

SURVIVAL STRATEGIES FOR EVENT ORGANIZERS DURING A PANDEMIC FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ISLAMIC BUSINESS ETHICS

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ABSTRACT

This research was conducted to see how service business owners who focus on event organizers are surviving during a pandemic. by conducting this research, we hope that the strategies implemented by surviving entrepreneurs can be duplicated and applied to other companies. Data collection techniques in this study used observation, interview, and documentation techniques. The result of this research at PT. Orbit Semesta Production implements several strategies, including action, investment, and operations. The company has also fulfilled the elements of business according to the Islamic view by not doing things that are not in line with PT. Turindo also carries out a business divestment strategy by streamlining operational offices and transferring resource functions through online media. In applying business ethics, business people follow the elements of ethics. In other businesses, CV. Flazh Production implements a reduction strategy, namely cutting team member rights, because the new production strategy does not follow what has been implemented in entrepreneurial ethics, such as not helping and being responsible for what the company owns.

Keywords: Survival Strategies; Event organizer; Islamic Business Ethics.

ABSTRAK

Penelitian ini dilakukan untuk melihat bagaimana para pemilik usaha jasa yang fokus pada event organizer bertahan di masa pandemi. Dengan dilakukannya penelitian ini, kami berharap strategi yang diterapkan oleh para pengusaha yang masih bertahan dapat diduplikasi dan diterapkan pada perusahaan lain. Teknik pengumpulan data dalam penelitian ini menggunakan teknik observasi, wawancara, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian ini di PT. Orbit Semesta Production menerapkan beberapa strategi, antara lain tindakan, investasi, dan operasi. Perusahaan juga telah memenuhi unsur-unsur bisnis menurut pandangan Islam dengan tidak melakukan hal-hal yang tidak sejalan dengan PT. Turindo juga melakukan strategi divestasi bisnis dengan merampingkan kantor operasional dan mengalihkan fungsi sumber daya melalui media online. Dalam menerapkan etika bisnis, para pelaku bisnis mengikuti unsur-unsur etika. Dalam bisnis lainnya, CV. Flazh Production menerapkan strategi reduksi yaitu pemotongan hak anggota tim, karena strategi produksi yang baru tidak mengikuti apa yang selama ini diterapkan dalam etika kewirausahaan, seperti tidak membantu dan bertanggung jawab atas apa yang dimiliki perusahaan.

Kata Kunci: Strategi Bertahan; Penyelenggara Acara; Etika Bisnis Islam.

INTRODUCTION

According to data published by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the phenomenon of the COVID-19 pandemic is of considerable concern because it affects the economy in terms of supply and demand. On the supply side, the company has significantly reduced the supply of raw materials and has an unhealthy workforce and a constrained supply chain. From the demand side, there is little and less demand and a decrease in consumer and customer confidence in a product or service. (OECD) also stated that MSMEs are now experiencing a significant effect or impact on these conditions. MSMEs are very vulnerable and at risk of being affected in business activities. According to data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises (UKM), in 2018, there were 64,194,057 MSMEs in Indonesia and employed 116,978,631 workers, so, at that time, MSMEs could compete, and the current pandemic made the proud numbers at that time the opposite. i.e., decreased (Hardilawati, 2020).

MSMEs in this research can be ascertained to be affected, and this research focuses on the MSME sector of the event organizer. flash production services, Wedding Organizer (Ospro), and Turindo (Tour and Travel), where the three businesses are engaged in services, especially Event Organizers. During the third pandemic, the MSMEs experienced ups and downs in demand. The government issued policies in several regulations. Most government policies require all community activities to be carried out at home during the Covid-19 pandemic. Whether we like it or not, these three businesses must survive with all the strategies that can be pursued for the sustainability of their business. So that this researcher knows the strategies used to survive and continue his business.

One of the essential studies in Islam is the issue of business ethics, namely the understanding of ethics, which means a code or set of principles in which people live (rules or a set of principles that govern human life). Ethics is a part of philosophy that discusses rationally and critically values, norms, or morality (Muzaiyin, 2021). As formulated by experts, Islamic economists are a science that studies aspects of benefit and benefit in economic activities by paying attention to human deeds as far as can be known according to reason (ratio) and guidance of revelation (*nash*). Economic ethics is the same as morals because they both discuss the good and the bad in human behavior.

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The author looks at research on survival strategies in businesses where few know Islamic law. The critical thing in this research is how to compare previous theories in several

companies and study them from the perspective of Islamic Business Ethics. Most of the previous research only revealed how to maintain a business in a critical condition faced by companies by adding knowledge and literacy to the management science (Ichsan & Yusuf, 2021). In this study, the authors use survival reference theory which refers to the opinion of Fred R. David, who analyzes survival strategies using three strategic references. To analyze small business survival strategies during a pandemic, we use Fred R. David's theory. The first reference is to understand Retrenchment. Retrenchment is a contract within a group or organization to reclaim assets and finances to recover falling profits. In this case, it can be called a reorganization strategy. In addition to the theory that refers to David's research, the author also refers to Islamic business ethics theory to see how companies act ethically according to Islam. A further explanation related to savings is how a group can maintain order in a business to bounce back by cutting less than optimal products, cutting the number of employees, reducing less productive businesses, and building a load control system. In this context, the author concludes with retrenchment that savings are made with the first reference if one group has a trading business with all potential but cannot maintain it regularly. The second reference is if a group experiences a decline compared to other groups.

If we look at the third reference, we can make savings if we find a group experiencing degradation due to pressure from other parties and team member performance is not good in a group. The fourth reference is that if in a group, there are leaders who cannot carry out their duties properly, it can be exemplified by their inability to take advantage of internal and external opportunities. The last one is the fifth reference if one group makes improvements due to something unexpected (soaring in the number of orders).

The author refers to the first condition to sustain a business in the initial survival strategy. The strategy is to carry out an activity known as Divestment. This activity is one of the techniques to restore a business so that it can return if it experiences a decline. Divestment can also be done by selling goods considered less than optimal in a business and reducing expenses considered less impactful in a business. From the above understanding, we can conclude that Divestment is an attempt to increase or survive a business by downsizing. Six reasons need to be considered for a business's divestment activities to maintain the business properly.

The first reason for doing Divestment to maintain a business is to do Downsizing is done because a group does not achieve unwanted results. Furthermore, Divestment, or maybe it can be called Downsizing, is done because a business group requires more resources to become competitive. The third reason is to do Downsizing because the reason for Downsizing is part of the responsibility of each section. The fourth reason is that Downsizing is done because a business group cannot compete due to objective conditions in the field. The last reason for Divestment is because the activity is a basic need in a group, and there is no emergence of trust that threatens that group.

Liquidation is the process of selling all assets of a business in exchange for tangible assets. The process was done because a business group chose to discontinue operations rather than experience a significant decline. Three things must be seen to carry out the liquidation process: the absence of results from a project in a specific business division. Another reason that can be used for deciding on liquidation activities is the company's bankruptcy, and the last is the desire of the shareholders of a business to sell their assets to reduce losses.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a qualitative method. Research is positioned as a critical instrument used to examine the condition of natural objects, and data collection techniques are combined. The data obtained tends to be qualitative in several companies focusing on event organizers. We collect data using in-depth interviews and direct observation. In addition to reducing data analysis techniques, the authors prefer spiral analysis, according to Creswell (Creswell, 2013). These steps can inform findings in the field more clearly. This data analysis is inductive/qualitative, and the research results are to understand the meaning, understand the uniqueness, construct phenomena, and find hypotheses (Sugiono, 2015)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

To achieve the research objectives, the researcher conducted a data search in the field by conducting interviews with informants. Interviews were conducted at three objects, namely PT. Turindo Tour & Travel, PT. Orbit Semesta Production, and CV. Flashh Production is located in Yogyakarta. In this study, the authors conducted interviews with the person in charge of the company. The writer went to the company's owner and was confronted by the manager and division heads in other companies. Interviews were conducted even though they were not the owners because they saw their position as the person in charge of the company's activities

while surviving the pandemic era. This study aims to determine Survival Strategy during the Covid-19 Pandemic from the perspective of Islamic Business Ethics. To achieve the objectives of this study, researchers describe the following aspects:

In dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, it is necessary to have tips from companies in the form of strategies that must be carried out from all aspects so that they can continue to operate and survive during this Covid-19 pandemic. The strategy of shrinking or grouping is done through cost reduction. Another effort the company makes is to save resources and assets due to declining sales or profits due to a particular problem. Based on the interview results, the President and Director of Flazh Production believed that when the pandemic emerged, the company made a virtual production strategy to overcome this problem. The concept being pursued indeed requires assets that support these activities, and of course, the tools and materials are also very different from non-virtual or offline activities.

In other companies, the manager at the Wedding Ospro company has a different program from the previous company. Regarding this downsizing or divestment strategy, he stated that the company did not take such steps or reduce assets because it was less practical and less functional. The sale or downsizing of assets, if carried out to meet operational needs in this company itself, may be helpful for some time and can provide the first solution if it is carried out. However, if it is carried out regularly, it will become a snowball effect which means that the burden is getting bigger and bigger every day. Need to produce an effective solution.

In the third company, the researchers took from the marketing department at the company PT. Turindo Tour & Travel. The marketing team said the company saw that the crisis problems had to be addressed appropriately. The company started by regulating or streamlining operational expenses, such as temporarily closing or freezing several scattered offices and diverting workers' operations online. The emergence of this strategy and the termination of efforts is to limit the area of the tourism sector and orders to limit sales from the government so that opening one office for operations is sufficient and closing other branch offices in the city of Yogyakarta. This effort is considered quite effective and a solution for Turindo, which is different from the case with other companies where there is still an opportunity to find consumers.

The strategy that business owner can do to continue to operate and survive during the pandemic is to do strategy tips, one of which is a strategy of retrenchment or shrinking elements. The downsizing in question is a process such as shrinking a product or resource that is less than optimal to be able to continue to maintain its business. The results of the interview regarding this strategy, at the beginning of the pandemic in flash production, made several efforts to overcome operational costs. The results of the interview regarding this strategy, at the beginning of the pandemic in flash production, made several efforts to overcome operational costs. Business actors said that because the burden borne by the company was not negligible and the operational costs were relatively high on the business, it was difficult to let it go. Then the business actor makes a moderately painful decision by reducing some of the operational burdens on the resource side, namely severing the working rights of the resources owned.

At the second company in the Orbit Semesta Production Division, they carried out several defensive strategies to support the company's operational activities. Some of the strategies carried out include efforts to diversify businesses. This effort is carried out by expanding the market and developing new products, such as creating a barbershop business and business investment companies for colleagues or partners. Efforts may be made, but only at the core of Orbit's business where the business can run well. the development businesses should be running better. Ospro may have a slight difference compared to Orbit. This company has the effort to handle events outside of weddings as the core of Ospro's business, such as birthdays and the inauguration of professors on campuses. Some of these efforts are carried out in the hope that they can continue carrying out their business operations properly without having to make unwanted efforts such as downsizing, divestment, or even liquidation.

Unlike the two previous companies, Turindo Tour & Travel closed operations for the first three months following the government's rules regarding activity restrictions to avoid a pandemic due to covid-19. After three months, Turindo limited the use of resources and operating hours of the company. Workers are asked to change work schedules and apply work patterns from home because they can use or minimize operational tools to a minimum. Turindo does this program, so they still have sales within these limitations. Turindo also made offers in the form of door-to-door sales to several agencies. They offer promo packages and make videos or educational content on tours or tours in the media. Besides that, they also provide promos in

the form of other exciting activities such as pooling or give away to attract tourism interest from academics.

Based on the communication results with Flazh Production, it can be seen that during the Covid-19 pandemic, the company must always run in any way. The company requires even the entire service team to consider the emergence of a policy from the government that all activities can be stopped indefinitely. The company hopes it does not go bankrupt even though this pandemic is terrible for them. In contrast to Turindo, they stated that the pandemic greatly affected the business area that became their livelihood. With the pandemic phenomenon, the government requires that every tour must be closed and its operations limited, so that many of the ticket schedules and tour tours are suddenly returned and their operations canceled.

The company sees many offices, usually Turindo's target market, even closing because of the applicable regulations. With this, several offices belonging to Turindo scattered in the Yogyakarta province area had to be temporarily suspended. The company automatically stopped using the relevant resources in the office in a typical ape-from-home pattern in the community at that time. At the company, Ospro is similar. At Ospro, they believe that they should close the company and transfer it so that the company has the option not to suffer continuous losses due to high operating costs.

Islam provides freedom in conducting business activities, but in Islam, there are fundamental principles that serve as guidelines that must be understood and obeyed by a Muslim in running his business. Islamic business ethics is knowledge about the procedures for managing a business where every business or business actor must pay attention to norms and morality to benefit humans and get blessings from Allah SWT. If viewed from every activity or effort of the Ospro Company, which is engaged in the service sector, the Company has carried out its business activities based on Islamic principles, and the Company can be said to have carried out and fulfilled the elements of Islamic business ethics. Their business practices are known from observations and interviews in which several strategies during the pandemic they have run have never had complaints and losses from any party, either internal or external. With various strategic efforts, such as company investment, creating new marketing concepts, and other efforts, we have always received an adequate response from consumers or company colleagues.

Regarding the survival strategy implemented by the Turindo company, they stated that several strategies or efforts were carried out to maintain their business during the Covid-19 pandemic, but several things burdened resources or employees. When viewed from the side of the workers, they saw a decision to close office operations up to a predetermined time so that it automatically reduced team member work. All the cuts were made to maintain the business or business during the pandemic until conditions improve and workers can return to work as usual under normal circumstances. Turindo also explained that wages or salaries are still supported but not as standard.

From the cuts made by Turindo and all kinds of shrinking strategies, the writer sees that Turindo is doing critical things to its workers. Even though there is a shift in the work schedule or company operations, wages should be given differently before the Covid-19 pandemic. The essence of the downsizing of this company can be seen from the indicators of Islamic business ethics, namely how companies help because they still provide space for work and wages even though the company is still in bad condition. The company is still affected by a very significant lousy condition because the tourism sector is completely closed and can no longer operate until the time set by the government. Turindo has fulfilled Islamic elements well. Implementing Islamic business ethics can be seen in applying marketing strategies that do not violate sharia values. Turino's marketing efforts provide education on how to share travel and tour tips on social media and provide attractive promos and cheap packages so that they can help the economy, which is currently struggling during the pandemic, to consumers who are struggling. Require the services of a Turindo company.

Flazh production is trying to adapt to the Covid-19 conditions, but some policies of Flazh Production deviate from Islamic business ethics. At the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, the termination of work rights carried out by Flazh Production was different from the principles of Islamic-based business, which prioritized mutual help and responsibility concepts. The author considers the program that the author considers not following these principles is a decision to terminate employment. This termination is carried out in order to minimize losses for the company. Based on Islamic business ethics, business people are not only based on the pursuit of profit but also the attitude of helping fellow human beings. In addition to ending employment rights, Flazh Production uses a strategy of reducing assets and transferring asset functions. Strategy for moving asset functions that were previously used for

offline events into assets for virtual production purposes. This strategy can be said to be successful because he said that the virtual production concept increases the business run at the company. What the author thinks is unethical is that the company should have a sense of responsibility towards employees who have been laid off so that they can be withdrawn to work at the company.

DISCUSSION

This research was conducted by observing several businesses in Yogyakarta's service sector. Companies engaged in the service sector felt a significant impact, so several efforts and strategies were needed to keep the business going. The research results show that the Flazh Production company in maintaining its business during the Covid-19 pandemic is done by looking at and changing the concept from the production, marketing, and management side. The efforts made by Flazh include asset function transfers, operational downsizing, cash flow management, and online marketing media. This research is similar to the research conducted by on MSMEs (Siregar, 2021). In this research, the results will increase insight and ability in mindset and insight into the knowledge of business people and academics. In addition to increasing insight and knowledge, thoroughness in reading a market, productivity efficiency, financial management, and several pieces of training that can support professional abilities are things that business people can understand the writer hopes

The search was carried out on the Orbit company or commonly known as Ospro about how their strategy is to continue business continuity. The search illustrates that business actors at the beginning of the pandemic felt a somewhat burdensome impact as a business engaged in the wedding organization service sector. As a company engaged in services or events for a long time, it is sufficient to have provisions or preparations if it experiences critical problems. In the early days of the pandemic, the company had several countermeasures or solutions as a survival strategy. This effort is to regulate the entry and exit of the company's financial cash flow, such as streamlining monthly expenses and managing savings or savings funds that are considered to be a solution. Orbit's efforts at the start of the company's pandemic have survived without having too broad an impact. The implications of this strategy can be seen from the first time that the Ospro office could operate clearly, even though it could have been more optimal than before the Covid-19 pandemic. This strategy is in line with research (Fitriyani, 2020). that one

way to maintain a business during a pandemic is to have readiness or prepare long before a difficult time for a business occurs.

In the research conducted in Turindo, the author saw that the company felt heavy economic conditions due to the pandemic. In these conditions, in the beginning, the government stated that there were restrictions on the territory, tourism, and social movements. This condition caused a decrease in sales and even stopped Turindo's operational activities. As a company with decades of experience operating in the Turindo tourism sector, it must be entirely professional and prepare for conditions that can threaten the company. Turindo assumes that the solution to the problems arising from the Covid-19 pandemic is to save the operational movement of resources so that they do not become a problem due to the spread of Covid-19. Along with this explanation, this is in line with research conducted by that organizational resources such as competence, control, policy (Diandra, 2021), and culture can also contribute to improving business performance. Today's organizational resources have been heavily influenced by digital technology, so companies must think about more specific capabilities to resolve the internal affairs of business organizations.

Business in Islam is the same as business in general. Islamic business must comply with the basis of the Qur'an, as-sunnah, al-ijma', and qiyās and pay attention to the limits that have been determined. Previous research (Baidowi, 2010). stated that ethics must be the basis of critical practical guidelines that bring religious awareness to all economic activities. Ethics is also expected to provide benefits such as helping, being honest and fair, and not conducting monopolies and products that must be halal, far from anything harmful.

In this study, Ospro did not carry out any activities or indicated to be out of Islamic business ethics. Even though the company is experiencing a situation that has never been experienced before, Ospro prioritizes the common good. Research (Ali, 2020) in business ethics applies ethical principles that business people must obey. These principles include autonomy, namely decision-making and action based on moral responsibility. The second principle is the principle of honesty as the key to the success of every business. In addition, there is the principle of fairness to ensure that everyone in the business is treated equally and the principle of mutual benefit to ensure that all parties get the same rights. Finally, there are principles. The principle of moral integrity is fundamental in running a business for the sake of the business's good name.

The strategy implementation by Flazh Production is exemplary in terms of marketing and the concept of Production. However, the company or business actor undergoing a new concept, namely virtual Production, has sent home or terminated several workers, none other than to reduce operational expenses where previously the company operated directly in the field. Nevertheless, the perpetrators feel they do not need workers because it has a virtual production concept with the above statement CV. Flazh Production is not following the principle of mutual benefit so that the resources under its care all this time can get help from the company where they work.

Turindo's efforts in maintaining its business do not deviate or deviate from the principles of business ethics. These efforts can be proven by the several strategies implemented, which do not find attitudes and policies that deviate from religious teachings or damage Islamic norms. Even though tourism is very difficult for business actors, Turindo and several other MSMEs can survive in their way. Several efforts have been made to minimize resources, working hours, and operating hours which are commensurate with the statement in research (Nawatmi, 2010) that humans as business people have a moral responsibility to God for business behavior. As a business commodity in Islam, wealth is a mandate from God that must be accounted for before God. Balance, togetherness, and moderation are ethical principles that must be applied in business activities and entities.

CONCLUSION

The researcher concluded that Ospro chose a downsizing strategy by cutting some of its operations and business investments, from operational office hours resource inventory, and making business investments to business partners. Ospro also made efforts to diversify its business to survive or provide income during the Covid-19 pandemic; besides that in marketing, the company also maximizes online media in finding consumers and on CV. Flazh Production Yogyakarta maintained its business during the Covid-19 Pandemic by creating a new concept in production, namely virtual production. The savings strategy was also carried out by cutting several employees who were no longer needed to carry out the new production concept. Turindo and its strategy carried out a divestment strategy: closing several office operations and moving workers to work online. Marketing efforts such as making special packages and tourism education are also maximized online. The Turindo company has implemented a strategy in maintaining its business following the elements of Islamic business

ethics such as honesty, fairness, responsibility, cooperation, non-monopoly, and far from harm. Together with PT. Orbit Universe, commonly known as Ospro, also fulfills ethical business practices that adhere to Islam. Unlike other MSMEs, this company's Flash Production does not meet the elements of Islamic business ethics. According to the Islamic view, Ospro has made efforts to terminate the right to work for employees, so they do not follow one that has been regulated in business ethics, namely helping others and being responsible for what they have.

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