Performance Management in Improving Competitive Advantage at School

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Abstract

The problem of performance management in Islamic educational institutions is still often carried out for only periodic formal assessments for promotion/position. The fantastic number of Muhammadiyah educational institutions, in fact, does not necessarily show their competitive advantage as a whole. Research at SD Muhammadiyah (PK) Pracimantoro and SD Muhammadiyah Inovatif Baturetno, aims to obtain a description based on field facts about planning, implementing, and evaluating performance management in achieving competitive advantage. This field research uses a qualitative approach by emphasizing the analysis of descriptive data in the form of written and spoken words and pictures. The data in this study were collected through interviews and documentation methods. Data analysis was carried out using the inductive method through several steps, namely: data collection accompanied by data reduction, presenting data in the form of narratives and descriptions, then drawing conclusions. The results of this study are performance management in achieving competitive advantage at SD Muhammadiyah PK Pracimantoro and SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno, carried out in three stages. First, planning includes: goal setting, recruitment of teachers and education personnel, performance agreements. Second, implementation. At the implementation stage of performance management contains several activities, namely: coaching discipline, motivation, competency development, and awards. Third, performance evaluation taken by two approaches, namely formal and informal. This process is carried out in order to realize school excellence that focuses on educational aspects, including: (1) Location; (2) Value excellence, which includes: curriculum, educational services, teaching staff, infrastructure, educational programs, and graduate achievements.

Keywords: Performance Management, Competitive Advantage
Introduction

Muhammadiyah has been concerned in organizing education since its inception, highly upholding the excellence of education. The spirit of excellence continues to be formed until now in the paradigm of advanced education that is based on religion and social life. This is shown by the growth and development of Muhammadiyah educational institutions from kindergarten to higher education levels in the country.

In fact, the fantastic number of Muhammadiyah educational institutions does not necessarily show their competitive advantage as a whole. Mohammad Ali and Istanto. According to both of them, Muhammadiyah which is known to have a relatively large number of educational institutions, there are still some who appear modest and as long as they can walk. Simple building, lack of cleanliness, most of the teachers are DPK, learning is one-way and not challenging. This picture is also seen in Muhammadiyah schools in the outskirts of Wonogiri district (read: rural environment). Many Muhammadiyah schools are managed from the road, so they often get the label of discarded schools, cannot compete with state schools, and are underestimated by the community. Muhammadiyah educational institutions are expected to be able to get out of this situation by building competitive advantage that can be achieved through proper performance management, in line with opportunities and the surrounding environment.

Facts show that parents are competing to send their children to schools that have good performance in achieving educational output. Schools with good performance ratings are often perceived as favorite schools, pilot schools, and model schools. This is reasonable considering that schools that can optimize their performance management will have a competitive advantage compared to other schools. Competitive advantage is a religious message (Islam) to compete in goodness (fastabiqul khoirat) because humans with the excellence of goodness are able to achieve high degrees. This is as mandated by Allah SWT in Al-Qur'an surah Al Ahqaf: 19:

\[\text{And everyone gets a level according to what they have done and so that Allah will suffice for their deeds and they will not be harmed.}\]

Building a competitive advantage for Muhammadiyah educational institutions through the application of proper performance management is absolutely a necessity. Managers of Muhammadiyah educational institutions cannot avoid the sacred call of the association, namely the call to make Muhammadiyah schools appear to be quality, superior, and popular schools. The call is manifested in the form of willingness to devote energy, thoughts, hard work, smart work, and sincerity from all components of educational institutions.

The problem of performance management as revealed by Ahmad Zarkasyi through his research entitled "Performance Management in Tafsir Al-Qur'ān and Hadith

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Thematic Philosophical Approaches" discusses briefly and simply about performance management in the Qur’an. The idea is contextualized to sharpen the concept of performance management in educational institutions, because there are still many Islamic educational institutions that carry out performance management only in terms of performance appraisal for promotion of rank and compensation. Several values from the Qur'an describe several concepts of performance management. Broadly speaking, the performance management perspective of the Qur’an informs three concepts of performance management, namely cooperation, professionalism, and commitment. The three are described as follows:

**Cooperation**

The concept of performance management in the form of cooperation is explicitly stated by Allah in Qs. As-Shaff:4

"Indeed, Allah loves those who fight in His cause in an orderly line, as if they were like a solid structure." 

Ali al-Shabuniy argues that the word "shaff" there means to order entry into a line or organization so that there is order in achieving goals. In order for the goals of Islamic education to be realized, individuals need to come together as a unit in educational organizations/institutions. The principle of cooperation is also stated by Allah in Qs. Al-Maidah: 2:

"...help you in (doing) virtue and piety, and do not help in committing sins and transgressions. And fear Allah, verily Allah is severe in punishment."

The word of "help you" has the meaning that Allah Almighty commands all His servants to always help each other in doing the good things that are included in the provisions of Al-Birr. Imam As-Sa'di explained that the meaning of Al-Birr is an order to cooperate in all forms of actions that are blessed and loved by Allah, both external and internal actions, actions related to Allah's rights and human rights. In the context of educational institutions, cooperation is an important part so that every part of the institution can work properly and work hand in hand to help each other. Good cooperation will prevent the institution from squabbling.

**Professionalism**

The professionalism of the staff (educators and education personnel) is very

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7 Al Hufaz: Al Quran Terjemahan & Tajwid Warna, (Bandung: Cordoba, 2016), p.551
9 Al Hufaz: Al Quran Terjemahan & Tajwid Warna, (Bandung: Cordoba, 2016), p. 106
10Quraish Shihab, Membumikan Al Qurâ’ân: Kebenaran Ilmiah Al Qurâ’n (Bandung: Mizan, 1994),p. 14
Influential on the advantages that will be obtained by the institution. Professionalism requires someone to perform as well as possible (precise, directed, and complete) based on the qualifications of his field of competence. This is confirmed in the hadith of the Prophet Muhammad, "Indeed, Allah loves people who when doing work are done properly, quickly, and directed. Work professionalism will have a major impact on the individuals and institutions concerned. God says in Al-Qur’ān letter Al-Ahqāf verse 19:

“... Work you, then Allah will see your work, as well as His Messenger and the believers, and you will be returned to Allah Who Knows the unseen and the real, then He will inform you of what you have done”

The verse above provides information that every work will be witnessed and rewarded by Allah SWT. This includes the understanding that divine awareness must be involved in the work. When someone works has an afterlife orientation from the work he does, it means they work not just for the sake of salary and wages. As Allah says in Qs. Al Ahzāb: 31

"And whoever among you is sincere to Allah and His Messenger, and does righteous deeds, We will surely give him a double reward and We provide him with noble sustenance."

They work with a commitment to religious values, carry out work recommendations according to Allah and His Messenger, which are serious and always improve themselves in muamalah. Further realization of the commitment to religious

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11 Imam Nawawi, Terjemah Riyadussalihin Jilid 1 (Jakarta: Pustaka Amani, 1990), p. 133
12 Al Hufaz: Al Quran Terjemahan & Tajwid Warna, (Bandung: Cordoba, 2016), p. 504
13 Ibid, p. 203
14 Ibid, p. 418
values within the scope of Islamic educational institutions is to develop ethics that are closely related to work problems so that it becomes a work tradition based on religious principles. These ethics include honesty, trustworthiness, pay compatibility, not cheating, depriving and arbitrarily. These attitudes are the fruit of faith and fear of Allah against His threats and punishment when working not in line with Islamic teachings. Based on this explanation, competitive advantage is not to kill other educational institutions as colony troops destroy their enemies, or business people use competitive strategies in conquering business rivals for the company's profit. Furthermore, the competitive advantage of educational institutions aims to make educational institutions able to provide meaningful education for the future of their students so that they are able to live in their time, unravel the problems of their lives, and share benefits for life\textsuperscript{15}.

Relevant research related to performance management in achieving competitive advantage in educational institutions is as follows. Hasan Baharun in his research entitled "Performance Management in Improving Competitive Advantage in Islamic Educational Institutions" provides a theoretical description that performance management in increasing the competitive advantage of Islamic educational institutions implies the stages that must be carried out by institutions, namely planning, coaching, and performance evaluation\textsuperscript{16}.

Then, Gillian Forrester wrote in his research entitled "Performance Management in Education: Milestone or millstone?", that performance management will be able to increase accountability, transparency, work ethic, and excellence in the educational sector\textsuperscript{17}. Jyoti and Farhat Mohsin highlight that performance management is a complex, continuous and realistic management process. Where the achievement of individual performance affects the performance of the institution\textsuperscript{18}. Michael Armstrong states, “Performance management as a flexible and evolutionary process that is, involves managers and the people they manage acting as partners, but within a framework and determining how best to work together. Most subordinates want direction, the freedom to get their job done, and with encouragement not control. This process is realized in the performance management cycle, namely planning, implementation, and evaluation\textsuperscript{19}.

School excellence is realized through a differentiation strategy. Philip Kotler explained that differentiation is the ability of a company to effectively differentiate itself from its competitors by presenting more value to customers\textsuperscript{20}. In the context of education, differentiation means creating "strengths and differentiating values" that other schools do not have. Educational institutions can achieve excellence by differentiating themselves in several aspects, namely:: (1) Location; (2) Value excellence, which includes: curriculum, educational services, teaching staff,

\textsuperscript{15} E. Mulyasa, Menjadi Kepala Sekolah Profesional (Bandung: Remaja Rosdakerya, 2004), p. 141.
\textsuperscript{17} Gillian Forrester, Performance Management in Education: Milestone or Millstone?, dalam Journal Management and Education, Liverpool John University, Vol. 25, No. I (2020), p.6
infrastructure, educational programs, and graduate achievements\textsuperscript{21}.

In the initial observation, it was found that the Pracimantoro Special Program Muhammadiyah Elementary School and Baturetno Innovative Muhammadiyah Elementary School had a brand image as well as a competitive advantage that can attract parents and society. This is in line with Amalia Yuli Astuti’s research on community preferences for Muhammadiyah schools, parents feel that character education, activities that foster self-confidence and responsibility, are attributes that if present are satisfying and if not present will give dissatisfaction\textsuperscript{22}.

Departing from the description of the problem as well as the reality of performance management above, the title of the study in this paper is “Performance Management in Improving Competitive Advantage of Schools. The purpose of this study is to describe the stages of performance management of the two schools in the form of planning, implementation, evaluation in achieving competitive advantage for schools.

**Research Method**

This study uses a qualitative research paradigm based on field research using a qualitative approach, namely research that prioritizes data research based on correspondence disclosure in the form of words, pictures, and not numbers. A qualitative approach is used to obtain data in the form of written or verbal words from people and observed behavior, in this case it will reveal real conditions about how performance management is in an effort to achieve competitive advantage in Muhammadiyah Pracimantoro Elementary Schools (PK) and Elementary Schools. Innovative Muhammadiyah Baturetno. The process of data acquisition is done by interview and documentation.

Furthermore, the data is validated by using the credibility test (trust) and confirmability (certainty). Data analysis in this study used a qualitative descriptive analysis technique with an inductive method to describe the facts and events of school performance management at the Muhammadiyah Pracimantoro Elementary School (PK) and the Baturetno Innovative Muhammadiyah Elementary School.

The inductive method is one step in thinking from facts and events that are special and then generalized. The application of this method in this research is to carry out the following steps: a) Data collection is accompanied by data reduction. When the data has been collected, then data reduction is carried out, namely classifying, directing, and discarding data that are not congruent with the research theme; b) Presentation of data, namely the results of data reduction and then presented in the form of narration and description. As for the presentation of the data in this study, the authors will present data in the form of narrative texts to describe school performance management in achieving competitive advantage in the Muhammadiyah Pracimantoro Elementary School (PK) and the Baturetno Innovative Muhammadiyah Elementary School.

**Findings And Discussion**

**Realizing Competitive Advantage Wonogiri Muhammadiyah School Through Performance Management**

\textsuperscript{21} Ibid, 18.

Performance management is a systematic process to improve organizational performance by developing individual and team competencies based on an agreed framework (standards, planned objectives, and competency requirements). Performance management activities are carried out in the planning, implementation, and evaluation stages.

Competitive advantage is at the heart of the company's performance in a competitive market, namely the ability of the company's resources and characteristics to have higher performance than other companies in the same industry in one market\textsuperscript{23}. Philip Kotler referred to as differentiation, namely the company's ability to effectively differentiate itself from its competitors by presenting more value to customers. In other words, schools that have "advantages and differentiating values" that other schools do not have, then consumers (the community) are much more interested in that school. For example, advantages in facilities, services, staff and teachers, varied extracurricular activities can be a differentiator from other schools\textsuperscript{24}.

Thus, in achieving competitive advantage SD Muhammadiyah (PK) Pracimantoro and SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno use the performance management cycle (planning, implementation, and evaluation) as a way of working in shaping institutional differentiation. The two schools display different values in several aspects of education, namely: (1) Location; (2) Value excellence, which includes: curriculum, educational services, teaching staff, infrastructure, educational programs, and graduate achievements\textsuperscript{25}.

**Competitive Advantage of SD Muhammadiyah (PK) Pracimantoro and SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno**

**Location**

The location of SD Muhammadiyah (PK) Pracimantoro is in the center of the busy Pracimantoro sub-district and has affordable access, where ±300 meters east of the school is the Pracimantoro market. Then, ± 600 meters north of the school there is the Pracimantoro District Office. Across the street, in front of the school stands the Pracimantoro Religious Affairs Office (KUA). Thus, access to SD Muhammadiyah PK Pracimantoro is not only clear, but also has the closest access to aspects of other vital objects. In the context of location, SD Muhammadiyah PK Pracimantoro has obtained its advantages, namely easy location accessibility and accessibility to other vital objects.

Historically, SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno SD Muhammadiyah Inovatif Baturetno was founded in 2009 with the background of the concern of Muhammadiyah Youth on the condition of Muhammadiyah education, where TK Aisyiyah, numbering 13 units, had difficulty distributing the results of its graduates to further education levels. Meanwhile, the existence of SD Muhammadiyah is spread in the inner village area which is far from the center of the crowd\textsuperscript{26}.


\textsuperscript{26}Interview with Ustadzah Eni Rochayatin, S.Pd. (Head of SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno), on Tuesday, June 8, 2021, at 08.00 WIB.
SD Muhammadiyah Inovatif Baturetno also has the advantage of an easily accessible location. Muhammadiyah Innovative Elementary School, Baturetno, is located at Jl. Tirta Kencana, Patuk Lor, Baturetno District, Kab. Wonogiri, Central Java. The school stands on an area of 2200m². This school is also close to the center of the crowd. The southern part of this school, ± 800 meters stands Baturetno Market. To the east (±300) stands TokoMU (a store owned by Muhammadiyah). Then, the western and northern parts of the school are a landscape of rice fields and residential areas.

Curriculum
Curriculum planning at SD Muhammadiyah PK Pracimantoro is to combine the National Curriculum, Islamic Curriculum, and Muhammadiyahism. The National Curriculum (K13) is intended so that students have an understanding and mastery of the general sciences. Al Islam and Muhammadiyah curriculum, is intended to strengthen character and deep understanding of Islamic teachings. The implementation of the curriculum in the learning process at this school more often applies the Contextual Teaching Learning (CTL) approach. Learners as much as possible are directed to be active in learning, namely with a lot of practice in exploring the material. So, students not only understand science theoretically, but also apply it in life.

Furthermore, the curriculum at Muhammadiyah Innovative Elementary School in Baturetno also implements an integrated curriculum. This school runs the national curriculum (K13) and the ISMUBA curriculum (Al Islam, Kemuhammadiyahan, and Arabic). Curriculum planning is done by ensuring that the curriculum used can accommodate the school's vision and mission.

Evaluation of the curriculum of SD Muhammadiyah PK Pracimantoro and SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno was carried out at the beginning of the school year. The focal point of the evaluation is to review the results/outputs of implementing the curriculum through school programs. Evaluation is carried out by reporting from the teacher in charge of the program, whether during the year there were obstacles in the implementation or not. Reporting on program achievements, how many students have memorized chapter 30, how many students have won championships (eg national science competitions) and so on. If the program has no problems, it will be continued in the following year.

Education Service
Educational services will be considered good and attract interest, if they meet the following five aspects that determine service quality: (1). Reliability, namely educational institutions in providing promised services in a timely, accurate and satisfactory manner; (2). Responsiveness, namely educational institutions are able to assist service users (students, stakeholders, and the community) in responding to their requests quickly. In other words, principals, teachers/employees must be easy to find and friendly. If there is a complaint, it is responded to quickly and professionally. (3) Assurance, that is, the entire board of teachers really has competence in their fields, attitudes and behavior. Thus, the school is able to

27Ibid, 90
28Philip Kotler, Manajemen Pemasaran..., p. 83
guarantee student success in academic and non-academic. (4). *Empathy*, that is, all levels of management of educational institutions have concern for students, parents, and the community. Empathy is manifested by easy communication and relationships in understanding the needs of students, parents, and the community. For example, the homeroom teacher knows the names of his students well, the BP teacher really acts as a counselor; (5). *Tangible evidence*, which is closely related to the ability of educational institutions to appear with standard facilities/equipment. For example, a good building, adequate library, comfortable classrooms, laboratories, and so on.

Service is an aspect that cannot be underestimated, because the services of managing an educational institution will provide convenience for its customers (people, students, and the community). SD Muhammadiyah (PK) Pracimantoro strives for tangible education services, namely schools that appear with educational facilities services according to standards. The services provided hold a commitment to teacher professionalism and discipline.

To accommodate the above commitments, this school offers educational services that are packaged in educational programs, including: *Tahfid Al-Qur’an Class Program*; which is to lead students to memorize at least juz 30 after graduating from school. *Excellent Class Program*; class intended for children who have talent/prominence in the fields of science, and mathematics. Where these children will continue to be guided, and if there is an event/competition they are prioritized to participate. *Parenting Program*; which is a cooperative partnership movement between parents and schools, where there are joint efforts to create the best approaches in children's education. One form of realization of this program is a parenting workshop facilitated by the school by inviting resource persons with experience in parenting.

Innovative Muhammadiyah Elementary School appears with educational services through the reliability of school stakeholders, one of which is by showing a high discipline culture. Furthermore, educational services are realized through school programs, namely: (1). SIBA Program (Intensive Study of Al-Quran Reading); (2). Extra Hizbul Wathan; (3). Tapak Suci Extracurricular; (4). Extra Hizbul Drumband; (5). Program of Tahfid Al-Qur’an; (6). Football.

Then, SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno also provides accommodation and financing-based services. The services are in the form of shuttle services, orphan scholarship services, and scholarship services for areas affected by Christianity in Baturetno.

**Educators and Education**

Educational institutions can gain a strong competitive advantage by hiring and training good people. Good personnel must have at least six characteristics, namely: ability (employees have the required expertise); politeness (friendly, respectful, and considerate staff); credibility (trustworthy); reliable (employees are able to provide services consistently and accurately); quick response (employees are quick in responding to consumer problems); communication (employees understand customers).

SD Muhammadiyah (PK) Pracimantoro and SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno have good teaching and educational staff and are professional in their fields. In obtaining quality educators, SD Muhammadiyah PK Pracimantoro and SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno carry out a structured recruitment. Starting from analyzing the needs of teachers/employees, carrying out the administrative selection
process and microteaching (for teachers), and entering into performance agreements with the applicants concerned. Then, in its implementation so that teachers/employees have quality, commitment and performance that is continuously maintained, SD Muhammadiyah PK Pracimantoro and SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno take various approaches: a. Discipline strengthening; b. Competency development through workshops/advanced studies/internships; c. Motivation through regular studies; d. Rewards/awards

In order to ensure the quality of teacher/employee performance, SD Muhammadiyah (PK) Pracimantoro and SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno always carry out evaluations. The principal periodically checks and evaluates teachers/employees in carrying out their duties as well as providing feedback on each implementation of school programs. On the other hand, schools also regularly receive evaluations from the Education Office and the Wonogiri Muhammadiyah Didasmen Majlis every six months.

Infrastructure

The community assesses the superiority of an educational institution based on the ability of the school to provide educational infrastructure. SD Muhammadiyah (PK) Pracimantoro and SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno make every effort to provide standard educational facilities.

The process of fulfilling infrastructure facilities at the two schools is carried out by planning, namely analyzing the needs for infrastructure ranging from building readiness to what infrastructure is needed for the implementation of school programs and the learning process. At the realization stage, the sarpras section coordinates with the school principal to procure the necessary sarpras. Evaluation of infrastructure facilities is carried out by the sarpras section to ensure whether the existing infrastructure facilities are still in good condition or not. If there is damage, then as soon as possible find a solution.

Graduate Achievement

Graduate achievements are services offered to customers in the form of reputation, variety of choices, and prospects. Islamic educational institutions that are able to offer a good reputation, variety of choices, and prospects will gain the upper hand. SD Muhammadiyah (PK) Pracimantoro and SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno provide offers to the public in the form of a reputation for academic excellence, a variety of academic service/program choices, and prospects for character education (akhlaqul karimah): 1. Academic Excellence: SD Muhammadiyah (PK) Pracimantoro and SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno have academic advantages that can relatively compete with other institutions. This can be seen in the achievements in various science competitions and sports, although it has not yet reached the provincial level. 2. Variety of Educational Services/Programs: SD Muhammadiyah (PK) Pracimantoro and SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno both have a variety of educational services and programs. These variations have been described in the subsection of education services in this article. 3. Character building: The prospect of character education at SD Muhammadiyah (PK) Pracimantoro and SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno is to apply religious learning in an integrated manner through habituation of positive behavior in schools. The habituation is in the form of worship and muamalah. For example, habituation of dhuha prayer, emphasis on respect for
others, cleanliness, and so on.

**Conclusion**

Performance planning at SD Muhammadiyah (PK) Pracimantoro and SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno consists of several activities, including: setting goals, recruitment of teachers/employees, and performance agreements. At the implementation stage of performance management, the principal regularly conducts visitations and monitoring to ensure school programs run well. Teachers/employees coordinate with each other in every implementation of the school agenda. In order for the performance of teachers/employees to maintain commitment and quality, the school provides internship policies at other institutions, further studies, motivation, and awards. Then, the performance evaluation at SD Muhammadiyah (PK) Pracimantoro and SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno was taken with two approaches, namely formal and informal. Formal evaluation is visitation/monitoring from the local Education Office and the Wonogiri Muhammadiyah Educational Education Council every six months. Meanwhile, informal evaluation is an assessment of the principal to the ranks below him which takes place continuously and simultaneously in the daily implementation of the school agenda. In informal evaluations, the principal provides feedback on teacher/employee performance.

SD Muhammadiyah (PK) Pracimantoro and SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno realize competitive advantage using a differentiation approach, namely presenting a value that is different from other institutions. SD Muhammadiyah (PK) Pracimantoro and SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno differentiate themselves in the following aspects of excellence: 1) Location; 2) Curriculum; 3) Education Services; 4) Educators; 5) Facilities; 6) Education Programs; and 7) Graduate Achievement. These aspects of excellence are then realized in the performance management system through planning, implementation and evaluation. Based on the conclusions above, performance management at SD Muhammadiyah (PK) Pracimantoro and SD Muhammadiyah Innovative Baturetno is really carried out not only as a formality assessment for promotion or position of one of the stakeholders. More than that, performance management at the two schools is a work system that takes place continuously at the institution.

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