

Palm Sugar Industry Development Strategy in Pernasidi Pondok Pring Village Banyumas

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Abstract

Banyumas is very well known for its diverse culinary sector, such as palm sugar. To develop palm sugar products, an effective development strategy is needed based on SWOT analysis and business model canvas. The research method used is descriptive qualitative with data collection through interviews, observations, documentation. The sample studied was 10 sugar industries in Pernasidi Village, Pondok Pring, which have livelihoods that depend on the palm sugar industry. The development strategy carried out by researchers based on SWOT analysis is the SO strategy by utilizing the surrounding community as a workforce. WO strategy, cooperation is needed to increase productivity. ST strategy, maintaining the characteristics and quality of the product. WT strategy, holding HR training. Using the right strategy, it can reduce the problem in the development of the industry such as weather factors, lack of managerial skills, promotion, limited use of technology, and increasingly tight competition. The suggestions put forward are the need for the role of government in terms of marketing, education, subsidies, and regulation.

Keywords

Development Strategy, Palm Sugar Industry, SWOT Analysis

INTRODUCTION

The palm sugar industry in Banyumas is one of the important sectors in the local economy and has been widely known both domestically and internationally (Alifah & Widodo, 2021). Palm sugar, also known as crystal coconut sugar, is produced from coconut sap collected and processed by farmers in the area. The process of making palm sugar involves several stages, starting from collecting the sap, boiling, to crystallizing the sugar. The uniqueness of Banyumas palm sugar lies in its high quality, with a richer taste and distinctive aroma compared to other sugars. This is because the production process still maintains traditional methods, although some producers have begun to adopt modern technology to increase efficiency and production capacity.

This industry not only provides significant economic contributions to the region, but also opens up employment opportunities for many local communities, especially in rural areas. In addition, palm sugar from Banyumas has succeeded in penetrating the export market, especially to European, American, and Asian countries, which further increases the economic value of this product. However, the

palm sugar industry in Banyumas also faces various challenges, such as fluctuations in palm sap prices, competition with sugar products from other regions, and the need to maintain quality standards in order to continue to compete in the international market. Support from the government, whether in the form of training, equipment assistance, or access to markets, is essential to maintain the sustainability of this industry.

One of the problems taken from Serayu News (2023) is that the number of tappers in Banyumas is predicted to decrease and regeneration is hampered. The Banyumas Regency Industry and Trade Service (Dinperindag) will update the data on the number of tappers, or coconut sugar craftsmen in Banyumas Regency. It is possible that their number has decreased, especially due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition, regeneration is also hampered.

The Functional Officer for Industrial Development, Industrial Sector, Banyumas Dinperindag, Amin Saefudin revealed that the number of coconut sugar craftsmen in Banyumas Regency was recorded at 26,580 people.

It was stated that currently the regeneration of tapper farmers is indeed not going well. This is because the interest of young people to pursue work as tapper farmers is very low. Because, to become a tapper farmer, you must have the skills to climb coconut trees and have high risks. The condition of the regeneration of tappers is not going well, one of which is influenced by the safety factor. This is because the average coconut trees owned by farmers are tens of years old, with very high heights. So it takes guts and skill to climb (Rohman, 2023).

The existence of several problems cannot be ignored, the palm sugar industry in Banyumas must continue to develop (Renleeuw et al., 2023). In Banyumas itself, the palm sugar industry has made a major contribution to the economy of its people. The Cilongok palm sugar industry prioritizes local wisdom so that it has distinctive characteristics, quality, and taste so that it is in great demand by people from within the country and abroad. The center of the palm sugar industry is located in Pernasidi Pondok Pring Village, Cilongok District, Banyumas Regency. Its rapid development has triggered the emergence of palm sugar industries in Banyumas, including Pekuncen District, Ajibarang District, Wangon District, Kebasen District, Somagede District, Kemranjen District.

Not all coconut sugar production gets maximum results and is balanced with the number of craftsmen (Pamikatsih et al., 2023). The potential and production results of each sub-district are different. This happens because the productivity of coconut sugar in Banyumas still has several obstacles such as natural factors, namely unpredictable weather and seasons, tools and capital that are still lacking, craftsmen's skills are lacking and so on. So an effective strategy is needed to help develop the coconut sugar industry. An effective strategy can be formed through a SWOT analysis (Taherdoost & Madanchian, 2021).

Jiagui & Lam, (2024) explains that SWOT analysis is a strategic planning method used to evaluate strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in a project or business venture. SWOT analysis uses simple concepts and easy-to-understand language, so it can be accessed by anyone without requiring a complex business background and can be applied to various types of organizations and projects, both large and small, making SWOT analysis a useful tool in various business contexts.

Previous studies that apply industrial development strategies with SWOT analysis have been carried out by several researchers, including Safitri (2020) who studied the development of the Kogaya Company's convection industry in dealing with imported goods from China. Fadli (2019) who studied the development strategy at PT. Gajah Tunggal Tbk. Fahli (2024) who studied the strategy for developing competitiveness in the rattan industry in Cirebon Regency. All these studies conclude that the SWOT analysis method and this can help the industry determine the right development strategy for the sustainability of the industry. Therefore, researchers are interested in applying this method to investigate the development strategy of the palm sugar industry in Pondok Pring Village, Banyumas.

Entrepreneur Concept

The concept of entrepreneur is "An entrepreneur is one who creates a new business in the face of risk and uncertainty for the purpose of achieving profit and growth by identifying significant opportunities and assembling the necessary resources to capitalize on them. Although many people come up with great business ideas, most never act on their ideas. " (De Aldaã, 2019). Entrepreneur is a person who creates a new business in the face of risk and uncertainty for the purpose of achieving profit and growth by identifying opportunities and utilizing existing resources (Salmony & Kanbach, 2022). The process of creative competition, where entrepreneurs create new ideas and new businesses that make existing ideas obsolete. Although businesses are constantly changing some rise, some sink, some succeed, and many fail, in fact it is an indication of a healthy, growing economic system creating new and better ways to serve needs and improve their quality of life and standard of living (Hatt, 2018).

Business Development Strategy

Strategy is the art of combining or interacting key success factors to create synergy in achieving goals. Strategy is a means to achieve goals. The benefit of strategy is to optimize superior resources in maximizing the achievement of performance targets (Zhang et al., 2022). Thus, one of the focuses of strategy is deciding whether the business should exist or not.

Development is improving the quality or quantity of an activity (Swaramarinda et al., 2022). Effort is an activity by directing energy, mind, or body to achieve a purpose: work

(action, initiative, effort, effort) to achieve something. Conceptually, development strategy in the industrial context is an effort to analyze the market conditions of the region, both internally, which include weaknesses and strengths. External market conditions are opportunities and threats that will be faced, then alternatives are taken to determine the strategy that must be carried out (Shutt & Liddle, 2020).

Internal market analysis is a company or organization's strategic advantage factors to determine where its strengths and weaknesses lie, so that strategy formulation can be utilized effectively, market opportunities and facing obstacles, developing resource and advantage profiles, comparing these profiles with keys to success, and identifying key strengths where the industry can build strategies to exploit opportunities and minimize weaknesses and prevent failure (Yu et al., 2019).

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Designs

This research is a descriptive study using a qualitative approach. According to Silverman (2021) qualitative research is a study based on the philosophy of postpositivism. This research was conducted qualitatively by collecting data through interviews. and the results of the study emphasize meaning rather than generalization.

The number of informants in this study consisted of ten people who were palm sugar entrepreneurs in Pernasidi Pondok Pring Village, Cilongok District, Banyumas, who of course had experience and understood very well, starting from the tapping technique to the production process of raw materials to become palm sugar that is ready to be sold.

Data Collecting Methods

This study used from two sources, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data is data obtained directly from the field either through interviews. The method of collecting primary data uses direct interviews with owners, employees and consumers in the palm sugar industry. Secondary data, in the form of documents or literature from the internet, the web of the trade cooperative service, and scientific journals. Secondary data collection is carried out by taking or using some/all of a set of data that has been recorded or reported (Cresswell, 2018).

Takona (2024) stated that activities in qualitative data analysis are carried out interactively and continuously until complete, so that the data is saturated. This means that

in data analysis, there needs to be continuous information mining so that the information obtained is truly deeper and has reached the center point of the information we want.

Data Analysis Methods

SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis is used to determine what strategy is used after looking at the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that the industry has. SWOT analysis is a management tool to evaluate the internal and external industries so that it can provide important information. SWOT analysis begins with the identification of positive aspects, namely Strength and negative aspects, namely Weakness from the internal industry. While from the external industry, Opportunities and Threats are identified (Xi, 2021).

Identification of internal factors (IFAS) and external factors (EFAS) is obtained by utilizing all analysis results. The final results of the SWOT analysis are then written down in 4 possible alternative strategies consisting of:

1. SO Strategy

If it is seen that the available opportunities also have a strong external position, then the industry also has a strong internal position, then the industry is considered to have a comparative advantage. These two good external and internal elements should not be let go, but become the main thing of empowerment even though we must not forget the existence of various obstacles and threats of change. (SO Strategy: using strength to take advantage of opportunities).

2. ST Strategy

This box brings together the relationship between strength and external threats that will become an opportunity if the industry can change the threat into an opportunity for further empowerment. (ST Strategy: Using strength to repel obstacles).

3. WO Strategy

This box demands certainty of the various opportunities and weaknesses that exist. The big opportunities here will face the lack of industry ability to take advantage of them. Growth must be done carefully to select and accept these opportunities, especially the potential of the region. (WO Strategy: Using opportunities to avoid weaknesses)

4. WT Strategy

A place to dig up various weaknesses that will be faced by the industry in its development. This can be seen from the relationship between threats and weaknesses. So you have to make a

decision to control the losses that will be experienced as a strategy.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on the results of interviews, it can be concluded that the status of business ownership in the palm sugar industry in Pernasidi Village, Pondok Pring, consists of 10 palm sugar entrepreneurs studied, 90% of business ownership is owned by individuals, 10% is jointly owned, and 0% is owned by families. In terms of the number of workers, business units that employ 10-12 workers are 2 units (20%) while those employing 12-15 people are 8 units (80%). This shows that the majority of the use of labor in the palm sugar industry in Pernasidi Village, Pondok Pring is 12-15 people, this is related to the large production costs. This was expressed by several informants as follows:

"I have my own business, but yes, many of them were previously family businesses, sis, so they have been passed down from generation to generation." (Interviews, Informant A).

The age grouping of palm sugar entrepreneurs in Pernasidi Village, Pondok Pring, aged 20-30 years, as many as 3 entrepreneurs (30%), aged 31-50 years as many as 6 entrepreneurs (70%), and no entrepreneurs over 50 years old (0%). This shows that most of the palm sugar entrepreneurs in Pernasidi Village, Pondok Pring are aged 31-50 years because the age range of 31-50 years is an unproductive age to apply for a job, so many of them set up their own businesses.

In terms of the level of education of palm sugar entrepreneurs in Pernasidi Village, Pondok Pring, there are no entrepreneurs who are elementary school graduates, 3 entrepreneurs are junior high school graduates (30%), 6 entrepreneurs are high school graduates (60%), 1 entrepreneur has a diploma (10%), and there are no entrepreneurs with a bachelor's degree (0%). This was expressed by several informants as follows:

"Most of the people who work as palm sugar entrepreneur here don't have a bachelor's degree, on average they only have high school graduates, sis, there are elementary and middle school students too, at most there are a few with diplomas." (Interviews, Informant C)

The capital required to establish ant sugar industry, entrepreneurs who spend capital of Rp1,000,000,000 - Rp2,500,000,000 are 3 entrepreneurs (30%) while with capital of Rp3,500,000,000 - Rp4,000,000,000 are 7 entrepreneurs (70%). This is influenced by the

ease or difficulty of obtaining capital. Entrepreneurs who get their own capital sources are 9 entrepreneurs (90%) and those who get their own capital sources and from loans are 1 entrepreneur (10%). This was expressed by several informants as follows:

"Regarding capital, if you want to start a business you have to have your own capital of a billion, sis, that's already the minimum capital, but in reality, we don't know what our expenses will be like in the future, so it's possible that later we will also be in debt for capital needs, if I do it myself. capital of at least two and a half billion to four billion, sis" (Interviews, Informant C).

All palm sugar industries studied are able to produce palm sugar in one day. The amount of palm sugar produced depends on consumer orders. In one month, it can produce 30 tons of palm sugar. The type of machine or technology used in the palm sugar production process is quite modern because it uses several modern machines, such as in the packaging process using a metal detector, sealer, and hanging sewing machine but also still uses traditional machines such as when cooking palm sap using a frying pan, oven, and sieve. This was expressed by several informants as follows:

"If you make palm sugar, starting from the tapping process, it is certainly still very traditional, sis, with equipment such as ditches, buckets, containers for the sap also made of bamboo, ropes, and so on, you climb the tree yourself, after getting the sap, it is then cooked in a large pan, right? That is also still traditional, we use a large fireplace, then when it comes to packaging, we start using machines such as sealers, metal detectors, and so on." (Interviews, Informant B).

The marketing area of the palm sugar industry in Pernasidi Village, Pondok Pring, starts from within the sub-district as much as 1 business unit (10%), within the district or city as much as 2 business units (20%), between cities as much as 4 business units (40%), and exports as much as 3 business units (30%). The marketing area of palm sugar reaches the national level and the largest is in Banyumas so that Banyumas becomes the center of palm sugar and the marketing of palm sugar has also reached the international arena. This was expressed by several informants as follows:

"Marketing of palm sugar is still around Banyumas, sis, but it's not uncommon to get orders from outside the city." (Interviews, Informant D).

"I've sold it to export to Japan, Netherlands, Singapore, even foreigners often come to Cilongok themselves, sis, but most of the sales

are still in Indonesia, because if you want to make exports, the requirements are really complicated, but Yes, in terms of profits, there are indeed more” (Interviews, Informant A).

Results of SWOT Strategy Analysis

According to (Xi, 2021), the internal factors (IFAS) is used to analyze the influence of the internal environment which can be done through identifying the company's internal factors so that the company's strengths and weaknesses will be known. The IFAS can show the company's internal conditions in the form of strengths and weaknesses. The external factors (EFAS) is used to analyze the internal environment by identifying the company's external factors to determine the company's opportunities and threats (Sasoko & Mahrudi, 2023). The EFAS can show the company's external conditions in the form of opportunities and threats (Siddiqui, 2021).

	products to obtain high sales value	because it can increase employment opportunities
Threats (T)	S-T Strategy	W-T Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rising raw material prices • The amount of competition between entrepreneurs • An increasingly selective market 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government policies and roles in determining raw material prices • Maintaining the authenticity and quality of products to be able to compete with other industries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversifying products from molded sugar (Javanese sugar) to crystal sugar (ant sugar) to attract consumer interest so that it has high competitiveness. • Conduct HR training to win the competition • Distribute products to many markets and not depend on one market

Table 1. SWOT Strategy Analysis

<p>IFAS</p> <p>EFAS</p>	Strength (S)	Weakness (W)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tapper skills • Wages are relatively cheap • Natural resources can be renewed • Have regular customers • It is a local product 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's difficult to meet the large number of consumer requests • Lack of promotional ability • The weather is not supportive • Lack of managerial skills
Opportunities (O)	S-O Strategy	W-O Strategy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High product demand level • The large availability of labor in areas around the industry • Marketing area up to overseas • There are government subsidies to develop businesses • Job opportunities are increasing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving HR skills to maintain product quality • Utilizing the local community as a workforce • Increasing international cooperation • Taking advantage of government subsidies to increase productivity • Making palm sugar an icon for local 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing promotional and marketing training to the workforce • Conduct promotions through various media such as the internet, television, billboards and radio so that the product is known to the public and can reach a wider market. • Creating a community between entrepreneurs to foster cooperation and good relations • Opening new industries

In a planning process, an analysis must be carried out, in this case the analysis carried out is a SWOT analysis. This analysis is seen from 4 factors, namely strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (Pasaribu, 2018). Strengths in this case are the strengths possessed by the palm sugar industry in Pernasidi Village, Pondok Pring so that they can be utilized by entrepreneurs, weaknesses in the industry must be minimized by entrepreneurs, opportunities in this case come from external factors or outside the palm sugar industry so that they can be maximized by entrepreneurs, while threats in this case are threats that come from outside the industry so that they can be prevented by entrepreneurs. Based on the SWOT matrix analysis, several development strategies can be proposed for the palm sugar industry in Pernasidi Village, namely:

SO Strategy

Utilizing the high demand for palm sugar by training and improving the skills of HR to maintain product quality so that demand will continue to increase. Labor can be utilized from the community around the industry in Pernasidi Village, Pondok Pring, wages will be relatively cheap and reduce unemployment rates in Banyumas. This was expressed by several informants as follows:

"skills training especially for the tappers and workers here is definitely mandatory because making your own palm sugar requires high tenacity" (Interviews, Informant A).

"wages can also be said to be cheap because the requirements are quite skilled and

tenacious, those who work are also mostly local residents, so it's quite good to reduce the number of unemployed people around here, it's quite good we can also contribute to regional economic development" (Interviews, Informant I).

The palm sugar industry in Pernasidi Village, Pondok Pring, which is known for its superior palm sugar product, can easily market its products abroad. In addition, palm sugar products can only be obtained from Cilongok Banyumas, so good cooperation is established with various countries such as Japan, the Netherlands, Singapore, and others. By increasing export activities, it can increase state and regional income. The increasingly good development of the palm sugar industry cannot be separated from the role of the government which also provides subsidies in the form of production equipment. This is utilized well by the palm sugar industry to increase productivity. This was expressed by several informants as follows:

Yes, of course, government subsidies for entrepreneurs like us are really needed because it really helps, especially in terms of capital, and as I said earlier, exports have many requirements and of course the costs incurred are also high, so we still really need to continue to be given subsidies by the government. (Interviews, Informant A)

A region must have its own icon or characteristic to attract public interest. In this case, making palm sugar an icon of Banyumas local products will increase consumer interest because palm sugar can only be obtained in Cilongok Banyumas so that the selling value of palm sugar increases.

WO Strategy

Every industry certainly wants its products to be known by the public so that doing promotion is the right thing to do but the majority of palm sugar entrepreneurs in Pernasidi Village, Pondok Pring, admit that they do not need to do promotion because they already have regular customers. Promotion needs to be done to increase income for entrepreneurs and craftsmen. Promotion can be in the form of advertising, participating in exhibitions, the internet, print media, television, radio, and others. Cooperation between entrepreneurs can establish good relationships and healthy competition so that prosperity can be evenly distributed. Taking advantage of the high consumer demand, entrepreneurs can establish a community, open new markets, and share tasks to meet consumer demand. This

was expressed by several informants as follows:

"To introduce a product, usually the fastest way is through an MSME product exhibition which is usually held by the government or communities, and also through word of mouth" (Interviews, Informant H)

"We are trying to start promoting it through Instagram, although it is not very active because we are not very good at creating content, but in this online era, of course we will continue to learn and try it." (Interviews, Informant E)

Opening new industries to increase employment and income. In an industry, workers who feel they are already professional will resign from the industry and establish their own new industry. This is a weakness, but on the other hand, with the existence of new industries, job opportunities are greater and reduce unemployment rates so that community welfare increases and these weaknesses can be reduced. This was expressed by several informants as follows:

"Not a few workers who previously worked for us for a long time because they already understood the process of making palm sugar, eventually left and opened their own businesses, yes, this can increase the number of competitors, but on the one hand, the job market becomes wider." (Interviews, Informant A)

ST Strategy

The government's role in subsidizing raw materials to the palm sugar industry can be utilized by the industry to increase its productivity so that it can penetrate the national and international markets. This has a good impact on export activities that will increase the income of the Banyumas and Indonesia regions. Maintaining the authenticity and quality of the product in order to compete with other industries. Characteristics and quality are the main indicators to increase consumer interest. A product that has good quality and its own characteristics will become the uniqueness of the product so that it can be easily recognized and remembered by consumers. This can be used to win the increasingly tight competition. This was expressed by several informants as follows:

"The government is quite supportive of our business activities by providing subsidies in the form of equipment or machines and some entrepreneurship training." (Interviews, Informant A)

The existence of subsidies from the government can ease our capital burden so that we can focus more on carrying out production. (Interviews, Informant D)

WT Strategy

Diversifying products from molded sugar to palm sugar can attract consumer interest because palm sugar is considered more efficient, easier to carry, and easier to use than molded sugar. The advantages of palm sugar make it a product with high competitiveness. This was expressed by several informants as follows:

"Palm sugar itself is a result of diversification of Javanese sugar or molded sugar which tends to be dense and heavy so it is less efficient, whereas palm sugar, because it is in powder form, is lighter, easier to package, and easier to use for everyday food or drinks." (Interviews, Informant D)

Conducting HR training to win the competition. The low level of education in Pernasidi Pondok Pring Village has an impact on the managerial skills of entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs in Pernasidi Pondok Pring Village have not yet carried out the planning, organizing, directing, and controlling processes comprehensively towards their industry. To improve industry performance, an effective and systematic managerial process must be implemented. The role of the government and academies is greatly needed to conduct managerial training that can improve entrepreneurs' skills in managing their industry so that entrepreneurs are able to think critically to increase their productivity. On the other hand, the large number of unskilled prospective workers makes many entrepreneurs reluctant to employ inexperienced workers. This hampers the productivity of the industry itself because every worker must seek their first experience in an industry that is willing to accept them and then they will be trained to become skilled workers. This was expressed by several informants as follows:

The work of making palm sugar has been passed down through the family for generations, so we work based on our experience, but that doesn't mean we reject the increasingly modern movement of the times, we will continue to strive to learn and develop further. (Interviews, Informant A)

Being a palm sugar craftsman can be said to be an increasingly rare job, because now there are very few or perhaps almost no young people who aspire to be palm sugar tappers, considering the many risks that result from

climbing tall coconut trees, but we still try to provide the best for the craftsmen who provide training and protective equipment when climbing. (Interviews, Informant G)

Distributing products to many markets and not relying on one market so that the product can be widely known by consumers. An increasingly selective market will hinder the product marketing process, if the product is distributed to many markets it will have a great opportunity to sell the product and make a profit. If the product is only distributed to one market and the market rejects it, it will always suffer losses so that the industry does not develop and can end up bankrupt

CONCLUSION

The SWOT analysis of the palm sugar industry in Pernasidi Village, Pondok Pring reveals that the industry has significant strengths, such as high demand for its unique product and support from the government, which can be leveraged for growth. However, weaknesses like limited promotion and low managerial skills pose challenges. To address these, strategies such as enhancing human resource skills, promoting the product in wider markets, and diversifying product offerings can help the industry grow. Cooperation between entrepreneurs, improved managerial processes, and increased export activities can enhance the industry's competitiveness both locally and internationally.

Suggestions for further research are to conduct a more in-depth analysis of the effectiveness of promotional strategies in increasing the competitiveness of palm sugar in the international market, considering that currently most entrepreneurs have not maximized promotions. Further research can also examine the impact of product diversification on increasing sales and consumer satisfaction. In addition, research is needed related to the implementation of managerial training and human resource development to see how improving these skills can contribute directly to the productivity of the palm sugar industry in Pernasidi Village, Pondok Pring. Other research can also focus on analyzing the role of government in supporting the sustainability and development of this industry.

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