating from Islamic teachings about the importance of doing something for good, including in managing schools with the target of achieving excellence that is of value and beneficial to the people or Nkrumah; 2) School excellence is expected to overcome the many problems of private schools, guarantee the continuity of institutions, and to balance with other schools; and 3) A good and superior Islamic school is needed by community who want their children to have strong basic abilities, both in religious and academic aspects.

While the strategic foundations for developing competitive advantage in SDIT Luqman Al-Hakim Yogyakarta are: 1) Motivation that places Islam as a way of life, both in terms of objectives and management of educational institutions, so that the arrangement of schools must be maximized in order to achieve the best results; 2) To maintain the continuity of educational institutions, minimize internal weaknesses, and as an effort to be equal or even exceed more advanced schools; and 3) The community has high hopes for a superior Islamic school because it is able to provide a good environment and meet the primary needs of their children in education.

Based on the research findings it could be concluded that the strategic foundations for developing competitive advantage in SDIT are: 1) Understanding and confidence to carry out the activities of educational institutions properly and optimally in accordance with the concept of Islamic teachings; 2) School efforts to overcome internal problems and maintain the existence of institutions, and to compete with other schools; and 3) Public demands on the existence of superior Islamic educational institutions.

Table 1
 Cross-Site Research Find Matrix Strategic Foundation for
 Competitive Advantage Development at SDIT

Component	Findings at SDIT Ar-Raihan	Findings at SDIT Luqman Al-Hakin	Findings across Sit
Organization Motivation	The belief that originates from Islamic teachings about the importance of doing something well, including in managing schools with the target of achieving excellence that is of value to the people	Motivation that place Islam as a way of life both in terms of objectives and management of educational institutions, so that the arrangement of school must be maximized in order to achieve the best results	Understanding and belief to carry out the activities of educational institutions properly and optimally in accordance with the concept of Islamic teachings
Internal Organization Interes	It is expected to overcon	To maintain the	1) Efforts to overcon

	the many problems of the school (private), ensure the continuity of the institution, and to compensate for other schools	continuity of educational institutions, minimize internal weaknesses, and to be equal or even exceed more advanced schools	internal school problems; 2) Maintaining the existence of schools; 3) Compete with other schools
External Organization Interests	A good and excellent Islamic school is needed by people who want their children to have strong basic abilities, both in religious and academic aspects	The community has great hopes for a superior Islamic school because it is able to provide a good environment and meet the primary needs of their children in education	Community needs for the existence of superior Islamic educational institutions

Comparison and Theory Development

Referring to Porter's competitive advantage theory, the comparison of theory with the research findings is as follows:

Table 2
 Comparison of Theory and Research Findings on Strategic Foundation for Competitive Advantage Development at SDIT

Component	<i>Competitive Advantage Theory of Michael E. Porter</i>	Study Findings
Organizational Motivation	Competitive advantage is at the heart of organizational improvement in competitive markets	Religious motivation based on the concept of Islamic teaching
Internal Organisational Interests	If an organization can achieve and maintain competitive advantage, the organization will become an institution with above average performance	Motivation improves the image of the institution (education)
External Organisational Interests	The entry of new competitors, the threat of substitute products, the power of supply from buyers, the power of supply from suppliers, and competition among organizations in the same business	Motivation to answer the demands of the community towards the existence of competitive and competitive Islamic educational institutions

From the comparison of theories and research findings as described in table 2, this study basically developed the competitive advantage theory proposed by Porter. Thus, the strategic foundations for developing competitive advantage in SDIT are as follows: 1) religious motivation; to carry out the activities of educational institutions to the fullest in accordance with the concept of Islamic teachings; 2) the internal interests of the institution; to improve the quality and image of the institution; and 3) the institution's external interests; to meet the expectations and demands of the community for the existence of competitive and competitive Islamic educational institutions. The conceptual building of strategic development theory foundation for developing competitive advantage on SDIT can be described as follows:

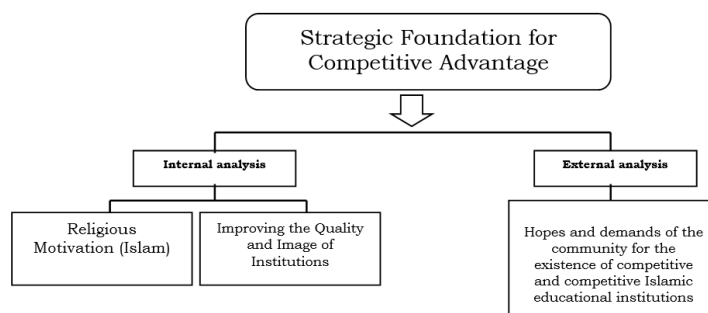


Figure 1. Chart the development of a strategic foundation for developing competitive advantage at SDIT

Conclusion

The main purpose of this qualitative research paper was to analyze the strategic foundation for developing competitive excellent in integrated Islamic schools in Indonesia. Based on the research question formulation, the research findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the strategic foundation for developing competitive advantage in integrated Islamic elementary schools at both schools; Primary School, Ar-Raihan Bantul and Integrated Islamic Primary School Luqman Al-Hakim, Yogyakarta as follows: First, religious motivation; to carry out the activities of educational institutions to the fullest in accordance with the concept of Islamic teachings. Second, the internal interests of the school, namely to improve the quality and image of the institution. Third, the external interests of schools; to meet the expectations and demands of the community towards the existence of a competitive and competitive Islamic education institution.

Therefore, identification of the limitations of this method that have affected the study is very useful. The researchers understand that there are many limitations of this study so that the future studies analysing the competitive integrated Islamic primary schools that exist in other institutions in the regions is needed to see challenges in achieving their excellence balance between Islamic education competitive and its values for community.

References

- [1] Barney, J. (1991). Firm Resources and Sustained Competitive Advantage. *Journal of Management*, 17(1).
- [2] Bordia, S. (2010). Problems of Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Engineering Education in Developing Countries. *European Journal of Engineering Education*, 26(2), 187–193.
- [3] Curran, P. J. (2000). Competition in UK Higher Education: Competitive Advantage in the Research Assessment Exercise and Porter's Diamond Model. *Journal Higher Education Quarterly*, SRHE, 54(4), 295–421.
- [4] David, F. R. (2006). *Manajemen Strategis: Konsep, terj. Ichsan Setio Budi (Ke-10)*. Salemba Empat.
- [5] Dirgantoro, C. (2007). *Manajemen Strategik: Konsep, Kasus dan Implementasi*. PT. Grasindo.
- [6] Effendi, R. (2008). *Produksi dalam Islam*. Magistra Insania Press.
- [7] Glueck, W. F., & Jauch, L. R. (1994). *Manajemen Strategi dan Kebijakan Lembaga, terj. Murad (3rd ed.)*. Erlangga.
- [8] Goldberg, J. S., & Cole, B. R. (2018). Quality Management in Education: Building Excellence and Equity in Student Performance. *Quality Management Journal*, 9(4), 8–22.
- [9] Haan, H. H. de. (2015). Competitive Advantage, What does it really mean in the context of public higher education institutions? *Internasional Journal of Educational Management*, 29(1), 44–61.
- [10] Jesus, A. D., & Antrop-Gonzales, R. (2006). Instrumental Relationship and High Expectations: Exploring critical care in two latino community-based school. *Journal Intercultural Education*, 17(3), 281–299.

- [11] Mainardes, E. W. (2009). Competitive Advantages in Institutions of Higher Education: A Proposal of Research Model,” *Journal of Academy of Business and Economics Publisher. Journal of Academy of Business and Economics Publisher, International Academy of Business and Economics Audience*, 9(2), 35–50.
- [12] Mazzarol, T., & Soutar, G. N. (1999). Sustainable Competitive Advantage for Educational Institutions: A Suggested Model. *Journal of Education Management*, 13(6), 287–300.
- [13] Meleong, L. J. (2008). *Metode Penelitian Kualitatif*. Remaja Rosdakarya.
- [14] Miyono, N. (2011). Kepuasan dan Loyalitas Pelanggan pada Sekolah Dasar Swasta Unggul Di Semarang. *Jurnal Dinamika Sosial Ekonomi*, 7(2).
- [15] Morrish, S. C. (2011). Country of Origin as a Source of Sustainable Competitive Advantage: The Case for Internasional Higher Education Institutions in New Zealand. *Journal of Strategic Marketing*, 19(6), 517–529.
- [16] Nasional, D. P. (2008). *Kamus Bahasa Indonesia*. Pusat Bahasa.
- [17] Porter, M. E. (1994). *Keunggulan Bersaing: Menciptakan dan Mempertahankan Kinerja Unggul*, terj. Tim Penerjemah Binarupa Aksara. Binarupa Aksara.
- [18] Purnomo, R. (2014). Resource-Based View dan Keunggulan Bersaing Berkelanjutan: Sebuah Telaah Kritis Terhadap Pemikiran Jay Barney (1991). *Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Bisnis*, XXIV(5).
- [19] Raymond A. Noe et.al. (2010). *Manajemen Sumber Daya Manusia: Menuju Keunggulan Bersaing*, terj. David Wijaya. Salemba Empat.
- [20] Sridadi, A. R. (2013). Kajian Atas Konsep Keunggulan Kompetitif Berkelanjutan Dari Nicole P. Hoffman dan Pengembangannya. *Jurnal Ekonomi Dan Bisnis*, XXIII(3).
- [21] Syarifudin, dkk, T. (2006). *Landasan Pendidikan*. UPI Press.
- [22] Wijaya, D. (2008). Pemasaran Jasa Pendidikan sebagai Upaya untuk Meningkatkan Daya Saing Sekolah. *Jurnal Pendidikan Penabur*, 11, 69–86.
- [23] Yin, R. K. (2000). *Studi Kasus: Desain dan Metode*, terj. M. Djauzi Mudzakir. Rajawali Press.
- [24] Nyoman Suwija, I., Made Darmada, I., Nyoman Rajeg Mulyawan, I., Suryasa, W. (2020). Balinese folklore value revitalization “Lubdaka” on Siwaratri holy day. *International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology*, 29(9), 5106-5112.