

The Strategy Building Competitive Advantage of Integrated Islamic Elementary School of Ar- Raihan Bantul and Integrated Islamic School of Luqman Al-Hakim Yogyakarta

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Abstract---The strategy of building competitive excellences in the Integrated Islamic Elementary School (SDIT) is an effort to gain higher achievements while overcoming the problem of cause and effect that envelops the journey of private Islamic educational institutions. The purpose of the study was to analyse and find the chosen strategies and steps in building a competitive advantage. To get the data needed, this study used a qualitative approach, with the type of case study and multi-site design. The results showed that the strategy of building a competitive excellency at SDIT was a strategy focused differentiation based on religious, with steps as follows: a) differential product on curriculum and program Tahfiz Al-Qur'an; b) differentiation of leadership competencies and human resources; c) differentiating service quality through financial innovation, religious culture and quality culture; d) differentiating cohesiveness in work teams and cooperation networks; and e) differential image with academic achievements and hafizh (memorising) the Al-Qur'an.

Keywords---Strategy, Competitive Excellence, Integrated Islamic Elementary School.

I. Introduction

Along with the rapid development of the times and the complexity of environmental changes, the journey of educational activities in Indonesia is also increasingly dynamic. Institutionally, the dynamics are seen in the vibrant development of schools, both public and private. Thus encourages the exist of competition between educational institutions, especially in the aspects of marketing services, quality, financing, and education services. This phenomenon shows that public service management has metamorphosed into business management that must prioritise price, prospect, product, profit, priority, place, people, profile and promotion. As a result, every public sector institution also needs to consider competitors, competitive advantages, added value and diversity in order be able to give satisfaction to customers.

The complexity of competition in the world of education certainly has an impact on educational institutions that are active with Islamic principles or identities, such as pesantren, madrasah, and Islamic schools. If seen from the

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growth and development of Islamic educational institutions to date, most are still in a pretty poor condition, especially in Islamic educational institutions that are private. Issues that surround the Islamic educational institutions are also increasingly complex from time to time. If associated with the ability of funding or financing, sources of funding private schools is still largely come from parents or society. Therefore, funding sourced from the community will not be able to accommodate all working needs of educational institutions. For educational institutions in regions or disadvantaged communities, the funds that can be collected are also relatively limited. The lack of funding sources has implications for the small likelihood of these educational institutions to offer incentives to employees as well as in the provision of educational facilities and infrastructure. This results in the education process being unable to run optimally, so that the quality of education cannot be expected. The low quality of education results in low motivation and community participation in educational institutions. With the low motivation and participation of the community, ultimately it has an impact on the small amount of funds that can be collected. The problem of cause and effect that continues to go with the journey of private Islamic education institutions has become a "vicious circle" which causes many madrassas, Islamic boarding schools, and Islamic schools are unable to survive for a long time.

If these problems continue to be ignored, the existence of private Islamic educational institutions will continue to decline. By then the Islamic educational institutions should be able to take strategic steps to get out of the problem, so that the "vicious circle" problem can be solved by educational institutions, as well as bringing Islamic educational institutions to achieve excellence.

The existence of excellent Islamic educational institutions that continues to experience positive developments can be seen from the work of Islamic Integrated School of Ar-Raihan Bantul and Luqman Al-Hakim Yogyakarta. The existence of those two schools are very interested in the community, especially in the area of Bantul District and Yogyakarta City. As an Islamic school, both of them emerge with concepts that prioritise special programs as the strong value of school excellence.

The dynamic development of Islamic integrated School of Ar-Raihan Bantul and Luqman Al-Hakim Yogyakarta showed that both institutions experiencing good growth and positive response by the public. The ability to present superior programs also indicates that the management of those Islamic integrated schools is so serious in the process of structuring the institution that the two schools still exist and able to compete with other educational institutions supported by government. Therefore, further research on the efforts of schools in building competitive excellence is needed, so that strategies are found that cause both schools to exist and be able to achieve excellence.

II. Literature Review

The word strategy comes from the Greek *strategy*, which is interpreted as *the art of the general* or the art of a commander normally used in warfare. According to *the Big Indonesian Dictionary*, the word strategy has the meaning of science and art using all the nation's resources to carry out certain policies and careful plans regarding activities to achieve specific targets. In the study of management science, the notion of strategy refers to the ways or actions used to achieve organisational goals. Stoner and Freeman mentioned that strategy is an act that outlines the allocation of resources and other activities to respond to the environment and help organisations achieve their goals, while Michael E. Porter defines strategy as creating unique and valuable positions obtained by carrying out a series of activities.

Strategy can be considered in the process of building the competitive advantage of the organisation according to Porter are: 1) leadership strategy costs (*cost leadership*), aims to become a producer with the lowest cost ; 2) The

strategy of differentiation, include the selection of one or more of the criteria used by buyers in certain markets, then the business uniquely positioned to be able to meet these criteria; and 3) strategic focus, which is divided into two, namely the focus strategy costs (*cost focus*) and focus on differentiation. The differentiation focus strategy aims to make differentiation only in one or a small group of targeted market segments, while the cost focus strategy is an effort to find advantages with lower costs in a small group of certain market segments. A clearer picture of Micheal E. Porter's generic competitive strategy as follows.

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

	Lower Cost	Differentiation
<p style="text-align: right;">Broad Target</p> <p>COMPETITIVE SCOP</p>	<p>Cost Leadership</p>	<p>Differentiation</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Narrow Target</p>	<p>Cost Focus</p>	<p>Differentiation</p>

Figure 1 . Michael E. Porter's competitive advantage strategy model

Meanwhile, competitive advantage according to Dogre and Vickrey has two different but interrelated meanings. The first understanding emphasises excellence or superior in terms of resources and expertise possessed by the institution, while the second understanding emphasises excellence in achieving performance. Excellence competes to grow the value (benefit) that is able to be created agencies to purchasers or users of services and the cost is greater than the capital must be spent agencies to create it. The superior value comes from offering lower prices than competitor prices with equal benefits.

According to Fred R. David, competitive advantage is the core of the strategic management process as strategic management is about how to obtain and maintain competitive advantage. If 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. Bharadwaj said that competitive advantage is the result of implementing strategies that utilise various resources owned by the organisation. The unique expertise and *assets* can be seen as a source of competitive advantage.

According to Jay Barney, a competitive advantage in the sense of superiority comes from the resources and expertise with some of the main criteria, namely: 1) *Valuable* (worth), which is the source of power and capabilities enable organisations implement strategies to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation; 2) *Rare* (scarcity), those resources and capabilities are rarely owned by competitors; 3) *Inimitable* (difficult to imitate), i.e.

resources and capabilities are difficult to be imitated by competitors or require a lot of money and time to imitate; and 4) non-substitution (*difficult to replace*), i.e. resources and capabilities owned are difficult to be replaced with other resources or capabilities.

Through Jay Barney's concept of competitive advantage, the concept of competitive advantage in Islamic educational institutions should not only stop at the process of forming or producing material excellence, but also excellence that is close to the values of piety. Jay Barney's criteria for continuous competitive advantage are a standard for private Islamic educational institutions to build competitive advantage, with criteria that are valuable, rare, difficult to replicate and difficult to replace.

III. Methods

The approach chosen in this research was qualitative with the type of case study and multi-site design. Data collection used in-depth interview techniques, observation, and documentation. Analysis of data through two stages, namely analysis of single site data and cross-site data analysis. Single site analysis used Milles and Huberman's interactive analysis techniques, with the following steps: 1) data reduction; 2) data display; and 3) verification/ conclusion drawing. Checking the validity of the data using four techniques, namely: 1) credibility test by triangulation and member checking; 2) dependability; 3) confirm ability; and 4) transfer ability.

IV. Findings

The study of strategies to build competitive advantage in schools is related to the choice of strategies and strategic steps in building competitive advantage findings revealed the choice of strategy at Islamic integrated Islamic School of Ar-Raihan Bantul was a way that is rarely or has never been done by other schools, such as through a flagship program in the form of an Integrated Islamic School curriculum; Alquran program, habituation program, and continuous improvement of HR capabilities. Meanwhile, the Integrated Islamic School of Luqman Al-Hakim uses a method that is rarely done by other schools, such as through strengthening the school's human resources that are routinely fostered and developing school curricula and Alquran programs that are packaged in curriculum and extracurricular activities. Based on the findings of research in both schools, the choice of strategies to build competitive advantage is a strategy that focuses on the integration of religious-based academic quality.

Next, findings related to school strategic steps in building competitive advantage at Islamic Integrated of Ar-Raihan Bantul are: a) observing the potential and prospects for the development of educational institutions that are becoming public or user's interest as well as priorities; b) effective leadership, structuring HR as well as organising work teams; c) build the reputation and figures of the school through a program that is unique and innovative; d) prepare students with higher achievements both academic and outside life; e) arrange a productive school financial support system through business charity and entrepreneurship; f) HR organisation is adjusted to the organisational structure; g) Islamic culture and tradition of the school organisation; h) Carry out promotional and campaign activities pro-grammatically; i) collaborating as well as cooperation with various parties; and j) evaluation of HR personal development and school performance.

Meanwhile, the strategic steps at Islamic Integrated Luqman Al-Hakim Yogyakarta are: a) a study of the development of Islamic schools and the tendency of the community as users of educational services; b) prepare human

resources and build solid work teams through strong leadership; c) build a school image through a special program; d) Develop a financial support system through business activities and cooperation; e) the organisation of HR accompanied by routine coaching; f) Building a school culture with Islamic nuance; g) regularly promoting programs and building partnerships with interested parties; and h) evaluation on the evaluation and strengthening of works in each HR as well as an evaluation of HR performance, both academic and non-academic.

Thus, it can be concluded that the strategic steps to build these Primary Islamic integrated school competitive advantage are as follows: a) environmental analysis ; b) strategic leadership, optimisation of human resources and work teams through the process of structuring, coaching, and empowering; c) building a positive image of the school; d) financing innovation through developing a *support system* ; e) development of religious culture and quality culture; f) ongoing promotion and development of cooperation networks; and g) evaluation on aspects of HR personality and performance.

Analysis of cross-site research findings on strategies to build competitive advantage in Primary Islamic Integrated Ar-Raihan Bantul and Luqman Al-Hakim Yogyakarta in detail is best described in the following table:

Table 1. Cross-Site Research Find Matrix

Concept	Findings on SDIT Ar-Raihan	Findings on SDIT Luqman Al-Hakim	Cross Site Findings
Strategy Options	Going the way that is rarely done or has never been done by other schools, namely through excellent programs in the form of SIT curriculum, Alquran program, habituation program, and continuous improvement of human resources, both in quality and quantity	Using a method that is rarely done by other schools, namely through strengthening school human resources that are routinely fostered and developing school curricula and the Koran program which is packaged in intra and extracurricular activities (pesantren tahfiz)	Strategies that focus on the integration of a culture of academic and religious quality
Strategic Steps	1) Observe the potential and prospects for the development of educational institutions that are of public interest; 2) Effective leadership, structuring HR as well as organising work teams; 3) Build the	1) Study of the development of Islamic schools and the tendency of the community as users of education services 2) Preparing HR and building work teams through strong leadership; 3) Building	1) Environmental analysis ; 2) Strategic leadership, optimisation of HR and work teams; 3) Building a

	reputation and good name of the school through a program that is unique; 4) Prepare students with achievements; 5) Develop a school financial support system through business charity; 6) Organising HR is adjusted to the organisational structure; 7) Organisational culture nuances of Islam; 8) Carry out promotional activities programmatically 9) Establish cooperation with various parties; and 10) Evaluation on HR personal development and general school performance evaluation	the image of the school through a special program; 4) Develop financial support systems through collaborative and business activities; 5) Organizing HR accompanied by routine coaching; 6) Building a school culture with Islamic nuance; 7) Regular promotion of programs and building cooperation with interested parties; and 8) Evaluation on the strengthening of learning in each HR as well as an assessment of HR, academic and non-academic performance	positive image of the school; 4) Financial innovation through the development of a support system ; 5) Development of religious culture and quality culture; 6) Continuous promotion and development of cooperation networks; and 7) Evaluation on aspects of HR personality and performance
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V. Discussion

The strategy to build competitive advantage in both Islamic Integrated Primary Schools is a way or strategic steps taken by schools to form and produce competitive advantage so that with these advantages schools can overcome various internal institutional problems and excel in competition.

In connection with the school strategy to build competitive advantage, Michael E. Porter says that the organisational strategy in the competitive market of which is the cost leadership strategy (*cost leadership*), differentiation and focus. The cost leadership strategy aims to be the lowest cost producer with a broad target market. The differentiation strategy is aimed at buyers in certain markets and then positions the business uniquely to meet these criteria. The differentiation focus strategy aims to make differentiation only in one or a small group of targeted market segments and to ensure that customers really have different needs and desires, while the cost focus strategy is an effort to look for lower cost advantages in a small group of certain market segments.

Based on Porter's theory, a differentiation focus strategy can be developed into a strategy that is concentrated on making a difference in education services. However, all forms of educational services still rely on internal school resources through the development of core human resource competencies (HR) and the completeness of the curriculum based on the Qur'an's values.

The strategic focus steps of differentiation according to Porter are: 1) differentiating service quality by concentrating on certain segments; 2) differentiation products through the exploitation of certain components that are different from other industries; and 3) differentiated image, by combination of policies for strategic targets. Therefore, organisation must have special competencies as drivers of organisational performance, so as to create a value that is higher than what competitors have.

Meanwhile, the steps to build competitive advantage at these Islamic Integrated Schools are: *First*, environmental organisation analysis which aims to anticipate the dynamic changes that occur in the school environment, so that schools can react quickly and appropriately to succeed in school strategies and programs. *Second*, strategic organisation leadership, optimisation of human resources and work teams through the process of structuring, coaching, and empowering.

HR structuring is closely related to optimising the role of school personnel in building competitive advantage. According to Marwansyah, human resource management can be interpreted as the utilisation of human resources in organisations carried out through the functions of human resource planning, recruitment and selection, human resource development, career development, compensation and welfare, work safety and health, and industrial relations.

Therefore, optimising the role of HR in achieving school goals cannot be separated from the leadership role or what is commonly referred to as strategic organisational leadership. Sedarmayanti said that strategic organisation leadership is the ability to anticipate, inspire, maintain flexibility, and empower others to create the desired strategic changes. By its multi-functional nature, strategic leadership involves all human resources in an organisation.

Third, building a positive image of the school can be pursued by designing superior curricula and innovative programs that aim to build a positive image of the school. School programs are overall activities that have been planned for educational purposes at school, so what they want to achieve must be in accordance with the vision and mission of the school. The development of flagship programs or those that are characteristic is basically another form of educational innovation.

Fourth, financing innovation through the development of a *support system*. Financing at private educational institutions must be a serious concern for the development of the quality of education. It is not enough for schools to only rely on fees sourced from students' parents or the community, because these funds are very limited. Schools need to innovate in exploring clear and useful funding sources. One form of educational funding innovation is through the development of financial *support systems* (*support systems*) that can be pursued through various businesses activities initiated by school with its communities.

Fifth, the development of religious culture and quality culture. For learners, school culture is a whole psychological experience, whether they are social, emotional, and intellectual that absorbed them while in the school environment. All activities that will bring an impact on the psychological appreciation of students which in turn forms patterns, values, attitudes, habits and behaviour changes.

Therefore, the value system that is developed in school culture must be introduced from the beginning, so that it can produce a school culture that matches both academic as well as non-academic expectations as demanded by government, communities and even global society.

Sixth, ongoing promotion and development of cooperation networks. According to Hermawan Kertajaya, *marketing* activities can be interpreted as: 1) activities connecting potential sellers and buyers; 2) sell goods or services and the services do not return to the person selling them; 3) provide a standard of living; and 4) a strategic business

discipline that directs the process of creating, offering and changing values from the initiator to the *stakeholders*. Entering the era of competition, every school needs to pay full attention to the marketing strategy being implemented so that on going cooperation can be implemented in larger scope.

Seventh, evaluation on aspects of HR personality and performance. This activity positions the principal or head of the foundation as the main supervisor in order to encourage the smooth activities that have been planned. The strategy evaluation process can be aimed at general school performance. According to Surya Dharma, performance measurement is the process of recording and measuring the achievement of the implementation of activities in the direction of achieving the mission through the results displayed in the form of products, services, or processes. In other words, every school activity must be measurable and stated in relation to achieving the direction of the school in the future.

Based on these descriptions can be concluded that the steps in building a competitive advantage of Islamic Integrated Primary Schools: 1) differential leadership competencies and human resources; 2) differential integration in work teams and networks alike; 3) differential quality of service with innovation financial system, religious culture, and the culture of quality; 4) differential product on curriculum and program residing/ memorised Koran ; and 5) differential images by graduates who excel in academics and memorising Quran text. Meanwhile, the choice of strategy used is the focus strategy of religious-based differentiation.

Comparison of theories with this findings on strategies to build competitive advantage in schools is as follows:

Table 2. Comparison of Theory and Findings on Strategies to Build Competitive Excellence Islamic Integrated Schools

Component	Michael E. Porter's Competitive Strategy Theory	Research Findings
Strategy choices	Strategies focus differential to make a difference in just one or a small group of targeted market segments and in making decisions is not affected by the problem of cost	The strategy of religious-based differentiation focus , which is a strategy that focuses on the integration of academic and religious quality culture with the Qur'anic recitation
Strategic steps	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Differentiation of service quality, by concentrating on certain segments 2. Product differentiation, by exploiting certain components that are different from other industries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Product differentiation in aspects of the Koran curriculum and memorising program • Differentiation of leadership competencies and human resources

	<p>3. Differential image through a combination of policy for strategic targets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differentiation of service quality through financial innovation, religious culture and quality culture • Differentiation of cohesiveness in work teams and networks of cooperation • Image differentiation with graduates who have academic achievements and Qur'an recitation
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The conceptual building of the strategy of religious-based differentiation focus is as follows:

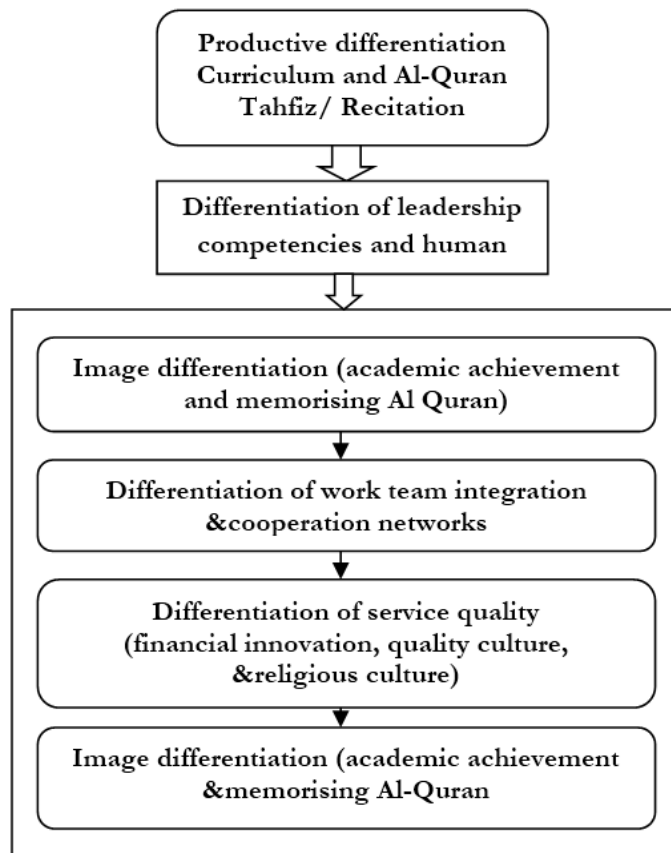


Figure 2. Conceptual building strategies for religious-based differentiation focus

VI. Concluding Remarks

Based on the findings and discussion, it can be concluded that the strategy of building a competitive excellence at Islamic Integrated Primary Schools above is a strategy focused on differentiation based on religious with the strategic steps as follows: a) differential product on the Koran's curriculum and programs; b) differentiation of leadership competencies and human resources; c) differentiating service quality through financial innovation, religious culture, and quality culture; d) differentiating cohesiveness in work teams and cooperation networks; and e) differential image with academic achievement and recitation of the Al-Qur'an.

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