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External and Internal Environmental Analysis of Strategic Management in the Digital Era

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ABSTRACT

Digital micro, small, and medium enterprises are micro, small, and medium enterprises that adopt digital technology in their operations, such as online sales through e-commerce, social media promotions, digital payments like QRIS and e-wallets, and digital business management. This technology aims to expand market reach, improve efficiency, competitiveness, and business growth in the digital economy era. This program is supported by national programs such as micro, small, and medium enterprises go digital. The purpose of this study is to analyze the external and internal environmental of strategic management in the digital era in small, micro, and medium enterprises. This research uses a qualitative approach with a systematic literature analysis using secondary data such as books, journals, and other related sources. The research shows that small, micro, and medium enterprises in the digital era dynamically formulate adaptive strategies based on the internal environmental, such as strengths, weaknesses, resources, and culture, as well as the external environmental, such as opportunities, threats, technological trends, and competitors. The digital era is transforming the way small, micro, and medium enterprises interact, conduct business, and create new business models that leverage data and connectivity for competitive advantage.

External Environmental, Internal Environmental, Strategic Management, Digital Era

Keywords

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INTRODUCTION

The development of the digital era is marked by a massive shift from analog to digital, driven by the internet, smartphones, social media, cloud computing, AI, and IoT. This is transforming communication, business, education, and even daily life. It offers efficiency, ease of access, and new

opportunities, but also brings challenges such as the digital divide and data security (Batubara, 2025). This transformation continues with the rapid growth of the digital economy in Indonesia, integrating technology across various sectors such as manufacturing, agriculture, logistics, and micro, small, and medium enterprises.

Micro, small, and medium enterprises are a crucial economic sector in Indonesia, encompassing small to medium-sized businesses categorized by assets, turnover, or number of employees. They play a role as an economic pillar, absorb labor, and drive innovation. They receive government support in the form of capital and digitalization development to enable them to advance and compete globally. Digital micro, small, and medium enterprises are micro, small, and medium enterprises that adopt digital technology in their operations, such as online sales through e-commerce, social media promotions, digital payments like QRIS and e-wallets, and digital business management. This technology aims to expand market reach, improve efficiency, competitiveness, and business growth in the digital economy era. This program is supported by national programs such as micro, small, and medium enterprises go digital.

Strategic management is the fundamental process of determining an organization's long-term goals, developing policies, formulating strategies, allocating resources, and implementing and evaluating plans to achieve competitive advantage and overall objectives. This involves internal and external analysis, formulation, implementation, and evaluation (Arifah, 2023). This process, at the highest level of management, ensures the company can adapt, grow, and survive in a competitive environment by directing all elements of the organization. The purpose of strategic management is to provide long-term direction for the company, create competitive advantage, improve organizational efficiency and effectiveness, facilitate adaptation to environmental changes, and formulate and evaluate strategies to achieve specific goals such as profitability, customer satisfaction, and market growth. This involves analyzing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) to ensure the company remains relevant and competitive in the future.

Strategic management of the external environment is the process of analyzing factors outside the organization, such as the macro and micro environment or industry, to identify opportunities and threats, formulate effective strategies, create competitive advantages, and facilitate decision-making so the company can adapt and survive business changes (Novianto, 2020). This involves analyzing forces such as economic, political, social, and technological trends, competitors, suppliers, and customers to proactively

respond to market changes. The goal of strategic management of the external environment is to identify opportunities and threats outside the company in order to formulate appropriate, adaptive, and competitive strategies. This improves performance and ensures the organization's survival by capitalizing on market trends, outperforming competitors, effectively responding to changes in economic, social, technological, and political factors, and establishing a clear long-term direction.

Strategic management of the internal environment is the process of analyzing controllable factors within the organization, such as human resources, finance, technology, operations, and culture, to identify strengths and weaknesses, which then form the basis for formulating strategies to build competitive advantage and achieve long-term goals. This is an important part of strategic management, often analyzed through a functional approach in conjunction with external environmental analysis (Yunus et al., 2024). The goal of internal strategic management is to identify a company's internal strengths and weaknesses to build sustainable competitive advantage, ensure optimal resource utilization, and adapt strategies to align with internal and external conditions to achieve long-term goals, efficiency, and adapt to change.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the external and internal environmental of strategic management in the digital era in small, micro, and medium enterprises.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with a systematic literature analysis using secondary data such as books, journals, and other related sources. A qualitative approach is a research method that aims to understand social phenomena from the perspective of participants, focusing on meaning, subjective experiences, and natural contexts. It uses descriptive data such as words and images from interviews, observations, and documents, rather than numbers, to answer the questions "why" and "how" something happens. This method is inductive, building theory from data, and relying on the researcher as the primary instrument to gain an in-depth understanding of complex issues (Kurdhi et al., 2023). Systematic literature analysis is a structured and transparent research method for identifying, evaluating, and synthesizing all relevant literature on a specific topic or research question, aiming to provide comprehensive, objective, and replicable conclusions based on existing scientific evidence. It differs from traditional literature reviews, such as narrative ones, because it follows strict scientific protocols, ensuring objectivity and transparency throughout the search and analysis process.

Secondary data in qualitative research is data not obtained directly from the research subjects, but rather through third parties or previous archives (Kurdhi et al., 2023). This data is extremely useful for complementing primary

data, broadening understanding, and strengthening the results of data triangulation. The purpose of secondary data is to provide context, broaden insights, complement primary data, and save time and money by utilizing data already collected by others, such as censuses, reports, or government databases, for more comprehensive and efficient analysis. Secondary data for systematic literature analysis is existing information from previous researchers, such as journals, books, theses, dissertations, conference proceedings, and research reports, collected from academic databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, Garuda, and university repositories to identify, evaluate, and synthesize research evidence thoroughly and objectively.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Challenges for Small, Micro, and Medium Enterprises in the Digital Era

Micro, small, and medium enterprises in the digital era are businesses that utilize technology to expand their reach, increase efficiency, and compete in the global market through e-commerce platforms, social media, marketplaces, messaging apps, and digital payment systems like QRIS (Batubara, 2025). This digital transformation helps micro, small, and medium enterprises shift from local markets to broader ones, but requires adaptation to trends, digital understanding, and the use of data and unique product innovations to compete. Benefits of digitalization for micro, small, and medium enterprises:

1. Wider Market Reach

Market reach in the digital era has become much broader because technology eliminates geographical boundaries, enabling businesses to reach national and even global consumers through e-commerce, social media, and digital marketing such as paid advertising, thereby increasing the visibility, efficiency, and competitiveness of small businesses in the international market. Key strategies include creating quality content, engaging with active engagement, leveraging paid promotional features, and utilizing appropriate digital platforms to reach targeted audiences more effectively.

2. Increased Efficiency

Increased efficiency in the digital era represents a fundamental shift in the way work and operations are conducted across various sectors, such as business, education, and the public, driven by the adoption of digital technology to optimize resources, accelerate processes, reduce costs, increase productivity, and provide better services through automation, data analysis, and connectivity, making it key to economic growth and competitiveness. This includes task automation, real-time communication, data-driven decision-making, and the development of innovative business models.

3. Effective Marketing

Effective marketing in the digital era is an integrated strategy using online platforms and technologies such as social media, search engines, email, and websites to reach, engage, and convert audiences with relevant, personalized, and measurable content, focusing on relevance, data, and interaction, not just promotion. The key is understanding your audience, creating value through quality content, leveraging influencers, and analyzing data to continuously adapt.

4. Financial Management

Digital-era financial management is a transformation of financial management that utilizes digital technology for automation, efficiency, and data-driven decision-making. This includes the use of fintech, data analytics, cloud computing, artificial intelligence, blockchain, and digital payments such as e-wallets and e-payments to manage transactions, assets, and risks in real time, for individuals, micro, small, and medium enterprises, and large corporations.

5. Customer Service

Digital customer service refers to the use of digital channels and technologies to provide support and assistance to customers. Unlike traditional telephone-based support, digital customer service utilizes channels such as live chat, SMS, email, and self-service portals to offer fast, convenient, and personalized interactions.

Challenges for micro, small, and medium enterprises in the digital era are as follows:

1. Digital Literacy Gap

Many micro, small, and medium enterprises do not yet understand how to effectively use marketplace applications, digital cashiers, online advertising, and digital administration.

2. Limited Access and Infrastructure

Limited stable internet access, especially in remote areas, as well as initial investment costs for hardware and software.

3. Fierce Competition

Digital platforms bring micro, small, and medium enterprises together with thousands of competitors, demanding differentiation and better marketing strategies.

4. Digital Security

Concerns about fraud, data theft, and cyberattacks are new risks.

5. Limited Human Resources

The difficulty of finding and retaining a workforce with digital skills such as marketing, data management, and others.

6. Digital Financial Management

Difficulties in organizing bookkeeping and financial administration digitally.

7. Product Standardization

Challenges in meeting quality standards for digital market expansion, including exports.

External and Internal Environmental Analysis of Strategic Management in the Digital Era

Small, micro, and medium enterprises in the digital era dynamically formulate adaptive strategies based on the internal environmental:

1. Strengths

The primary strength of strategic management lies in its ability to provide clear direction regarding vision and mission, identify opportunities and threats, build competitive advantages, optimize resources, increase adaptability to change, and drive better decision-making and operational efficiency, thus ensuring the company's long-term success and relevance amidst the competition. Strategic management is a force that transforms companies from merely reactive to proactive, capable of building a strong foundation for sustainable growth. The strengths of micro, small, and medium enterprises in the digital era lie in their flexibility, broad market reach, low-cost promotion, local product innovation, and operational efficiency through digital platforms and technologies such as imitation and e-commerce, making them the backbone of the economy with significant potential for advancement if supported by digital literacy, infrastructure, and appropriate policies. Although they still face challenges in access to technology and digital skills (Pandiangan et al., 2024).

2. Weaknesses

Key weaknesses of strategic management include high costs and time constraints, limited adaptability due to an over-focus on rational planning, reliance on potentially inaccurate assumptions, execution constraints such as lack of communication and resistance to change, and the potential to stifle innovation and creativity if overly rigid. The process is also vulnerable to rapid environmental changes and limited internal resources. Weaknesses of micro, small, and medium enterprises in the digital era include low digital literacy, gaps in infrastructure and internet access,

limited capital for technology investment and digital marketing, intense competition in the digital market, cybersecurity challenges, and difficulties in digital data and financial management, such as bookkeeping and reporting, all of which slow down transformation and competitiveness (Arifah, 2023). To address these challenges, increased digital literacy training, better infrastructure, financial support, and ongoing mentoring from the government and relevant parties are needed.

3. Resources

Strategic management resources are key company assets, capabilities, and processes, such as human resources, technology, finance, information, brands, and networks, that are managed purposefully to achieve long-term goals and competitive advantage, rather than solely focusing on day-to-day operations (Hamzah et al., 2025). This involves integrating human resource functions with the overall business strategy, ensuring all resources are aligned to support the organization's vision, mission, and targets, making them a vital asset for sustainable competitiveness (Tambunan et al., 2025). The resources of micro, small, and medium enterprises in the digital era include financial capital, digitally skilled human resources, digital platforms such as marketplaces and social media, information technology such as data management and analysis applications, and networking and collaboration. All of these enable micro, small, and medium enterprises to expand their markets, increase efficiency, and compete better globally through the strategic use of information and communication technology for production, marketing, and business management. Utilizing these resources is key for micro, small, and medium enterprises to not only survive but also grow and increase their competitiveness in the digital era (Batubara, 2025).

4. Culture

Strategic management culture is the internal condition of an organization encompassing collective values, beliefs, and norms that support and guide the successful implementation of a company's strategy. A sound strategy needs to be aligned with a strong culture, ensuring employees are motivated, engaged, and understand the objectives, and making culture a competitive advantage that ensures strategies are effective and adaptable to change (Pandiangan et al., 2025). The strategic management culture for micro, small, and medium enterprises in the digital era focuses on flexibility, innovation, and the use of technology to increase competitiveness. This transformation goes beyond simply adopting digital tools, but also shifts the mindset to become more data-driven, responsive,

and customer-experience-oriented (Deni, 2023). Key challenges within this culture include limited digital literacy and the ability to adopt new technologies. However, micro, small, and medium enterprises that successfully adopt this digital culture generally have a higher chance of survival and growth.

As well as the external environmental, such as:

1. Opportunities

Strategic management opportunities are a company's ability to achieve competitive advantage, growth, and long-term profitability by identifying opportunities, responding to market changes, allocating resources effectively, and creating innovation through a structured process of strategic planning, implementation, and evaluation, including navigating the digital era with adaptation and expertise such as the balanced scorecard. This is not merely about survival, but rather a tool for rapid growth, improving performance, and ensuring business sustainability. With strategic management, companies can transform from merely reacting to being proactive, creating a desired future, and achieving sustainable success (Dewi and Srisusilawati, 2025). The opportunities for micro, small, and medium enterprises in the digital era are enormous through digital platforms such as marketplaces and social media, digital marketing, and new business models, which offer the advantages of broad market access, cost-effective promotions, and easy transactions via fintech. The challenges are technological literacy and infrastructure, but the solution is digital community training and collaboration, enabling micro, small, and medium enterprises to be more creative, innovative, and penetrate the global market through product storytelling.

2. Threats

Threats in strategic management are external factors beyond the organization's control that have the potential to cause losses or problems, such as intense competition, changes in government regulations, economic recession, changes in customer preferences, or the emergence of new disruptive technologies. The goal is to identify unfavorable external environmental factors so the organization can design strategies to minimize their impact and survive (Novianto, 2020). The main threats to micro, small, and medium enterprises in the digital era include intense competition from large platforms, imported products, gaps in digital literacy and access, cyber threats such as phishing and malware disrupting old business models, and changes in consumer behavior that demand speed and convenience, forcing micro, small, and medium enterprises to

adapt to technology and digital security to avoid being left behind or going out of business.

3. Technological Trends

Current strategic management technology trends center on the integration of advanced data analytics, automation, and cloud computing to drive innovation, efficiency, personalized customer experiences, and rapid adaptation in the disruptive digital era, with a focus on technology-aligned business objectives, sustainability, and new platform-based business models (Ramli and Kartini, 2023). The technology trend for micro, small, and medium enterprises in the digital era is the comprehensive adoption of digital marketing, such as marketplaces and social media, transactions like e-wallets and QRIS, and operations like cashier applications, stock management, and cloud accounting, which enable them to reach a wider market, increase efficiency, and competitiveness through online platforms and digital systems. This is an urgent need for survival.

4. Competitors

Competitors in strategic management are other companies offering similar products or services and targeting the same market segment. They compete for customers using strategies such as price, innovation, or quality. Competitor analysis is crucial for creating a long-term competitive advantage. Competitors can be divided into strategic groups such as market and same-strategy, market challengers, or market followers, all of which influence the industry's profit potential (Sedjati, 2015). Competitors for micro, small, and medium enterprises in the digital era are diverse, including other more adaptive and innovative micro, small, and medium enterprises, large companies with abundant resources in digital platforms, imported products, and changing consumer behavior demanding speed and convenience. This is compounded by the challenges posed by gaps in access and technological literacy that leave many traditional micro, small, and medium enterprises behind.

The digital era is transforming the way small, micro, and medium enterprises interact, conduct business, and create new business models that leverage data and connectivity for competitive advantage.

CONCLUSION

The research shows that small, micro, and medium enterprises in the digital era dynamically formulate adaptive strategies based on the internal environmental, such as strengths, weaknesses, resources, and culture, as well as

the external environmental, such as opportunities, threats, technological trends, and competitors. The digital era is transforming the way small, micro, and medium enterprises interact, conduct business, and create new business models that leverage data and connectivity for competitive advantage.

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