Investigating Competitive Advantage Determinants among Private Universities towards Excellent Accreditation

Yuli Ardianto[1], Gunawan Baharuddin[2]

[1,2]Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Pancasila, Indonesia

ABSTRACT: The increasingly rigorous business competition in the higher education industry requires every private university to improve its competitiveness by utilising all available resources. This study aims to examine the determinants of competitive advantage by mediating the performance of A-accredited and excelled study programmes at private universities in LLDIKTI Region III. The factors studied include lecturer competence, organisational commitment, and application of information technology. The research method used is a survey to the object of this research, namely all Study Programs at Private Universities that have A and Excelled Accreditation under the LLDIKTI Region III Jakarta, with a total of 314 Study Programs and a sample size of 250. Data were analysed using multiple regression analysis and path analysis. The results showed that the performance of A-accredited and excelled study programmes mediated the relationship between the determinants of competitive advantage and competitive advantage itself. The managerial implication of this research is that private universities in LLDIKTI Region III can increase competitive advantage through improving the performance of A and excelled accredited study programmes and the determinants of competitive advantage that have been studied.

KEYWORDS: Competitive advantage; Performance; Study Program; Private University.

I. INTRODUCTION

Rapid and dramatic environmental developments and changes, including changes in consumer tastes, technological advances and socio-economic changes, have affected the higher education sector resulting in intense business competition in the higher education industry. In this case, there are at least two quality assurance systems that must be carried out by a higher education institution, namely: (1) an internal quality assurance system developed by the Higher Education Institution and (2) an external quality assurance system conducted through accreditation (Article 53). Efforts must also be made by universities to maintain the loyalty of users, in this case students, of course, with good quality service to students, especially those who have problems in campus learning by providing as detailed information as possible and easy access to that information, even universities offer more competitive tuition fees to attract as many prospective new students as possible.

According to the mtryout.id page released in 2000 with the title "8 Private Universities with the Most Students in Indonesia", it appears that students choose universities with consideration of quality, uniqueness of programmes, reputation and tuition fees. Meanwhile, according to the universitas123.com page posted on the internet on 2 March 2023 with the title "8 Private Universities in Jakarta that are most targeted by Students" illustrates that prospective students choose universities because of quality, program uniqueness, reputation and tuition fees. Unlike the case with state universities, where the study programme does not have to organise activities, such as attracting new prospective students because the demand for prospective students must be high because of the label "Public" attached to the university. Based on this phenomenon, each study programme must realise that competition is a natural thing and willingly or unwillingly must be faced in the era of industrialisation and globalisation. Each study programme in private universities must be able to increase its competitiveness by utilising all available resources in order to compete competitively with its competitors and can improve the performance of the university. The key to the success of the education business is the development of unique and attractive competitive advantages and producing graduates who are ready to work.

On the other hand, organisational performance is an indicator of the level of achievement that can be achieved and reflects the success of managers/entrepreneurs to improve performance, so Prodi must have a differentiating value in order to increase competitive advantage and can affect the increasing performance of Prodi. Although there are many factors that can affect

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organisational performance and competitive advantage, such as lecturer competence factors (Adiputra and Mandala 2017; Afrina et al. 2021), organisational commitment (Budiansyah and Putri 2020; Perez-Campdesuner et al. 2018) and the application of information technology (Rahmasari 2018; Alfulailah and Soehari 2020).

Therefore, this study uses the variables of lecturer competence, organisational commitment and the application of information technology as factors that will affect organisational performance and competitive advantage. These three factors are important because lecturers have the main role in carrying out the learning process in the classroom so that Prodi needs lecturers who really have competence in the courses they teach. The competence of lecturers according to the Law of the Republic of Indonesia No.14 of 2005 concerning Teachers and Lecturers, to become a lecturer must have four competencies, namely pedagogic competence, professional competence, personality competence, and social competence.

Some previous studies explain the definition of organisational commitment is: "Organisational commitment is the degree to which an employee sides with a particular organisation and its goals, and intends to maintain his membership in the organisation (Lubis et al. 2010)." The results of this study are supported by other studies such as Budiansyah and Saudi which states that one of the important aspects in realising organisational sustainability is to create overall organisational commitment (Budiansyah and Saudi 2020). In contrast, research conducted by Marlina et al. states that information technology has no effect on competitive advantage and University performance (Marlina, Samsiah, and Ardi 2018). Based on the background of the phenomenon and several previous studies, this study aims to further examine the topic of discussion: "Determinants of Competitive Advantage with Mediation of Performance of A Accredited and Excelled Study Programs at Private Universities in LLDIKTI Region III (Study on A Accredited and Excelled Study Programs at Private Universities in LLDIKTI Region III)".

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Several studies build a strong case for the importance of competence and capabilities in achieving organizational success. Adiputra (2017) highlights the positive impact of competencies and capabilities on competitive advantage and performance in tourist lodges. Similarly, Budiansyah (2020) finds lecturer competence to be a driver of performance in universities, while Kaunang (2020) demonstrates its influence on financial management performance. Adiputra's study on tourist lodges in Denpasar, Bali, and the research by Alfulailah and Soehari, (2020) on traders in the Glodok market emphasize how competence, capabilities, and innovation positively impact company performance. Similarly, Afrina et al. (2021) study highlights the significance of competence in enhancing performance, albeit with information technology showing no direct effect. Additionally, the research by Domenech et al. (2021)'s study on small firms highlight the correlation between competence, organizational commitment, and performance outcomes. This reiterates the significance of human capital and internal organizational factors in achieving desired performance levels.

Meanwhile, the research overwhelmingly supports the significance of competitive advantage as a driver of performance. Studies across diverse sectors, including universities (Wahyudin, 2015; Herawati, 2021) and freight forwarding (Rahmasari, 2018), demonstrate this positive relationship. Interestingly, Ismail et al. (2017) offer a more complex model, suggesting trust can lead to commitment, which translates to competitive advantage and ultimately affects export performance. This highlights the potential interplay of various factors influencing performance.

By synthesizing findings from diverse studies, one can discern a coherent narrative that underscores the intertwined nature of competencies, capabilities, innovation, and organizational dynamics in shaping performance outcomes and competitive advantage across various sectors. From these studies, it appears that no research has been found so far that discusses the performance of Prodi through accreditation with the approach of Lecturer Competence, Organisational Commitment, and IT implementation as a driving factor for competitive advantage in Higher Education in Indonesia. In fact, accreditation is an important aspect in the management of higher education in Indonesia. The novelty of this research is in the measurement of organisational performance variables, which in this case is a private university study program using measurement standards from LAM (Independent Accreditation Agency) which is tasked with carrying out the Accreditation process for Study Programs using 8 indicators as stated in the Decree of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 754 / P / 2020. Meanwhile, the measurement of organisational performance in several previous studies used more opinions from several experts as described in Chapter II of this study. Another novelty is that the sample of this study focuses on the Head of Study Programmes along with the Secretariat and Quality Assurance from various private universities in LLDIKTI region III. Previous studies used more lecturers as respondents.

Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

In preparing the conceptual model of this research, the support of previous research results in the formation of relationships between research variables are important as presented in the following figure:
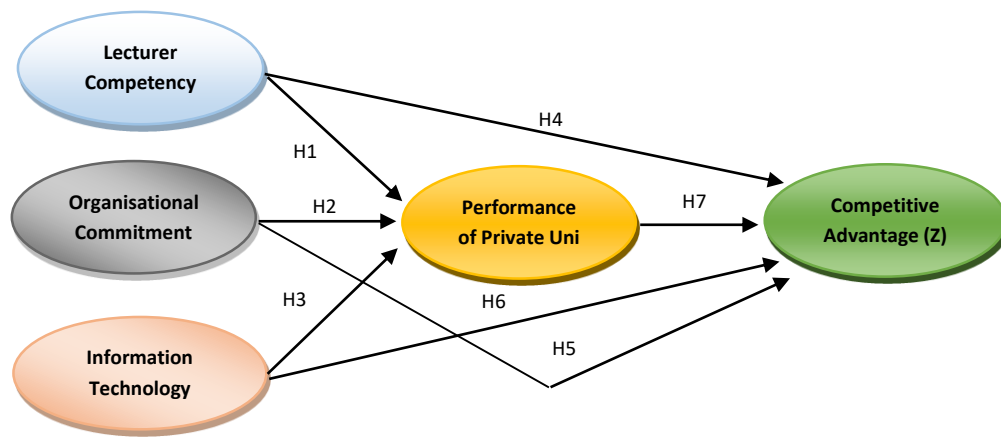
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Figure 1. Research Framework

Based on the above framework, the relationship between variables can be explained as the following research hypothesis:

H1: Lecturer competence affects the performance of Prodi.

H2: Organisational commitment affects the performance of Prodi.

H3: Application of technology affects the performance of the study programme

H4: Lecturer competence affects competitive advantage.

H5: Organisational commitment affects competitive advantage.

H6: Technology implementation affects competitive advantage.

H7: Study programme performance affects competitive advantage.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research uses a combination research design between verification and descriptive research, with a survey approach method. The purpose of descriptive research is to get a clear picture of the characteristics of the research variables, while verification research aims to examine the relationship between variables through hypothesis testing. In this study, descriptive statistical analysis will be conducted by calculating the limits for each class. There are five classes numbered from 1 to 5. The larger the number, the higher the class boundaries will be and reflect the requirement to agree. To determine the boundaries of each class, this study uses a predetermined formula (Asra, Irawan, and Purwoto 2015).

Highest score = 5

Lowest score = 1

Total classes = 5

Formula :

$$\frac{\text{Highest score} - \text{lowest score}}{\text{Total of classes}} = \frac{5}{1} \quad 0.8$$

The object of this research is all Study Programmes in Private Universities that have A and excelled Accreditation under LLDIKTI Region III Jakarta, with a total of 314 Study Programmes. The research population consists of the Head and Secretary of Study Programmes, and also the Quality Assurance Officer of Study Programmes from those Private Universities, which amounted to 942 respondents.

To determine the number of representative samples, this study refers to the number of indicators multiplied by 5 to 10. The minimum sample size required is 250 respondents, assuming there are 50 indicators. Therefore, the number of A and Excelled accredited study programmes that qualify as samples is at least 83 study programmes. The sampling technique uses purposive sampling.

This study uses a written survey technique using a questionnaire as a research instrument given to a sample of the population under study. Primary data is obtained from respondents' responses to questions in the questionnaire. Based on the time dimension, this research is included in the cross-sectional research category, because it was conducted at one specific time and not compared with other studies.

- To analyse the data, this research uses a quantitative approach which is more concerned with measurement and sampling methods because it uses a deductive approach emphasizing detailed priorities in data collection and analysis (Hair, Ringle, and

Sarstedt 2011). This research is conducted based on number of hypotheses which will then be tested through data analysis methods. The hypotheses in this study were tested quantitatively.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Results of Research Variables

   Lecturer Competency Variable (X1) - The lecturer competency variable was measured using 9 instruments. Table 4.3 shows that respondents have a very high perception of lecturer competence, as indicated by the variable mean value of 4.47 which is in the range of 4.21 ≤ 5.00 (very high category). The indicator of lecturer competence that is rated highest by respondents is "Lecturers provide information about general knowledge to students," with an average approval value of 4.69, indicating the importance of being maintained. While the lowest value chosen by respondents was the statement "Lecturers create communication to students," with an average approval value of 4.12. This response indicates that this indicator needs to be improved.

   Organisational Commitment Variable (X2) - For this variable, 9 instruments were used in its measurement. Table 4.4 shows that respondents have a very high perception of organisational commitment, with a variable mean value of 4.39 in the range of 4.20 ≤ 5.00 (very high category). The indicator of organisational commitment that was rated highest by respondents was "Prodi ranks work for the progress of the organisation," with an average approval value of 4.52, indicating that the performance of the study programme is important to maintain. Meanwhile, the lowest value chosen by respondents and a concern to be improved is the statement "The ranks of Prodi have a sense of belonging," with an average approval value of 4.07.

   Information technology implementation variable (X3) - The information technology implementation variable was measured using 6 items in this study. Table 4.5 shows that respondents have a high perception of the application of information technology, with a variable average of 4.56 and this value is included in the very high category (4.21 ≤ 5.00). The most prominent indicator of the six instruments is "Application of Information Technology with the aim of increasing effectiveness" with an average agreement of 4.60. Meanwhile, the instrument "Application of Information Technology saves time for completing work" received the lowest assessment with an average approval of 4.47 so that more attention needs to be given to improving this indicator.

   Private higher education organisational performance variable (Y) - This variable was measured using 16 statement items in this study. Table 4.6 shows that respondents have a very high perception of organisational performance, with a variable average of 4.49 and this mark included in the high category (4.21 ≤ 5.00). The indicator of organisational performance that received the highest assessment from respondents was "Prodi has international cooperation in more than 1 country" with an average agreement of 4.62. Meanwhile, the statement item "Prodi creates students who graduate get a decent salary" gets the lowest assessment with an average approval of 4.36 which shows the response that Prodi needs to improve the quality of graduates so that they are quickly absorbed by the industry.

   Competitive Advantage Variable (Z) - 10 statement items are used in measuring competitive advantage in this study. Table 4.7 shows that respondents have a very high perception of competitive advantage, with a variable average of 4.38 which is included in the very high category (4.21 ≤ 5.00). The indicator of competitive advantage that received the highest assessment from respondents was "Prodi has a programme needed by the world of work" with an average agreement of 4.43. Meanwhile, the statement item "Prodi has a very good quality lecture process" received the lowest assessment with an average approval of 4.33 so that it needs to be a concern by the management.

A. Structural Equation Model (SEM) Analysis

   Lecturer Competency Variables (X1) - Lecturer competence in this study was measured using three dimensions, namely the knowledge dimension with three indicators, the ability dimension with three indicators, and the skill dimension with three indicators. The results of the discriminant validity test in the loading factor table for the lecturer competency variable are as follows:

Table 1. Loading Factor Value of Lecturer Competency Variables (X1)

Dimension	Indicator Code	Outer Loading	>/<	Result
Knowledge	X1.1	0.823	> 0.7	Valid
	X1.2	0.876	> 0.7	Valid
	X1.3	0.817	> 0.7	Valid
Competence	X1.4	0.942	> 0.7	Valid
	X1.5	0.944	> 0.7	Valid
Skill	X1.8	0.744	> 0.7	Valid

	X1.9	0.874	> 0.7	Valid

The table above shows that there are two items with loading factor values less than 0.7, namely X1.6 and X1.7, with a value of 0.623 for X1.6 and a value of 0.543 for X1.7. As a result, the indicators X1.6 and X1.7 are found invalid since they fail to fulfil the convergent validity requirements, and the two indications are deleted and retested. After deleting previously invalid indications, there are currently seven viable indicators to quantify lecturer competency characteristics.

Organizational Commitment Variable (X2) - Measured across three dimensions: emotional, continuation, and normative. The following figure and table illustrate the results of the validation test for the organizational commitment variable :
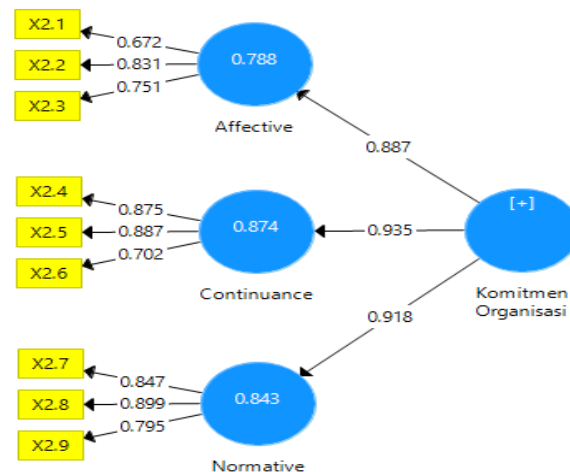
The results of the discriminant validity test may also be seen in the loading factor table for the organizational commitment variable, as shown in the table above

Table 2. Loading Factor Value of the Organizational Commitment Variable (X2)

Dimension	Indicator Code	Outer Loading	Requirements	Results
Affective	X2.1	**0.672**	< 0,7	Invalid
	X2.2	**0.831**	> 0,7	Valid
	X2.3	**0.751**	> 0,7	Valid
Continuance	X2.4	**0.875**	> 0,7	Valid
	X2.5	**0.887**	> 0,7	Valid
	X2.6	**0.702**	> 0,7	Valid
Normative	X2.7	**0.847**	> 0,7	Valid
	X2.8	**0.899**	> 0,7	Valid
	X2.9	**0.795**	> 0,7	Valid

According to the table above, there is a loading factor value of less than 0.7 from the Organizational Commitment variable (X2), especially indication X2.1 (value 0.672). As a result, the X2.1 indication is ruled invalid since it does not match the convergent validity standards, and it will be deleted before being updated through re-testing. It may be argued that all indicators of organizational commitment variables are legitimate after being adjusted by deleting previously invalid indications.:

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Table 3. Loading Factor Value of the Organizational Commitment Variable (X2) After Second Modification

Dimension	Indicator Code	Outer Loading	Requirements	Results
Affective	X2.2	**0.899**	> 0,7	Valid
	X2.3	**0.790**	> 0,7	Valid
Continuance	X2.4	**0.917**	> 0,7	Valid
	X2.5	**0.930**	> 0,7	Valid
Normative	X2.7	**0.850**	> 0,7	Valid
	X2.8	**0.903**	> 0,7	Valid
	X2.9	**0.786**	> 0,7	Valid

Source: Results of analysis using SmartPLS 3.2.9

It can be concluded that after modification of all indicators of organizational commitment variables by removing previously invalid indicators, the remaining 7 indicators are used to measure organizational commitment variables.

Information Technology Application Variable (X3)

Information technology application variables in this study are measured using two dimensions: the usefulness dimension with three indicators and the effectiveness dimension with three indicators. It can be seen that all indicators of the information technology implementation variable (X3) are worth more than 0.7. This indicates that all variable indicators of the application of information technology are valid because they meet the requirements of convergent validity. The results of the discriminant validity test on the variable loading factor table for the application of information technology are as follows:

Table 4. Loading Factor Value of Information Technology Application Variables (X3)

Dimension	Indicator Code	Outer Loading	Requirements	Result
Usefulness	X3.1	0.917	> 0.7	Valid
	X3.2	0.928	> 0.7	Valid
	X3.3	0.903	> 0.7	Valid
Effectiveness	X3.4	0.924	> 0.7	Valid
	X3.5	0.919	> 0.7	Valid
	X3.6	0.837	> 0.7	Valid

Source: Results of analysis using SmartPLS 3.2.9

Organizational Performance Variable (Y)

Organizational performance variables in this study were measured using 8 dimensions, namely: graduates get decent jobs, students get experience off-campus, lecturers are active off-campus, practitioners teach on-campus, lecturers' work is used by the community, study programs collaborate with world-class partners, collaborative and participatory classes, and international standard Study Programs. Each dimension is measured using two indicators. From the results of the analysis, it was found that all indicators of organizational performance variables (Y) had a loading factor of more than 0.7. This proves that all indicators of organizational performance variables (Y) can be used in this study and meet the requirements of convergent validity.

Competitive Advantage Variable (Z)

Competitive advantage variables are measured using 5 dimensions: program quality, uniqueness, price, reputation, and quality human resources. Each dimension is measured using two indicators. It can be seen that all indicators of the competitive advantage variable (Z) have a loading factor of more than 0.7, so they can be used in the analysis because they meet the convergent validity requirements.

It was found that the correlation value of constructs with their indicators is greater than the correlation value with other constructs. Thus, it can be concluded that all latent constructs show good discriminant validity because they can predict indicators in their block better than indicators in other blocks.

Furthermore, discriminant validity testing is carried out by looking at the AVE (Average Variance Extracted) value. The AVE value is considered good if it has a value greater than 0.50 (Ghozali, 2016). It was found that the AVE value of the research model for all research variables and research dimensions was above 0.5, so the AVE value for discriminant validity testing was sufficient for

further testing. Thus, the Discriminant Validity test has been fulfilled as well as the convergence Validity test, so it can be concluded that the research model is valid.

Reliability measurement

The reliability measurement in this study includes dimensions and variables. The results of the reliability measurement show that all dimensions of the lecturer competency variable (X1), organizational commitment (X2), application of information technology (X3), organizational performance (Y) and competitive advantage (Z) have a composite reliability value greater than 0.7. Thus, all dimensions are considered reliable. Furthermore, the measurement of variable reliability shows that the variables of lecturer competence (X1), organizational commitment (X2), application of information technology (X3), organizational performance (Y), and competitive advantage (Z) also have a Cronbach alpha value greater than 0.7. It can be concluded that the research model meets the value of Cronbach's alpha. From the model above, it can be concluded that the model meets the Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha criteria, so the research model meets the reliability criteria and is a reliable measuring instrument.

The results of testing the hypothesis of all research variables show that:

- Hypothesis 1 is accepted. Lecturer competence has a positive and significant influence on the organizational performance of private tertiary institutions within the scope of LLDIKTI Region III DKI Jakarta.
- Hypothesis 2 is accepted. Organizational commitment has a positive and significant impact on the organizational performance of private tertiary institutions within the scope of LLDIKTI Region III DKI Jakarta.
- Hypothesis 3 is accepted. The application of information technology has a positive and significant impact on the organizational performance of private tertiary institutions within the scope of LLDIKTI Region III DKI Jakarta.
- Hypothesis 4 is accepted. Lecturer competence has a positive and significant impact on the competitive advantage of private tertiary institutions within the scope of LLDIKTI Region III DKI Jakarta.
- Hypothesis 5 is rejected. Organizational commitment does not have a significant influence on the competitive advantage of private tertiary institutions within the LLDIKTI Region III DKI Jakarta.
- Hypothesis 6 is accepted. The application of information technology has a positive and significant influence on the competitive advantage of private tertiary institutions within the LLDIKTI Region III DKI Jakarta.
- Hypothesis 7 is accepted. Organizational performance has a positive and significant impact on the competitive advantage of private tertiary institutions within the scope of LLDIKTI Region III DKI Jakarta.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

Based on the results of the previous research and discussion, several research conclusions can be conveyed as follows:

- Lecturer competence has a positive and significant effect on organizational performance in private tertiary institutions within the scope of LLDIKTI Region III DKI Jakarta. The higher the competence of lecturers, the higher the resulting organizational performance.
- Organizational commitment has a positive and significant effect on organizational performance in private tertiary institutions within the scope of LLDIKTI Region III DKI Jakarta. The higher the organizational commitment of the Prodi ranks, the higher the resulting organizational performance.
- The application of information technology has a positive and significant effect on organizational performance in private tertiary institutions within the scope of LLDIKTI Region III DKI Jakarta. The higher the ability to apply information technology, the higher the resulting organizational performance.
- Lecturer competence has a positive and significant effect on competitive advantage in private tertiary institutions within the scope of LLDIKTI Region III DKI Jakarta. The higher the competence of lecturers in carrying out the teaching and learning process, the higher the competitive advantage of the tertiary institution.
- Organizational commitment has no effect on the competitive advantage of Prodi accredited A and Excellent at private tertiary institutions within the scope of LLDIKTI Region III DKI Jakarta. Thus, the weak or weak organizational commitment of the Prodi ranks does not have a significant impact on competitive advantage in a private tertiary institution, because the Prodi accredited A and Excelled have their own commitment to competitive advantage.
- The application of information technology has a positive and significant effect on competitive advantage in private tertiary institutions within the scope of LLDIKTI Region III DKI Jakarta. The higher the application of information technology in managing a Study Program, the higher the competitive advantage of the tertiary institution.

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- Organizational performance has a positive and significant effect on competitive advantage in private tertiary institutions in the scope of LLDIKTI Region III DKI Jakarta. The higher the organizational performance of a higher education institution, the higher its competitive advantage from its competitors.

Recommendation

Based on some of the findings in this study, some suggestions will be presented as follows: (1) The Study Program should be able to improve the competence of its lecturers, especially their ability to communicate with students during the teaching and learning process. Lecturers are expected to be able to create interactive and critical communications so that students can take part in lectures with enthusiasm and enjoy the challenges of learning. (2) Study Program staff should be able to continue to increase their organizational commitment by having a high sense of belonging to the organization where they work, so that this attitude will foster dedication and positive work motivation for the progress of the organization. (3) Study Programs should be able to apply information technology that keeps up with the times in managing their organization, so that it can make it easier for staff to carry out their duties and for students to access information related to academics or the general public to obtain information about related Study Programs at the university. (4) The Study Program is expected to be able to improve its organizational performance, by creating graduates who are able to compete in the world of work and get a decent salary, also encourage lecturers to have active classes, encourage students to carry out activities off campus so that students get real challenges in society or the working world. (5) The Study Program is expected to increase competitive advantage by creating a collaborative lecture process, using representative teaching methods and tools so that it can produce students who are competitive with other campus competitors.(6) For further research, this study suggests including other variables that are thought to affect the competitive advantage of a tertiary institution, such as capability, good corporate governance, and international accreditation, so that it is expected to provide more comprehensive research results.

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