

Competitive Advantage Using Low Cost Higher Education

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ABSTRACT

A university that has a competitive advantage by implementing a Higher Education Competitive Advantage strategy, namely using marketing assets to form a competitive advantage, namely: overall cost advantage or low cost efficiency, differentiation advantage, and focus advantage. This research is categorized as descriptive research which describes the situation and conditions of the internal and external environment of UM Manado in facing competition between universities. qualitative in nature, the dependability test is carried out by auditing the entire research process. The aim of this research is to analyze competitive advantage and formulate competitive advantage strategies using a low cost approach. interviews as a data collection technique. The analytical tool used is value chain analysis which is supported by internal and external environmental analysis tools. Three respondents from UM Manado leadership, Chair of BPH and (Chancellor, Deputy Chancellor for Finance) who represent the condition and character of the data needed in the case study and the Dean and Head of Study Program as confirmatory. The results of this research show that in campus position, Value Chain analysis is used as a cost management analysis tool for making strategic decisions in facing competition. The primary activity that provides the most superior value to UM Manado is the operational and service aspect, while the secondary activity that provides the most value is the quality aspect of human resource management (HRM). Good internal collaboration network (BPH, Rectorate Leadership, PP Muhammadiyah Research and Development Board of Higher Education) Low cost strategy starting from budget planning, use and accountable reporting, providing optimal contribution to competitive advantage.

Keyword : *competitive advantage, Low cost, UM Manado*

1. INTRODUCTION

Higher education in Indonesia is faced with increasingly complex competition, both private universities (PTS) and state universities (PTN), only universities that have competitive advantages will be increasingly sought after by the public, they can create value, loyalty for their stakeholders, a stigma of satisfaction or customer loyalty The competitive advantage of higher education institutions needs to be improved. One of the general weaknesses of our higher education institutions in terms of competition is that the quality of education in Indonesia is still low compared to other countries (Muhardi 2004). Educational institutions need to realize quality education, there needs to be comprehensive and professional management of\ existing resources in higher education.

One of the resources that needs to be managed well in higher education is financial matters. In this context, finance is a source of funds that universities really need to carry out daily operational activities. A university must be able to guarantee the availability of funds to support the implementation of the tri dharma and improve the quality of the university on an ongoing basis. Efforts made by universities in raising funds must refer to the vision, mission, and character of universities as legal entity institutions which are not oriented solely towards profit/profit. However, they must be managed effectively and efficiently so that the institution grows and develops well, with still refers to the understanding that higher education is a form of noble industry which must be managed as well as possible without straying from its main objective, namely to create intelligence and national personality of noble value.

Competitive advantage is the search for a profitable competitive position in an industry, as an arena for competition." He further stated that competitive advantage aims to determine a profitable and sustainable position against the forces that determine industrial competition. (Sudarsono, 2016), competitive strategy is the search for a profitable competitive position in an industry, the fundamental arena where competition occurs. Porter further said that a company or organization in competition will be determined by five competitive forces, namely: (1) Threat of competitors entering new; These newly established universities can actually be a threat to existing or existing universities (2) Threat from substitute products; the current generation's orientation prioritizes work over school, the proliferation of various education and training programs in the

workplace (on-the-job training) (3) Bargaining power of buyers; Universities are required to have a bargaining power (bargaining position) that is higher or at least balanced, not the other way around the world of work has a stronger bargaining position so that as is the case with most university output, where the graduates are not able to be fully absorbed by the market. (4) Bargaining power of suppliers; universities must be able to adapt themselves to the socio-economic capabilities of society, creating an intelligent generation (5) Competition between existing competitors, meaning that universities that lack excellence will be threatened, on the other hand, universities that are managed in a professional manner will be stronger and more established as a quality higher education institution. Shank and Govindarajan, in Porter 2001, define Value Chain Analysis, as a tool for understanding the value chain that forms a product. This value chain originates from the activities carried out, from raw materials to consumers, including after-sales service.

The Muhammadiyah Higher Education (PTM) planning and budgeting system is used in the context of formulating long-term, medium-term, short-term strategic planning, programs, activities and financial planning for one year. The PTM planning system design uses a strategic planning system followed by a performance-based budgeting system. The strategic planning system is a long-term planning system which is broken down into medium-term and short-term planning. A performance-based budget system is a budgeting system that not only focuses on how to allocate resources (input), but also focuses on achieving performance targets, both output and outcome. The performance budget is a budget whose performance can be assessed, both in the process of preparation, implementation and accountability by each line of function of the higher education organization.

2. METHODS

Competitive advantage is the search for a profitable competitive position in an industry, as an arena for competition". Which aims to determine a profitable and sustainable position (profitable and sustainable position) of Higher Education in industrial competition, where the core of Excellence according to Porter is Cost advantage, Differentiation advantage, the forming factors are Program quality, Differentiation of educational programs (program uniqueness), Cost or price, This research is a type of qualitative descriptive research using a case study research method. Data collection was carried out by researchers from informants at the University of Muhammadiyah Manado, with the main source of research data obtained through in-depth interviews, observations, documentation and document studies. The process of strategic management of the University of Muhammadiyah Manado in facing competition with private universities, Identifying strategies and implementation in building competitive advantages of the University of Muhammadiyah Manado

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Logistics Center and the essence of its actions

Cost leadership strategy is a competitive strategy that emphasizes lower costs compared to competitors, which is ultimately reflected in lower selling prices. In this case, universities that implement this strategy must make maximum efforts to reduce production costs and the cost of production so that they are lower than competitors but without significantly sacrificing quality. A cost leadership strategy is one in which a company strives to be the lowest cost producer compared to its industry competitors. The company's strategy for achieving different competitive advantages It depends on the company. Cost leadership A company's strategy to minimize costs and therefore lowered costs are not the same as the costs incurred when using, Cost leadership strategies can encourage increased profits, because companies can reduce costs. Competitive prices and company profits can be increased. As a result, the company's performance continues to improve. Implementing a cost leadership strategy is a combination of financial leverage, business strategy and dividend payments have a positive impact on company results (N. Liu and G. Zhou). Besides that, it can improve company performance. Strict cost control allows the business to lead the market. Efforts must be made to minimize costs in all aspects of work. There will be more emphasis on efficiency to further produce mass products (Detak Prapanca, et al, 2023). Cost Leadership Strategy can make companies gain greater profits because companies can reduce production costs so that prices can be competitive and company profits can increase. (Khusna, 2022). Low cost strategy (the cost of leadership) Jatmiko, 2014

- 1) A low cost strategy based on certain qualities implements a low cost strategy, through increasing efficiency and exploiting external situations. There are 3 benefit values generated:
 - a. Benefit parity, where a company produces products that produce the same benefits or quality, but at lower costs, because the company achieves economies of scale.
 - b. Benefit proximity, where the company produces slightly lower benefits/quality, but at lower costs, because it uses automation or cheaper labor, and cheaper raw materials.

- c. Produce products that are of different or lower quality compared to competitors' products but at lower costs.
- 2) Low cost strategy (the cost of leadership), namely a series of integrative actions to produce and offer goods or services at the lowest cost to competitors with characteristics that are acceptable to customers. If a company offers a product or service with standard quality, but costs are much lower than industry costs, then the organization will be said to be superior in costs and/or price. Companies that have an overall cost advantage can exploit this advantage to set low prices or take higher profit margins. Companies that are able to make products at lower costs and sell them at prices that can provide greater profits than competitors, then the company is in a better position, namely:
- a. Enables companies to survive in price war competitive situations and prevents competitors with higher costs from carrying out price wars (to survive price wars, attack from a price angle, enjoy high profits).
 - b. Higher profits can be invested to improve quality and efficiency.
 - c. The possibility of generating economies of scale, but many companies do not take advantage of it (due to limited capital, information, etc.).
 - d. The increase in raw materials from suppliers can be dampened by cost advantages.
- 3) The low cost strategy is an economy of scale, namely the aim of achieving a minimum measure of efficiency between the input-output relationship and high quality products.

Muhammadiyah Higher Education Financial Management Objectives.

The Muhammadiyah Higher Education Performance Budget is prepared based on activities and is budgetary in nature. A budgetary budget (as opposed to non-budgetary) is a budget that is planned and written or recorded. The budget prepared must have three main uses: 1). As a work guide. The budget functions as a work guide and provides direction and targets that must be achieved by PTM activities in the future. 2). As a work coordination tool. The budgets of all sections contained in the PTM enable the sections to support each other and work together well towards the goals or objectives set by the PTM in the Statutes and Strategic Plan. 3). As a means of supervision or control. The budget functions as a benchmark (comparison tool) to assess and evaluate the realization of PTM activities in the future.

Preparation of Muhammadiyah Higher Education (PTM) Budget Planning Documents

The preparation of the PTM performance budget is carried out using a working meeting (raker) mechanism by combining bottom up and top down mechanisms. Bottom up refers to the preparation of activities proposed by the work unit, while Top down refers to the basis for preparing activities which must be in line with the PTM Strategic Plan and based on the income structure/funding allocation determined by PTM. Before the performance budget preparation process, PTM conducts a self-evaluation first. Self-evaluation is an effort by the study program/university to find out an overview of the performance and condition of PTM through studies and analyzes carried out by the study program/university itself regarding strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, challenges, obstacles, and even threats. This study and analysis can be carried out by utilizing peer experts from outside the study program/university, so that self-evaluation can be carried out objectively. The results of self-evaluation, apart from being used to prepare performance plans and budgets, can also be used to update study program/university databases in the form of comprehensive profiles, strategies for developing and improving study programs/universities on an ongoing basis, assuring the internal quality of study programs/universities high level, and to prepare for external evaluation or accreditation.

Self-evaluation is carried out by assessing, reviewing and analyzing the entire study program/PTM system, which includes input, process, output, outcome and impact based on data, information and evidence. other evidence relating to systemic components of the entire implementation of study programs/universities. The self-evaluation report is a description, analysis and reflection regarding the condition, performance and educational equipment of a study program/university, as a result of in-depth and internal studies and assessments. After carrying out the self-evaluation, a self-evaluation report is prepared which is used as a basis for determining the General Direction and Policy (AKU) of the PTM leadership. General Direction and Policy (AKU) of PTM leadership is the direction and policy of higher education institutions in one fiscal year as general guidelines and provisions agreed to guide the preparation of the Annual Performance Plan (RKT) and Annual Activity Plan and Budget (RKAT) for the coming year/year plan. The leadership AKU is approved by the PTM Daily Advisory Board (BPH). As a basis for formulating strategies and priorities for performance and budgeting that will be implemented in the coming year period, AKU is basically

part of efforts to achieve the vision, general mission and special missions, goals, targets, policies, programs and strategic activities that have been set out in the Plan PTM Strategic. The PTM leadership AKU contains priority policies and programs to be implemented in the planned budget year which are prepared by taking into account: Recommendations on the results of performance evaluations/self-evaluations, namely in implementing the previous year's policies and programs: 1). Projected performance achievements for the planned budget year; 2). Performance indicators and targets that have been set in the PTM Strategic Plan/Operational Plan (Renop) for the planned fiscal year period, 3). The operational needs for organizing Catur Dharma Muhammadiyah Higher Education and the quality of service are expected to increase: 4). After the Self-Evaluation stage and Leadership General Policy Direction

The following is an interview from the Chair of the UM Manado Daily Advisory Board, Prof. Punari Salim. PhD. "Muhammadiyah Central Leadership Regulation number 01/PRN/I.0/B of 2012 concerning the Higher Education Council Article 7 concerning the Daily Advisory Board where the Daily Advisory Board is formed by and is responsible to the Muhammadiyah Central Leadership whose function is to represent the Muhammadiyah Central Leadership to carry out the following tasks: a) provide direction and considerations to the PTM leadership in managing PTM, b) together with the PTM leadership prepare the Annual Revenue and Expenditure Budget Plan; c) together with the PTM leadership and the Senate to prepare the RIP and Statutes; d) make a report to the Muhammadiyah Central Leadership.

Further questions regarding Financial Governance. The UM Manado Planning and Budget Preparation Process has 7 stages in planning and budget preparation, including:

- 1) Annual Working Meeting at Rectorate Level
- 2) Annual Work Meeting at Work Unit Level, Head of Bureau, Dean, Head of Study Program, Sub-division down to the bottom
- 3) Merger of Prospective Work Unit RAPB Plans by the Head of BK of the Work Unit below
- 4) Verification of UM Manado RAPB Candidates by the Budget Committee.
- 5) Determination of PTM RAPB by BPM (Quality Assurance Agency)
- 6) Determination of the UM Manado Revenue and Expenditure Budget by the Chancellor with the consideration of the PTM Senate.
- 7) Submission of the PTM Revenue and Expenditure Budget to the PP Muhammadiyah Diktilitbang Council.

The following is an interview from the Chancellor of the Muhammadiyah University of Manado. Agus A. Laiyah. SKM. M.Kes as follows: "UM Manado Planning and Budgeting Procedures The planning and budget preparation stages are as follows:

- a. The Annual Work Meeting (RKT) outlines the strategic plan for the next year based on self-evaluation and AKU leadership. The RKT also determines assumptions about the amount of UM Manado revenue allocated to budget users using a certain formula determined by the leadership of UM Manado.
- b. The results of the RKT are in the form of general policy directions (AKU) which refer to the annual theme of UM Manado. General policy directions are classified based on strategic functions as material for making Prospective Budget Plans (CRA) at the work unit level at the Working Unit Level Meeting and Prospective Budget Plans at the rectorate/PTM leadership level at the UM Manado Rectorate Level Meeting.
- c. The Prospective Budget Plan is prepared using a budget preparation form which is determined based on the priority scale by each user of the Prospective Budget Plan.
- d. Candidate Budget Plans resulting from User RKT at the UM Manado rectorate/leadership level and work unit level are then combined into a Candidate Budget Plan for Revenue and Expenditure.
- e. CRAPB UM Manado was discussed jointly by the strategic function (rectorate/leadership level of UM Manado and work unit level) and the Quality Control Board (BKM) at the Budget Committee forum.
- f. CRAPB UM Manado which has received recommendations from the Budget Committee is proposed to become the UM Manado Revenue and Expenditure Budget Plan (RAPB).
- g. The proposed UM Manado RAPB above will be determined as the UM Manado Revenue and Expenditure Budget Plan (RAPB) by the PTM Leadership together with BPH with consideration by the Senate.
- h. The UM Manado RAPB and the previous year's Budget Realization Report were sent to the PP Muhammadiyah Diktilitbang Council to be ratified as the PTM APB.

The flow chart of the PTM planning and budget preparation process is as follows:

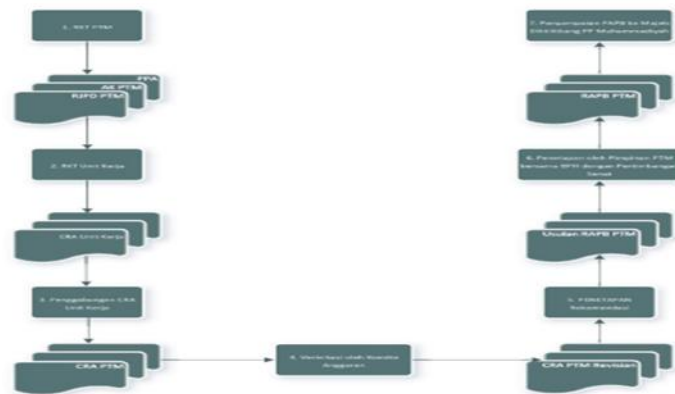


Figure 1. The flow chart of the PTM planning and budget preparation process
Source: processed by researchers

The following is an interview from the Vice Chancellor of the Muhammadiyah University of Manado. Dr Rifai Polii as follows: "UM Manado's budgeting goes through 7 stages and the products produced are also clear. The planning and budget preparation stages include the following, similar thing, Interview from the Chancellor of the Muhammadiyah University of Manado. Agus A. Laiyah. SKM. M.Kes as follows: Private universities are usually managed by foundations. Since the enactment of Law no. 16 of 2001 as amended by Law no. 28 of 2004 concerning Foundations, makes the existence of foundations in Indonesia as legal entities even stronger. The law confirms that a foundation is a legal entity that has aims and objectives of a social, religious and humanitarian nature. Muhammadiyah, especially UM Manado, has its own rules in this regard, especially since financial management is regulated by the Litbang Dikti Council, namely the Muhammadiyah Higher Education financial management system.

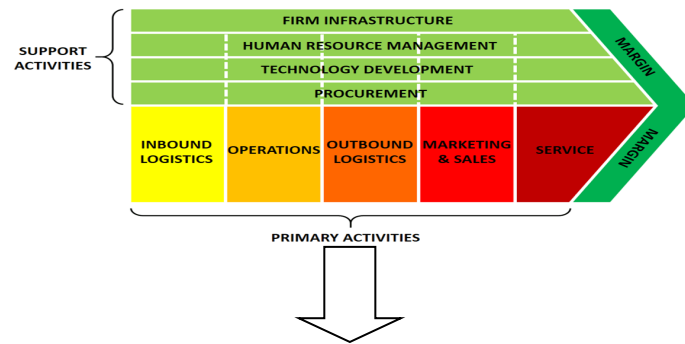
Discussion Analysis

Basically there are three main aspects of competitive advantage, namely: (1) cost advantage, (2) differentiation advantage, and (3) marketing advantage. The business paradigm from Comparative Advantage to Competitive Advantage, which forces business/company activities to choose the right strategy. The strategy in question is where the company is in a strategic position and can adapt to an ever-changing environment. that, higher education is a form of noble industry which must be managed as well as possible without straying from its main objective, namely to create national intelligence of noble value.

Universities that run value chains consider competitive advantage, namely where the company can provide the best value to key customers at the lowest possible cost, not cheap according to the proportions, which is a strategic analysis because the nature of the Value Chain depends on the nature of the industry and varies for companies. services and organizations, especially universities that are not profit-oriented. With changes in the business environment, the role of cost management has also changed. The introduction of information technology and technology requires companies to develop strategic information systems to effectively maintain competitive advantage. information directed at the company's strategic goals. Focusing reports on operational matters alone is not enough. "The critical Success Factors" (CSFs) that exist in companies vary and many are long-term, efforts to maintain competitive advantage require long-term plans. SWOT analysis and value chain analysis are used to identify the strategic position of universities. Short-term success is no longer the main measure of success, because long-term success requires strategic long-term plans and actions. (Agus Widarsono; 2017), a strategic approach requires integrative thinking, namely the ability to identify and solve problems from a cross-functional perspective, and the aim of value-chain analysis is to identify the value chain stages where the company can increase value for customers or to lower costs. Reducing costs or increasing value added can make a company more competitive. Because universities base their considerations on the competitive advantages that exist in each company, namely where the company can provide the best value to main customers at the lowest possible cost.

Critical Success Factors

Competitive Advantages of Muhammadiyah University Manado



Aktivitas	Variable (Value Creation Potential)	Critical Success Factors (Conversion Potential value creation)
Primer	Inbound logistics	Input/Acceptance of quality students
	Operational	Teaching and learning process/activities academic program
	Outbound Logistics	Networking and collaboration with agencies Government / private / company
	Marketing	Promotion and involvement in local, regional, national and international events through academic/non-academic achievements
	Service	Supporting services and facilities academic / non-academic activities
Sekunder	Company Infrastructure	Infrastructure/software (general management, organizational planning, and finance)
	HRM	Quality of bureaucrats, lecturers and employees
	Technology	Application of technology and information
	Purchase	Procurement of facilities and infrastructure to support academic programs

Figure 2. Critical Success Factors Competitive Advantages of Muhammadiyah University Manado

Value Chain Analysis for Competitive Advantage

The value chain concept provides a perspective on the company's position in the value chain of products offered to customers. Where the value chain helps universities to understand the value chain that forms the product. Value starts from planning to handling the product after it is sold to consumers. This is intended to be able to recognize its position in the value chain that forms the service product. This is very important to identify opportunities from competition. If the program provides value, it will continue to be used and improved to maximize value. On the other hand, if the activity does not provide added value then it must be deleted.

The cost advantage aspect is characterized by universities that focus more on cost efficiency factors. With this strategy, a university will emphasize the efficiency of managing education costs for a broad range of competition or market targets, of course while also paying attention to the importance of education quality. What are the factors that support Manado Muhammadiyah University to be able to compete with other private universities? HR, Accreditation, has its own campus. There is still quite a lot of campus development that can be done both in terms of infrastructure and in terms of human resources. What are the factors that support UM Manado University to be able to compete with other private universities? The Chancellor answered, "When we at the College of Health Sciences wanted to change to a university, we developed and added study programs by adding human resources, lecturers and educational staff, institutional accreditation was improved, and the campus

also had its own. The campus development is still quite large with an area of 9 ha, therefore there needs to be governance and funding sources. Relating to 1) Determining costs by looking at internal conditions, namely a number of activities, both academic and non-academic, which are taken into consideration in relation to the need for costs. 2) Then external factors themselves consider the purchasing power of prospective students. The third is competitors, of course competitors with the same quality and lower costs, meaning that the campus sets proportions that are in accordance with people's purchasing power. So the public can assess that education costs are affordable based on the quality of academic and non-academic achievements. This means that Cost leadership (low cost) is a strategy of the University of Muhammadiyah Manado which aims to have lower prices than competitors without reducing profits.

Value chain analysis supports strategic competitive advantage in higher education by helping find opportunities to add value to customers by reducing product or service costs. Furthermore, value chain analysis can be used to determine which points in the value chain can reduce costs or provide added value. UM Manado's competition is becoming increasingly fierce with competitors. Businesses that will be built or developed must have a competitive advantage in order to dominate business competition. A business that is built so that it can continue to exist and can expand its customers becomes a company orientation in addition to being profit oriented.

4. CONCLUSION

Value Chain Analysis, namely an activity of analyzing business processes related to other entities outside the campus institution, suppliers, customers, and relationships between entities in the business cycle that generate profits. UM Manado in implementing strategy can be implemented by looking at it from a management perspective. The transfer process transfers responsibility from the company strategy makers to the hands of divisional or functional managers. Differences in perspective and thinking will become complicated when managers are at the functional level. Therefore, it is hoped that functional level leaders will also be involved in strategy formulation. Value chain analysis is an analytical tool that is useful for understanding the position of change in a chain that forms the value of a product, where value chain analysis must be viewed on a broad scale. The formation of the value of a product starts from the planning process to the sale of a product with after-sales service handling. Value Chain Analysis is an analysis of activities that produce value, both from within and outside higher education. Value chain concept This is very important to identify opportunities from competition. After seeing the identification of the position, the university recognizes the activities that form these values. These activities are reviewed to identify whether they provide value to the product or not. If the activity provides value, it will continue to be used and improved to maximize value. On the other hand, if the activity does not provide added value then it must be deleted.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Universities must be able to understand their position in the value chain, then determine their competitive strategy: Low Cost or Differentiation to compete with their competitors with strategic cost management, the goal of the campus is not only to be the cheapest, but also to become a superior university by focusing on differentiation. Institutions must exploit relationships with suppliers and distributors, in this case for UM Manado from the 16 Higher Education Services Institute and the Muhammadiyah Central Leadership Research and Higher Education Council to maximize the value of its products. Then, from that, UM Manado should create a sense of trust from Customer Linkages and Stakeholders so that good relationships can be created, which ultimately increases the competitiveness of the products offered. The value chain concept provides a perspective on the company's location in the industrial value chain.

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