

# Analysis of Tahubudi product strategy in facing competition using Porter's five forces and Islamic perspective

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## Abstract

This research aims to investigate and analyze the tofu product strategy employed by Budi in response to business competition. The study was conducted at Tahu Budi Household Industry, an MSME located in Deli Serdang Regency. A qualitative approach was employed to gather and analyze the data, primarily consisting of Budi's competitive strategy, obtained through interviews with the business owners. Data collection techniques involved observation, interviews, and documentation. Porter's Five Forces of Competition Theory was utilized as the analytical tool for assessing the competitive strategy. The findings indicate that Tahu Budi can compete with its rivals regarding price, product quality, promotion, and distribution. In order to sustain their operations, they need to streamline production costs and enhance their marketing integration, as adaptable businesses thrive amidst environmental changes.

## Public interest statements

This research is highly relevant for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in any industry, particularly the home industry of tofu production, as it explores effective competitive strategies that can contribute to their sustainability.

**Keywords:** Competitive strategy; MSMEs; product strategy; Porter's five forces; Islamic perspective

**Paper type:** Case study

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## Abstract

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui dan menganalisis strategi produk tahu Budi dalam menghadapi persaingan usaha. Penelitian ini dilakukan pada UMKM Industri Rumah Tangga Tahu Budi yang berada di Desa Tangsi, Kecamatan Paluh Kemari, Kabupaten Deli Serdang. Metode yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah pendekatan kualitatif. Data yang dibutuhkan atau digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah data strategi kompetitif Tahu Budi yang diperoleh dari wawancara dengan pemilik usaha Tahu Budi. Teknik pengumpulan data dengan observasi, wawancara, dokumentasi. Alat analisis yang digunakan untuk strategi kompetitif adalah Porter's Five Forces of Competition Theory. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa Tahu Budi mampu bersaing dengan pesaingnya dalam hal harga, kualitas produk, promosi, dan distribusi produk. Dan agar dapat terus bertahan dalam menjalankan bisnisnya, yaitu dengan menekan biaya produksi dan mengintegrasikan sistem pemasaran menjadi lebih baik karena bisnis yang mampu bertahan adalah mereka yang tanggap terhadap perubahan lingkungannya.

## Pernyataan kepentingan publik

Penelitian ini sangat relevan bagi UMKM dibidang apapun terutama home industri pabrik tahu karena membahas tentang strategi bersaing yang dapat memberikan manfaat dan informasi bagi keberlangsungan UMKM.

**Kata kunci:** Strategi kompetitif; UMKM; strategi produk; lima kekuatan Porter; perspektif Islam

## Introduction

The micro, small, and medium economic sector (MSMEs) plays a vital role in national economic growth to meet people's needs for better products, create new jobs, and increase regional income (Alfiansyah et al., 2023). In Indonesia, the existence of MSMEs has been proven to overcome various economic problems, starting from reducing unemployment, increasing people's income, alleviating poverty, reducing disparities in income distribution, and improving community welfare (Nurbaiti et al., 2023). Currently, most business actors are Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). Because more and more of these businesses can absorb labor, micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) have become one type of business that plays a vital role in the productivity of the country's economy (Putri et al., 2023). Considering that the business covers almost all industries, the development of MSMEs is very strategic in driving the national economy. The contribution of SMEs to increasing the income of low-income communities is very high (Rengganawati & Taufik, 2020). Small businesses (SMEs) have enormous potential to reduce unemployment and poverty levels. One of the steps that must be taken to improve the community's economy is to develop small businesses as an economic base and concrete steps must be taken. The growth of domestic industry will definitely have an impact on the economy, increasing employment opportunities, reducing unemployment, and improving people's living standards (Fahira et al., 2023).

The development of the business world is currently advancing very rapidly. Various forms of business can be found in everyday life (Rahmadani & Makmur, 2019). With economic growth in the current era of globalization, more new businesses are emerging in various places. Because there are more and more similar goods with different brands and qualities on

the market, giving rise to competition between them. Due to increasingly fierce competition, many companies are forced to close their businesses because the products they make cannot compete with products made by other companies with better quality. Therefore, companies must carry out environmental analysis and diagnosis to determine their environmental opportunities and threats. Therefore, to deal with competitors, strategies must be created properly. Marketing is an effort to introduce products to customers or the public, so it is an important activity to win the competition. So, it is hoped that people will get to know and then like it and ultimately want to use the product to meet their needs (Said & Mukhlis, 2023). Businesses in the marketing sector continue to grow, and many small and medium-sized businesses have emerged, triggering intense marketing competition. As a result of competition with medium and large businesses, it is not uncommon for small businesses to go bankrupt due to a lack of company management in choosing the right marketing strategy. This will not happen if marketing strategy preparation is carried out effectively (Arifin et al., 2023). Competition in existing industries is fierce, but new competitors can easily enter, and consumers and suppliers can have enormous bargaining power (Adam et al., 2022). A company that has a competitive advantage is a company that must be able to create something unique and different from other companies and has no competitors in that product/service (Susanti et al., 2022).

Indonesia is a country that has many traditional foods, one of which is Tofu. Tofu is a food that Indonesian people love very much. Tofu is a food processed from soybeans, which has continued to develop over time from fried Tofu on the side of the road to now being included in large restaurant menus (Bangun et al., 2022). Indonesian people prefer processed soybean products because they are not too interested in consuming them directly without processing them (Monique & Nasution, 2019). Tofu is a food product made from soybeans, which are mashed and squeezed into juice; then the soybean extract is pressed or pressed. It is known as a fat-containing food that does not contain cholesterol but is rich in protein and is loved by everyone. The various nutritional contents contained in Tofu include protein, fat, carbohydrates, calories and minerals, phosphorus, B-complex vitamins such as thiamin, riboflavin, vitamin E, vitamin B12, potassium, and calcium (which are useful for supporting the formation of the bone framework). Containing around 80% unsaturated fatty acids, Tofu does not contain much cholesterol, so it is very safe for heart health (Dirwan et al., 2023).

Usaha dagang (UD) Budi is a tofu home industry whose address is in Deli Serdang Regency. This factory was founded by Mr. B, who experienced a decrease in income; after experiencing a decrease in income, he tried his luck to create another soybean-processed innovation in the form of Tofu in 2022, within two years of sales of UD. Budi has grown from only thousands of pieces sold when he first started operating to now reaching tens of thousands of pieces of Tofu sold. However, this condition did not last long, and the Tofu sales at UD did not last long. Budi will decline in 2024 because there are many similar business actors in the area. Hence, finding customers or consumers is challenging, but within two years, the UD tofu factory will be built. Budi could compete with other tofu factories that had previously operated and dominated the tofu sales market, but this lasted only a short time because other new competitors emerged. UD. Budi carries out marketing in various places, be it markets, small stalls, traveling traders, etc. In fact, it is not uncommon for the factory's consumers to come from outside the area, such as Perbaungan, Tanjung Morawa, and other

areas. Even though it has succeeded in selling tens of thousands of products outside the region and has various agents and resellers, UD. Budi still relies on word-of-mouth marketing methods, whereas other tofu factories compete to create neat marketing strategies in order to win business competition.

The owner's lack of knowledge regarding marketing strategies means product marketing is unknown to UD. Budi has been like that until now; there has not been any change; the owner only hopes for more buyers from word-of-mouth marketing. This situation is what makes UD. Budi lost in competitive strategy with his competitors, namely competitors UD. Budi continues to change his marketing strategy following developments in time and technology, but UD. Budi still maintains a traditional word-of-mouth marketing strategy. The word-of-mouth strategy is considered cheap and effective in attracting customer interest. However, consumers are convinced through word of mouth, a conventional marketing strategy. Recommendations about goods or services used to provide information to the public are known as word-of-mouth strategies (Artanti & Adinugraha, 2020). The competitiveness of business units could be higher due to a lack of business strategy and management training. It is very important to carry out thorough planning, especially when developing a marketing strategy, considering the problems faced by the business unit. Amid industrial competition among MSMEs, companies need to increase their competitiveness. Business survival will be influenced by the ability to expand market share and open new markets. For this reason, UD. Budi needs a strategy that can be used to win market competition with similar entrepreneurs, a method that can be used to analyze UD's competitive strategy. Budi is the Five Porters Force method.

An organization can understand the actions needed to create a competitive advantage using the five forces model. This concept includes five important factors that influence the level of industrial competition, including the threat of substitute products, the bargaining power of buyers and suppliers, and barriers to entry (Tohari, 2023). This process provides organizations with guidance for taking the steps necessary to achieve a strategy broad enough to create a competitive advantage. Although studies on competitive strategies using five Porter's forces have been carried out previously by other researchers (Pranoto & Indradewa, 2024; Rijanto, 2021; Sari et al., 2024; Wijaya et al., 2023), but most studies were conducted in the doll industry, hydroponic vegetables, and other sectors. This research is aimed at increasing insight into the implementation of competitive strategies using the five Porter's forces analysis methods in the tofu industry sector.

This research is motivated by gap research in previous studies. The difference between this research and the previous one is that the research results differ. However, the object of both research is the same: researching competitive strategies using the five Porter force methods. Based on the explanation above, the researcher attempts to prove new results from the competitive strategy analysis of tofu products using Porter's Five Forces and an Islamic perspective. Apart from that, from several studies conducted, no one specifically researches and discusses the competitive strategy of MSMEs in the tofu industry using Porter's Five Forces method and an Islamic perspective. Thus, the research that will be carried out is relatively new and has not been carried out by many previous researchers. This research was conducted to develop a competitive strategy at UD. Budi. This research can help business

actors consider their business competition strategies. Regulators accompanying MSMEs can also create appropriate policies to help entrepreneurs choose the right competitive strategy.

## Theoretical framework and hypotheses

According to the book "Management Strategy and Corporate Policy" by Lawrence & Glueck (1989) in Fikram (2023), strategic management is said to be a series of actions and decisions that lead to perfecting effective strategies or tactics to improve the company's achievement of its goals. The tactical management process is how tactical planners select targets and make decisions. Strategic management is an effort to determine strategy and planning issues and how these strategies are implemented to achieve organizational or company goals. In addition, strategy can be defined as a series of decisions and/or management actions that lead to the creation of a strategy or a number of effective strategies to help achieve company or organizational goals (Siregar, 2020). According to Grant Robert M (2016) in Simamora & Hidayat (2024), the function of strategy is essentially an effort to enable the creation and implementation of effective strategies. A company establishes its long-term goals and objectives, as well as the means of action and allocation of resources necessary to achieve them, as part of the company's competitive strategy. It is inevitable that competition arises in business. During the competition, entrepreneurs face various threats and opportunities from outside the company and within the company. Weaknesses and strengths in a company will greatly influence business continuity (Ilyas et al., 2023).

Management strategy is a process for running a business and will regulate all business activities carried out. By implementing the right management strategy, a business will be able to know the direction, movement, steps, and goals of the business being developed. In Islam, it is also regulated in such a way; from an Islamic perspective, management is termed the word *attadbir* (arrangement) as in the word of Allah SWT in surah *As-Sajadah* verse 5. Without planning (*ahdaf*), a company or organization will have no direction and will not know what its goals are. The planning stage aims to determine the direction, movement, steps, and goals to be achieved. This is in accordance with the word of Allah SWT in surah *Al-Hasyr* verse 18 (Andrini & Fahrulliansyah, 2022).

Companies must create value that is different from that offered by competitors. Therefore, because management strategy is sustainable and can change according to external conditions, management strategy will be closely related to the company's competitive advantage (Rijanto, 2021).

Competition is when someone wants to achieve the goal of success, but there are other people who want the same thing as him. To achieve this, you need to be a strong person, responsible for your responsibilities and the results, dare to take risks, be future-oriented, have a leadership spirit, and continue to strive to be better (Ritonga et al., 2023).

Competitive strategies or competition in the view of sharia are permitted with the criteria of competing well. One of them is explained in the *Al-Qur'an* surah *Al-Baqarah* verse 148 regarding the recommendation to compete in goodness, which reads as follows: "And for each community, there is its (own) Qibla which it faces. So compete (in making) good. Wherever you are, Allah will surely gather you all (on the Day of Judgment). Indeed, Allah has power over all things."

An industry analysis model known as Porter's five forces (Porter et al., 2001). The five forces model calculates competitive intensity, profit probability, or industry profitability. This model consists of five factors: supplier bargaining power, buyer bargaining power, threat of substitute products, and competition between companies in the industry (Lestari et al., 2023). Porter's Five Forces Model –also known as Porter's Five Forces Model –is used to identify similar industry structures that can increase a company's advantages (Hintoro & Wijaya, 2021). Five things that influence the market attractiveness of an industry are barriers to entering the industry, the strength of consumers, the strength of substitute products, the strength of suppliers, and competition in the industry. These five things must first be analyzed, and the results of this analysis will conclude whether an industry can survive or not in the face of competition (Sukamulja, 2022).



**Figure 1.**

*Five Porters Force Model Framework*

According to Michael Porter in Gultom & Lumbanraja (2022), Porter's Five Forces strategy model aims to describe a framework for analyzing business growth as follows :

Bargaining power of buyers/ buyers' power. This site focuses on buyer analysis, which leads to the buyer's choice of existing products. There are conditions where buyers can only buy products from certain companies, and/or buyers have many choices to buy the same product but produced by other companies because there are many types sold on the market (this illustrates High Buyers' Power). Customer loyalty is also included in this site. Buyers who are loyal will, of course, only buy and sell the product, thus creating a Low Buyers Power condition.

Bargaining power of suppliers/ suppliers' power. How much does the company need or depend on suppliers? There are raw materials that can be purchased from any supplier (describing Low Suppliers' Power ) or that can only be purchased by certain suppliers. In the context of large companies, they usually have collaborations with certain suppliers at prices that are different from the market because of large-scale production, so if there is a problem

with that supplier, it will hamper the production process because they are already dependent on one supplier (describing High Supplier' Power ).

Threat of new entrants. Analyzing awareness of whether this business is easy to follow or not. The New Entrants in question are individuals or groups who create the same business as the existing ones. There are conditions where a new business is booming in the market because it is quite easy to create (describes the High Threat of New Entrants ). Apart from that, there are conditions where a business can only be carried out by certain companies. There are various factors that exist, such as the risk being too high, the need for a high level of expertise, and other factors (describes the Low Threat of New Entrants).

Threat of substitute products or services. Analyzing product substitutes. A product or service, whether it is possible to replace it with another one or not. In this context, substitutes are goods or services that are different but can fill the absence of the main goods or services needed.

Rivalry among existing competitors. Analyzes a more limited scope, namely competitors in the same industry or market. In the market, there are definitely several similar products or services competing for customers. The high and low levels of competition will be analyzed.

## Methods

### Participants and procedure

The research method used in this research is a qualitative method. This research was conducted at UD. Budi whose address is Tangsi Village, Palu Kemiri District, Deli Serdang Regency, North Sumatra.

### Data analysis procedures

The types of data used in this research are primary and secondary data. Primary data was obtained through observation and structured interviews. In this study, primary data was obtained from interviews with Mr. A, the owner of UD Budi. Secondary data was collected through articles obtained from various institutions or agencies related to this research and various literature related to this research. Data analysis was carried out using triangulation, namely reducing data, displaying data, and drawing conclusions using Porter's Five Forces and an Islamic perspective.

## Results and discussion

Based on the results of direct observations and interviews with Tahubudi owners, it can be identified regarding the strategy of Budi tofu products in facing competition using Porter's five forces based on Michael Porter's theory, which includes five aspects, namely: (1) Bargaining Power of Buyers, where researchers find out and analyze buyers which leads to the buyer's choice of existing products (2) Bargaining Power of Suppliers, where researchers find out and analyze how much the company needs or is dependent on suppliers (3) Threat of New Entrants, researchers try to find out and analyze whether the business is run is easy to imitate or not (4) Threat of Substitute Products or Services, researchers find out and analyze

substitute products which are a business threat (5) Rivalry Among Existing Competitors, researchers find out and analyze competition in the same market.

We conducted interviews regarding the five aspects above with Tahu Budi business owners in this case. Of the five aspects asked by the researcher, the following interview results were obtained: First, the buyer power side focuses on buyer analysis, which determines buyer preferences for current products. Tahu Budi had planned to reduce product prices to slightly cheaper than those of environmentally friendly competitors. There are no price offers from customers, so Tahu Budi can sell many Tofu products to consumers within one month, as shown by the production of tens of thousands of Tofu pieces. The impact of distributor competition on consumer demand could be more influential because Tahu Budi has the same market price as its competitors.

Second, Tahu Budi relies on multiple suppliers for raw materials, including soybeans and supporting materials like tofu flour. The business carefully selects its suppliers, considering the quality and cost of the raw materials. The owner actively seeks suppliers from areas outside Lubuk Pakam City to find better quality and lower prices, which will be advantageous for Tahu Budi.

Third, the threat of new entrants increases knowledge about whether this business is easy to join. The focus of Budi's Tofu is the quality of the tofu product. Tahu Budi also has advantages in product innovation. Tahu Budi does not need to be afraid of new entrants because its superior products can attract market share. The price, quality, and product variants of Tahu Budi prevent new entrants from entering the market share.

Fourth, threat substitutes products or services, evaluating substitutes for goods or services and whether they can be replaced with others. If there is a need for more Tofu to be produced, Tahu Budi has plans to use tempeh as a substitute. If they have replacement products in the future, knowing what they sell will not greatly impact sales because their primary product remains known. Until now, other MSMEs have not found a threat to substitute products because most only focus on one product, namely Tofu. Therefore, Tahu Budi must immediately do new things to face the threat of substitute products.

Fifth, rivalry among existing competitors is primarily within the same industry or market. Tahu Budi is a new entrant in the tofu product market but has quickly proven its ability to compete, as evidenced by increasing monthly sales. Tahu Budi employs word-of-mouth marketing and leverages its prior customer base from tempeh products to gain traction in the tofu market. While initially facing challenges due to its previous focus on tempeh production, Tahu Budi adapted to produce tofu in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite the initial difficulties of being a newcomer in the business world, Tahu Budi has demonstrated resilience in navigating competition within the same market.

Tahu Budi's competitive strategy will enable the company to continue to compete with other companies. The force that determines competition in an industry is to maintain a profitable position and defend it through competitive strategies. Competitive advantage comes largely from the value a company can provide to its buyers that exceeds production costs. By reducing production costs, Tahu Budi's competitive strategy can reduce selling prices. This method is intended to meet the needs of consumers, who are easily affected by price changes and are relatively affected by prices. Tahu Budi saves money by selling Tofu at

a lower or equivalent price to competitor products. However, they still try to maintain the quality of their products, which allows them to enter the lower middle market. Tahu Budi can take advantage of technological developments to produce Tofu that is tastier, more hygienic, and lasts longer so that consumers will not easily switch to other entrepreneurs. Tahu Budi collaborates with many partners to find high-quality and cheap raw material prices. This ensures that the price of products sold to customers remains affordable and can compete with competitor products. In addition, Tahu Budi only serves a small portion of customers compared to the overall market. To survive the competition, Tahu Budi updated its marketing system.

In the Qur'an, some things explain entrepreneurship, which can be used as a basis for motivating Muslims to carry out entrepreneurship or self-employment as ordered by Allah SWT to balance the affairs of the world and the afterlife, as stated in the Al-Qur'an surah al-Qashash verse 77.

وَابْتَغِ فِيمَا آتَاكَ اللَّهُ الدَّارَ الْآخِرَةَ وَلَا تَنْسَ لَكَ وَالْأَرْضَ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُفْسِدِينَ

Meaning: "And, seek what Allah has bestowed upon you (reward) in the land of the afterlife, but do not forget your share in this world. Do good (to others) as Allah has done good to you and do not cause harm on earth. Indeed, Allah does not like those who do damage."

According to the verse that advises humans not to forget part of the world's efforts, Allah SWT's command is clear. It is not just about working hard to seek wealth in the world, but the purpose of this wealth is crucial. In Islam, wealth is not meant to be hoarded but to be used to seek the pleasure of Allah SWT as a provision for the afterlife.

In business, free competition emerges, where business people use various methods so that their business continues to develop and progress rapidly. Relationships that justify various means to obtain one's desires are certainly not permitted in Islam. Islam teaches its people to compete in doing good deeds as stated in the Al-Qur'an Surah Al-Baqarah verse 148:

وَلِكُلِّ وُجْهَةٍ هُوَ مُوَلِّيٰهَا فَاسْتَبِقُوا الْحَيٰرَاتِ اِنَّ مَا تَكُوْنُوْنَ بِكُمْ اِلٰهَ اِنَّ اِلٰهَ عَلٰى كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيْرٌ

Meaning: "For every Ummah there is a Qibla towards which he faces. So, compete in various virtues. Wherever you are, Allah will surely gather you all. Indeed, Allah is Almighty over all things."

The competition between Tahu Budi MSMEs and other tofu MSMEs is relatively healthy, where it is found that the product prices at Tahu Budi MSMEs are based on the quality and added value of each product. Islam prohibits price discrimination (if there is injustice towards customers) and fraud in determining prices. The holy Qur'an has expressly prohibited all business transactions that contain elements of fraud in any form against other people, as stated in Surah Al-An'am verse 152.

وَلَا تَقْرَبُوا مَالَ الْيَتِيمِ **above** مِيزَانَ بِالْقِسْطِ وَلَا تُكَلِّفُوا نَفْسًا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ أَوْفُوا ذَلِكُمْ وَصْنَكُمْ بِهِ

Meaning: "And do not approach the property of an orphan, except in a more beneficial way, until he reaches adulthood. And perfect the measures and scales fairly. We do not impose burdens on anyone but only their capabilities. And when you say, then be fair, even though he is (your) relative, and fulfill Allah's promise. This is what Allah has commanded you to remember."

Apart from that, the Islamic law implemented by MSME Tahu Budi can also be seen in business capital, which prioritizes own capital without using loans from the banking world. Using its own capital shows that the management of the Tahu Budi MSME business is in accordance with Islamic law principles.

## Conclusion

Porter's five competitive strategies at Tahu Budi are as follows: (1) Setting product prices slightly cheaper than competitors' prices that are affordable for the public, so there are no more price offers from customers (2) Having many supplier partners so that you can choose which suppliers can meet your raw material needs and whose prices can be adjusted to the company's finances (3) Tahu Budi also has advantages in product innovation. They realize that various products have developed into superior products that can attract market share. (4) Tahu Budi has plans for a substitute product, namely temple if tofu stock is insufficient for production. (5) Tahu Budi is a new competitor that has emerged amidst many similar companies. Tahu Budi has just entered the tofu product market in approximately two years. For Tahu Budi to continue operating, its competitive strategy is to increase production costs and integrate the marketing system better. Businesses that can survive are those that can adapt to environmental changes. There are various ways to win the competition, including product diversification. The product diversification must be based on the results of a survey that has previously been carried out so that the products produced can suit consumer tastes and add value to their knowledge. Different from other tofu businesses, they use aspects of product, price, place, service, and after-sales service as a competitive strategy.

The competition between Tahu Budi MSMEs and other tofu MSMEs is healthy. Tahu Budi MSMEs price their products according to their quality and added value. Islam prohibits price discrimination and fraud. Tahu Budi MSMEs follow Islamic law by prioritizing their capital without relying on bank loans. These results show that Tahu Budi MSMEs' business management aligns with Islamic principles.

Despite the valuable insights provided by this study into the implementation of strategies by MSMEs, it's important to acknowledge several limitations for future research. Firstly, as this case study only focuses on one company, its findings have limited generalizability. Thus, it is of utmost importance for future studies to gather data from a diverse range of companies and business types. Secondly, this research was conducted using a qualitative approach involving interviews and field observations, which makes it challenging to objectively quantify the level of competitiveness. To address this, it is advisable for future studies to employ mixed methods, enabling a more accurate portrayal of phenomena in the field.

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