

**THE INFLUENCE OF COMPETENCY DEVELOPMENT ON THE  
COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE OF SALT FARMERS IN GALIS  
DISTRICT, PAMEKASAN REGENCY**

**Sukron Ma'mun**

Public Administration Departement,  
Faculty of Administrative Sciences,  
Universitas Madura;

**Abdurahman**

Public Administration Departement,  
Faculty of Administrative Sciences,  
Universitas Madura;

**Erina Saputri**

Public Administration Departement,  
Faculty of Administrative Sciences,  
Universitas Madura;

**Mohammad Bustanol Husein**

Public Administration Departement,  
Faculty of Administrative Sciences,  
Universitas Madura Jl. Raya Panglegur KM 3,5 Pamekasan  
[inong@unira.ac.id](mailto:inong@unira.ac.id);

**ABSTRACT**

This research is motivated by the problem of many salt farmers in the Galis District who do not understand the importance of developing competence and competitive advantage for the sustainability of the salt business. This research aims to determine and analyze the influence of competency development on the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency. The research method used is a quantitative method so the data displayed is data from questionnaire results which are processed using SPSS 26 statistics. The type of research used in this research is survey research, data collected through questionnaire results on the research instrument used. The data analysis technique used is the inferential statistical analysis technique. The results of this research can conclude that competency development has a significant effect on the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency. This research is expected to contribute to competency development efforts to increase the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency.

**Keywords:** *competency development, competitive advantage, salt farmers*

## A. PRELIMINARY

In Indonesia, salt is used not only for direct household consumption as one of the basic needs but also for dietary needs. Salt is also widely used in industries such as the chemical industry, various food industries, pharmaceutical industries, oil industries, and the leather tanning industry. Salt is classified as consumption salt and industrial salt in Indonesia. The classification of salt as consumption salt and industrial salt is based on the chemical content required by each user. For example, the consumption of salt requires a minimum NaCl content of 94%, while salt for diet requires a maximum NaCl content of 60% (Zamroni and Ernawati: 2016).

As written by Husein, M., Wandu, M., Ma'mun, S., & Fachrizi, A. (2022), The government should, through the Fisheries Service, really empower the Salt Farmers of Lembung Village, considering its huge potential. In addition, the government through the Department of Fisheries pays serious attention to farmers in fostering and assisting farmers in the process of their business continuity. And as also written by Ningsih, S., & Prathama, A. (2021), the farmers in Baureno District felt empowered by the empowerment carried out by the Bojonegoro Regency government through the independent farmer program which was analyzed by the theory of community empowerment stages: enabling, empowering and protecting.

Until now, most of the salt production is done individually by salt farmers so salt production has low productivity and relatively low salt quality so that it does not meet the specifications required by the domestic industry (Efendy, et al., 2016). When compared between national needs and production capacity, national salt production is only able to meet the needs of consumption, while the needs of industrial raw materials still depend on imports. Consumption of salt has been met by domestic production, but it turns out that most of the people's salt production still requires further processing to meet all the standards needed to be suitable for consumption by the community (Efendy et al, in Batafor, 2020).

Pamekasan Regency is one of the regencies on Madura Island that has a fairly large salt farming area. The area of salt farming in Pamekasan Regency reaches 2,113.35 ha consisting of 839.05 ha of community salt land and 1,274.30 ha of PT. Garam land. Community salt land is spread across Galis District covering an area of 423.22 ha, Pademawu District covering an area of 409.78 ha and Tlanakan District covering an area of 6.06 ha, (Suhelmi et al, 2013: 35). In general, people in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency who live around salt land work as salt farmers, but access and ability to produce the salt they have are still low. Based on the phenomenon of these problems, the author conducted a study on the influence of competency development on the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency. Based on the results of the initial preliminary study conducted by the author, it is known that generally the competencies possessed by salt farmers in Galis District are still low, there are still many salt farmers in Galis District whose competencies do not meet the competency standards of superior salt farmers. This study was conducted to determine the effect of competency development on the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency.

## **B. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Definition of Competence**

Hogg 1993, in Seema Sanghi (2007: 9) defines competence as a manager's characteristic that leads to the demonstration of skills and abilities that result in effective performance in the work area. Competence also embodies the capacity to transfer skills and abilities from one area to another. Another definition that is also relevant and widely accepted among human resource experts in the corporate environment states that competence is a fundamental characteristic in a person that results in effective performance and or superior performance in his/her job Klemm 1980, in Seema Sanghi (2007: 10). A more detailed definition synthesized from the suggestions of several hundred experts in human resource development who attended a conference on competency issues in Johannesburg in 1995, states that competence is a collection of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are interrelated and affect most of a person's work (role or responsibility) that correlates with performance in the workplace, which can be measured against well-accepted standards and can be improved through training and development, Parry 1996 in Seema Sanghi (2007: 10).

### **Competency Characteristics**

The characteristics of competence are distinguished based on the level at which the competence can be taught. The following will describe in detail each characteristic of competence as stated by Spencer and Spencer 1993, as follows:

#### **Knowledge**

The characteristics of competence are distinguished based on the level at which the competence can be taught. The following will describe in detail each characteristic of competence as stated by Spencer and Spencer 1993, as follows.

#### **Skills**

Someone who has good work skills will speed up the achievement of the desired goals, whereas someone who is not skilled will slow down the achievement of the desired goals.

#### **Self-Concept And Values**

Self-concept and values refer to a person's attitude, besides a person's knowledge and skills, what needs to be considered is their work attitude or behavior.

#### **Personal Characteristics/Traits**

Personal characteristics or traits are a reflection of how someone is able/unable to carry out an activity and task easily/difficultly and successfully/never successfully.

#### **Motives**

Motive is a driving force that will manifest a behavior in order to achieve the goal of self-satisfaction. The knowledge aspect and the skill aspect are grouped as competencies that are visible on the surface, and easier to observe and assess. While the self-concept aspect, personal characteristics/traits, and motives are grouped as competencies that are not visible on the surface, not easy to observe and assess. The existence of competency levels was put forward by Spencer and Spencer (in Seema Sanghi, 2007: 11) like an iceberg where some are visible on the surface, but some are not visible on the surface.



Figure1. *The iceberg model*

### Competitive Advantage Concept and Indicators

According to Muhammad Bukhori Dalimunthe in Syafira (2019:17), competitive advantage is the ability of a business to create competitive advantages in order to compete with competitors. The indicators of competitive advantage are developed by several experts, namely competitive prices, management capabilities, profits, strategic positions, and locations. In a study conducted by Delta and Paulus (2017:60), Porter's strategy explains that competitive advantage is the heart of business performance in facing competition (Syafira, 2019:17). According to Heri Setiawan (2012:14) in Syafira (2019:18) product purchases will occur if customers consider the price of the product to be in accordance with the value it offers. Some indicators used to measure competitive advantage include:

- a. Product uniqueness. The uniqueness of the products produced by the company distinguishes them from competitors' products or general products on the market.
- b. Product quality. The quality of a product successfully created by the company. Smart in choosing high-quality raw materials, so as to produce quality products or better than competitors.
- c. Competitive price. A competitive price is the company's ability to produce products at prices that are competitive in the market.

The hypothesis is a temporary answer to the formulation of the research problem, where the formulation of the research problem has been stated in the form of a question sentence. The hypothesis is also a theoretical answer to the formulation of the research problem, not yet an empirical answer. The hypotheses in this study include H1: competency development has a significant effect on the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency. H0: competency development does not have a significant effect on the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency.

### C. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a quantitative method, which can be interpreted as research based on the philosophy of positivism, namely research used to examine a particular population or sample, data collection using research instruments, quantitative/statistical data analysis, with the aim of testing the established hypothesis (Sugiyono, 2017: 8). The type of research used in this study is survey

research, which explains the influence of competency development on the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency. The data collected are questionnaire data that refer to the research instruments used.

Quantitative methods tend to be able to answer and describe research questions or research problems in this study. The object of the study is the influence of competency development on the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency. The reason for choosing the research location in Galis District is because first, Galis District has a match with the substance of the research being conducted. Second, the level of welfare and competence of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency is still quite low.

The type of data used in this study is primary data, namely data obtained from the results of the questionnaire. The data source in this study is salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency. Population is a generalization area consisting of objects/subjects that have certain qualities and characteristics determined by researchers to be studied and then conclusions drawn (Sugiyono, 2017: 80).

The population in this study is salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency. The sample is part of the number and characteristics possessed by the population. The selection of samples in this study used the probability sampling technique, namely a sampling technique that provides an equal opportunity for each member of the population to be selected as a sample member, namely using simple random sampling technique. Simple random sampling is a technique for taking sample members from the population randomly without considering the strata in the population.

A research instrument is a tool used to measure natural or social phenomena that are observed, specifically, the phenomenon is the research variable. The research variables in this study include: the dependent variable (free variable) is competency development while the independent variable (bound variable) is a competitive advantage. Competency development variables according to Spencer and Spencer quoted by Emmyah (2009), consist of indicators: (1) knowledge, (2) skills, (3) self-concept. (4) traits or personal characteristics or traits, and (5) motives. Competitive advantage variables according to Heri Setiawan (2012:14) consist of (1) product uniqueness, (2) product quality, and (3) competitive prices.

Data collection techniques used in this study include questionnaires. Questionnaires are data collection techniques carried out by providing a set of written questions or statements to respondents to be answered. Respondents in this study were salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency who were selected randomly because the author knew for sure what information was obtained.

Data analysis in this study is grouped based on variables and types of respondents, tabulating data based on variables from all respondents, presenting data for each variable studied, performing calculations to answer the problem formulation, and performing calculations to test the hypothesis made (Sugiyono, 2017:147). The data analysis technique used in this study is the inferential

statistical analysis technique, namely a statistical technique used to analyze sample data and the results are applied to the population.

#### **D. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

##### **The Influence of Competency Development on the Competitive Advantage of Salt Farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency**

The data presented in this study are data on the Influence of Competency Development on the Competitive Advantage of Salt Farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency. Efforts to develop the competence and competitive advantage of salt farmers can be started by first determining the problems that cause salt farmers' competence and competitive advantage not to develop, for example: lack of training and coaching from the local government, lack of motivation and willingness of salt farmers to develop the competence and competitive advantage of salt farmers so as to produce high-quality salt, still minimal access to information obtained by salt farmers related to salt quality, knowledge and procedures for producing quality salt, and salt sales methods in accordance with the provisions or regulations that have been determined by the Regional Government and the Central Government.

The characteristics of competence as stated by Spencer and Spencer (1993) in Seema Sanghi (2007) consist of: knowledge, skills, self-concept and values, personal characteristics/traits, and motives. Meanwhile, the competitive advantage variable in this study refers to the theory put forward by Heri Setiawan (2012:14), which states that indicators of competitive advantage include: product uniqueness, product quality, and competitive prices.

Based on the results of data collection obtained through questionnaires given to salt farmers in Galis District as respondents, the characteristics of each respondent can be identified. The characteristics/identities of these respondents are based on age, gender, last education, and length of time working as a salt farmer, which are described as follows:

##### **Respondent Age**

Table: 1  
Respondent Characteristics Based on Age

<b>Respondent Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
< 20 Years old	3	6%
20-30 Years Old	9	18%
30-40 Years Old	14	28%
40-50 Years Old	16	32%
> 50 Years Old	8	16%
<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: data processed by researchers, 2022

Based on Table: 1 above, it can be seen that the respondents in this study include: those aged 40-50 years old as many as 16 respondents or 32%, aged 30-40 years old as many as 14 respondents or 28%, aged 20-30 years old as many as 9 respondents or 18%, aged > 50 years old as many as 8 respondents or 16%, and

aged < 20 years old as many as 3 respondents or 6%. The ages of respondents in this study were generally in the age categories of 40-50 years old and 30-40 years old.

### Respondent Gender

Table: 2  
Respondent Characteristics Based on Gender

<b>Respondent Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Man	42	84%
Woman	8	16%
<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: data processed by researchers, 2022

Based on Table 2 above, it can be seen that the respondents in this study include: the male gender as many as 48 respondents, or 84%, and the female gender as many as 8 respondents or 16%. The gender of respondents in this study is generally male, thus there will be differences in perspective or opinion between male respondents and female respondents in assessing the influence of competency development on the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency.

### Respondent's Last Education

Table: 3  
Respondent Characteristics Based on Last Education

<b>Last Education</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
No School	6	12%
Elementary School ( <i>SD</i> )	16	32%
Junior High School ( <i>SMP</i> )	15	30%
Senior High School ( <i>SMA</i> )	12	24%
Bachelor ( <i>SI</i> )	1	2%
<b>Number of respondents</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: data processed by researchers, 2022

Based on Table 3 above, it is known that the respondents in this study include: 16 respondents or 32% with elementary school education, 15 respondents or 30% with junior high school education, 12 respondents or 24% with high school education, 6 respondents or 12% with no school education, and 1 respondent or 2% with a bachelor's degree. The last education of the respondents in this study was generally in the category of elementary school education (*SD*) and junior high school education (*SMP*). This proves that the last level of education by the respondents has an effect on the ability to develop the competence and competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan.

### Length of Time Respondents Have Worked as Salt Farmers

Table: 4

Respondent Characteristics Based on Length of Time Working as Salt Farmers

Length of Working Time	Frequency	Percentage
< 5 Years	5	10%
5 – 10 Years	15	30%
10 – 15 Years	22	44%
> 15 Years	8	16%
<b>Number of Respondents</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: data processed by researchers, 2022

Based on Table 4 above, it can be seen that the respondents in this study include: have worked as salt farmers for 10-15 years as many as 22 respondents or 44%, worked as salt farmers for 5-10 years as many as 15 respondents or 30%, worked as salt farmers for > 15 years as many as 8 respondents or 16%, and worked as salt farmers for < 5 years as many as 5 respondents or 10%. The length of time respondents have worked as salt farmers in this study is generally in the category of having worked as salt farmers for 10-15 years and 5-10 years.

Based on the research data collected for both the independent variable (X), namely competency development, and the dependent variable (Y), namely competitive advantage, which was processed using the SPSS 26 program, the results of the t-test were obtained, the results of which can be shown in table 5 below:

Table: 5

Recapitulation of Knowledge t-Test Results (*knowledge*)

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.073	1.077		2.683	.000
	Knowledge	.565	.087	.513	5.680	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Competitive Advantage

Based on the theory, it is explained that knowledge is part of competence. Where knowledge also determines the success or failure of the implementation of tasks assigned to someone, someone who has sufficient knowledge will increase the efficiency of the company, but someone who does not have sufficient knowledge, their work will be hampered. Waste of materials, time energy, and other production factors will be carried out by someone who has less knowledge, so this kind of waste will increase the cost of achieving the goals of the organization.

Based on the results of the research and analysis contained in Table 5 above, we can see the influence of knowledge by paying attention to the t-count value



and the level of significance of the variable. Based on Table 5, the t-count for the knowledge indicator is 2.683 and the t-table value obtained is 1.876. The comparison of t-count and t-table can be seen that the t-count value is  $>$  from the t-table value, namely  $2.683 > 1.876$ . So based on the comparison of t-count and t-table values, it can be concluded that the knowledge indicator has an influence on the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency.

Table: 6  
Recapitulation of Skills t-Test Results (*Skills*)

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.034	1.078		2.157	.002
	Skills	.538	.071	.577	7.105	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Competitive Advantage

Based on the theory, it is explained that skills are part of competence. Where skills show that someone who has good work abilities will accelerate the achievement of the desired goals, conversely someone who is not skilled will slow down the achievement of the desired goals, for someone with new tasks and jobs additional abilities are needed to carry out the tasks assigned to him.

Based on the results of the research and analysis contained in Table 6, we can see the influence of skill competition by paying attention to the t-count value and the level of significance of the variable. Based on Table 4.6, the t-count for the skill indicator is 2.157, and the t-table value obtained is 1.876. The comparison of t-count and t-table can be seen that the t-count value is  $>$  from the t-table value, namely  $2.157 > 1.876$ . So based on the comparison of t-count and t-table values, it can be concluded that the skill indicator has an influence on the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency.

Table: 7  
Recapitulation of the results of the t-test of self-concept and values (*Self Concept*)

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.347	1.672		2.547	.004
	self-concept and values	.225	.060	.383	5.460	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Competitive Advantage

Based on the theory, it is explained that self-concept and values (self-concept) are part of competence. Where self-concept and values (self-concept) refer to a person's attitude, besides a person's knowledge and skills, the thing that

needs to be considered is his/her work attitude or behavior. If a person has a nature that supports the achievement of organizational goals, then automatically all tasks assigned to him/her will be carried out as well as possible.

Based on the results of the research and analysis contained in Table 7 above, it can be seen the influence of self-concept and values (self-concept) by considering the t-count value for and the level of significance of the variable. Based on Table 7, the t-count for the self-concept and values (self-concept) indicator is 2.547 and the t-table value obtained is 1.876. The comparison of t-count and t-table can be seen that the t-count value is > from the t-table value, namely  $2.547 > 1.876$ . So based on the comparison of t-count and t-table values, it can be concluded that the self-concept and values (self-concept) indicator has an influence on the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency.

Table: 8  
Recapitulation of Personal Characteristics/Traits t-Test Results (*Traits*)

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.220	1.009		2.099	.003
	Characteristics/Traits t-Test Results	.678	.065	.672	10.020	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Competitive Advantage						

Based on the theory, it is explained that personal characteristics/traits are part of competence. Where personal characteristics/traits are a reflection of how someone is able/unable to do an activity and task easily/difficultly and successfully/never successfully. Based on the results of the research and analysis contained in Table 8 above, the influence of personal characteristics/traits can be seen by paying attention to the calculated t value and the level of significance of the variable.

Based on Table 8, the calculated t for the personal characteristics/traits indicator is 2.099, and the t table value obtained is 1.876. The comparison of the calculated t and t table can be seen that the calculated t value is > from the t table value, namely  $2.099 > 1.876$ . So based on the comparison of the calculated t and t table values, it can be concluded that the personal characteristics/traits indicator has an influence on the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency.

Based on the theory, it is explained that motives are part of competence. Where motives are the driving force that will realize a behavior in order to achieve the goal of self-satisfaction. The results of the analysis based on the results of the study contained in Table 9 below see the influence of motives by paying attention to the calculated t value and the level of significance of the variable.

Table: 9  
Recapitulation of Motive t-Test Results (*Motives*)

Coefficients						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	3.011	.652		3.194	.000
	Motives	.645	.050	.738	12.230	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Competitive Advantage						

Based on the results of the research and analysis contained in Table 9, it is known that the calculated t for the motive indicator is 3.194, and the t table value obtained is 1.876. The comparison of the calculated t and t table can be seen that the calculated t value is > from the t table value, namely  $3.194 > 1.876$ . So based on the comparison of the calculated t and t table values, it can be concluded that the motive indicator has an influence on the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency.

## E. CLOSING

### Conclusion

From the results of statistical data analysis and discussions that have been conducted by researchers, it can be concluded that competency development has a significant effect on the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency. The conclusions of this study can be described as follows:

1. The development of knowledge competencies has a significant influence on the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency with a significance value of 2.683.
2. The development of skills competencies has a significant influence on the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency with a significance value of 2.157.
3. The development of self-concept and values competencies (self-concept) has a significant influence on the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency with a significance value of 2.547.
4. Development of personal characteristics/traits competencies has a significant influence on the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency with a significance value of 2.099.
5. The development of motive competencies has a significant influence on the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency with a significance value of 3.194.

### Suggestions

Suggestions in this study include: The Pamekasan Regency Government is expected to be more intensive and sustainable in conducting training and coaching for salt farmers, especially to develop the competence of salt farmers in Galis District in order to realize the competitive advantage of salt farmers in Galis District, Pamekasan Regency. Salt farmers in Galis District are also expected to be able to implement the results of competency development through training and

coaching so that salt farmers in Galis District can produce high-quality salt in the future.

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