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THE MANAGEMENT OF SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISES TO ACHIEVE COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES IN NORTHERN THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

This research aims at studying the management to achieve competitive advantages, the success of business management, the impact and relationship between the management to achieve competitive advantages and the impact of management to achieve competitive advantages. From the questionnaire collected data from 400 small entrepreneurs who run business in 9 provinces of northern Thailand, the researcher found out that there are the management to achieve competitive advantages and the success in overall operations are in high level. Also the relationship in each type of small entrepreneurs business in each area has no different in overall of the management to achieve competitive advantages. In term of problem and obstacle arose from interviewing the thought leader, the researcher found out that to run small enterprise business, there are not different in term of marketing and innovation in the manufacturing process. In term of financial matters, there are no account operating, no cost management and has no network of partners.

KEYWORDS

Competitive Advantages, Management, Small Enterprises.

INTRODUCTION

STATEMENTS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROBLEMS

Since there is a changing of concept in developing country into more and more oriented focus on small size, but it still should be realized that small business nowadays is not different from other type of Thai business. It can be said that small business has to face the problem arise from severe economic crisis. It is not only meant to help small businesses to survive from the crisis of change in this current situation (The Office of Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion, 2008) but small businesses development approach also need to consider in terms of creating sustainable strength to be able to rely on this modern time business as a base for sustainable country development in the future by managing businesses competitive advantage for business sustainable success. When there was the economic crisis in year 2008, many businesses have to close their businesses, especially small businesses. Even many Thai financial institutions which are international acceptance as stable institutions still have to close down their businesses. This crisis affected many countries; this problem also has many causes and issues. Anyway, the important issue to consider is why some countries that their business was affected but their domestic businesses will still be able to survive. From many sources of information, it can be found out about more and more management adjustment. Then when there is crisis or any transition, those countries can use their systemic approach effectively. As a result, their economic become stable in both micro-economic and macro-economic. Major problems of small businesses in Thailand can be categorized into the following 4 issues: 1) Focus to create a trading strategy which base on competitive advantages. 2) Lack of long-term strategy planning for the organization in order to enhance the adaptation of the organization, lack of skill to analyze various factors. 3) No competitive advantage management. There is no analyzing on pros and cons, opportunity and obstacle in running business, also no clear planning and no assistance from government policy towards small business. And 4) Majority of small businesses are not aware of importance or they don't know of integrating knowledge in management of competitive advantages of businesses in their product and service (Reungsak Eungprasertphakorn, 2001) Therefore, small business management and operation play an important role in nowadays business due to the significant resources that create competitive advantages for organizations. If any business has information and potential opportunity, they would create the opportunities for organizations to success in business running by having proper information and opportunity for management. Also the small business can use their competitive advantages in efficiency way and match with the nature of nowadays situation that changing all the time. (Nattapan Khejoranan et al, 2002: 189) The upper North of Thailand is the region that is ready in term of economic, social, culture, financial potential and also growth of small business in tourism. However, there is no business expansion and no additional competitive advantages of nowadays business in this upper North of Thailand. This issue makes the researcher interested to study in the management of small and medium enterprises to achieve competitive advantages in Northern Thailand.

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To study the management of competitive advantages of small enterprises in Northern Thailand.
- 2) To study successful operation of small enterprises in Northern Thailand.
- 3) To study the relationship between management of competitive advantages and successful operation of small enterprises in Northern Thailand.
- 4) To study the impact of management of competitive advantages towards the success operation of small enterprises in Northern Thailand.

SCOPE OF STUDY

This research aims to study the competitive advantages and success in operation by applies from the concept of Balanced Scorecards of small enterprises' owners in Northern Thailand.

HYPOTHESES

- 1) The management of competitive advantages is related to the successful operation of small enterprises in Northern Thailand.
- 2) The management of competitive advantages have an impact on successful operation of small enterprises in Northern Thailand.

- 3) Small enterprises in Northern Thailand are various different in term of type of business, capital investments, total employees and age of business which distinct competitive advantages.
- 4) Small enterprises in Northern Thailand are various different in term of type of business, capital investments, total employees and age of business which distinct success in operation.

CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

- 1) As a guideline to improve and enhance the potential competitive of small enterprises in Northern Thailand.
- 2) As an information of direction of small enterprises operation in Northern Thailand to meet the changing of competition.
- 3) As a guideline to create management of other competitive advantages which suitable for business management base on the concept of management of competitive advantages and success in operate of small enterprises in Northern Thailand.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

LITERATURE REVIEWS

1.1) The concept of "Small and Medium Enterprises" means the business which is managed independently, the executives or director are self-employed, business investment funds are from private funds and operations are local operate. Number of employees, investment fund and assets are determine according to the size and operation of small and medium enterprises which divided into 3 main groups that are manufacturing, commercial and service businesses. (The Office of Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion, 2008).

1.2) The concept of competitive advantages of Siriwan Serirat et al, 1999: 179 – 200 which include:

1.2.1) Differentiation is the strategy to make a difference of the products or services to be unique and distinguishes from competitors in the same business. For example, differentiation in form of goods image, brand image, technology used for customer service or dealer network and etc. This differentiation may be a difference of one thing or various things. This differentiation will result greater customers loyalty to the company and cause customers to less focus on the price factor. As a result, business will be able to efficiency compete with other competitors (Supanat Chouchinprakarn, 2003: 33)

1.2.2) Cost Leadership, Suwannee Anansaynon (2004: 83-86) mentioned that the organization be able to create competitive advantages by creating Economic of Scope which is the ability to reduce the cost by sharing resources between each unit of the business. There can be notice that large manufacturer tend to have lower production cost per unit due to many types of products that can share production resources together which resulted cost saving in production. The main part of Economic of Scope will focus on large quantities manufacturing to keep unit costs down.

1.2.3) Quick Response

1.2.4) Market Focus by Porter, Michael E which found out that competitive advantages nowadays are used in term of business by connect important marketing concepts to crate general competitive advantages which are Cost leadership, Differentiation and Market Focus.

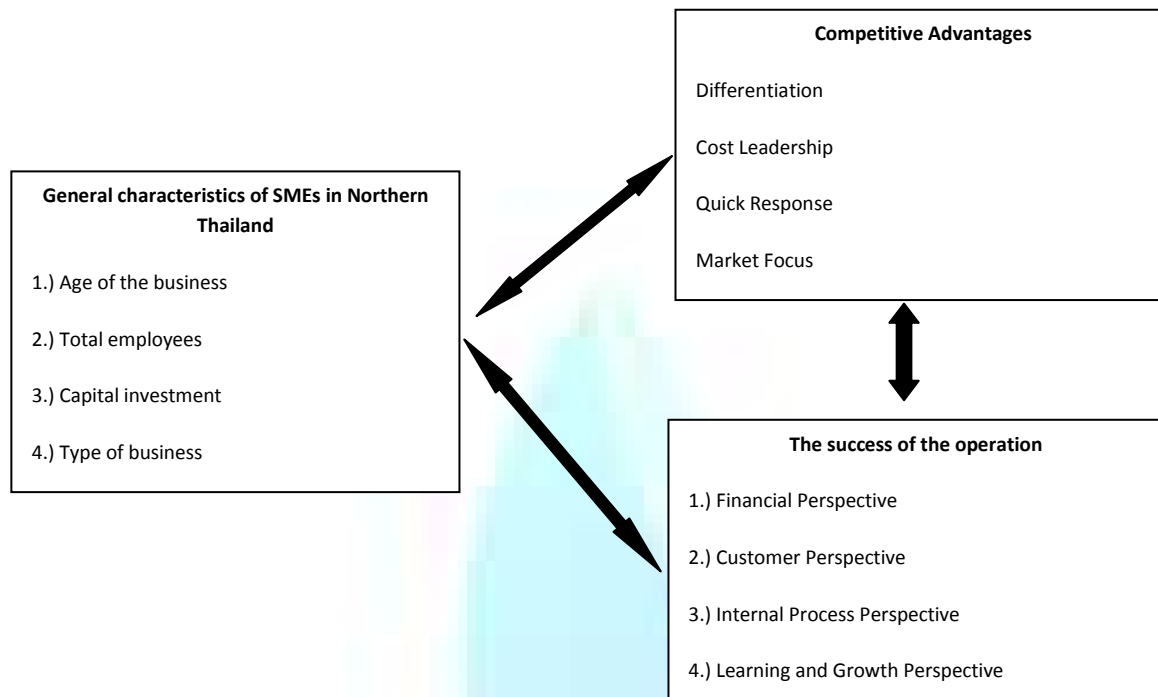
Therefore, Competitive Advantages is the result of practice on Value Creating Strategy. Anyway, this is not to stimulate the response of competitors nowadays, not stimulate potential or request to compare with competitors, no competitive advantages on competitors from providing value to consumers in both lower prices or offer superior benefits and offer better facilities but at higher prices. In this case, advertising can increase capability of products or superior distribution performance (Barney, 1991) which the management of competitive advantages and success factor in management of small and medium enterprises are categorized under framework of BSC (Atchara, 2005) as follows:

- 1) Financial perspective. Financial capital is one important factor to consider. There would be limited of funding from outside because to research and develop of small and medium enterprises are high risk and lack of loan security to get the fund for research and development. There must be publicly supported from the government to allow small and medium enterprises to research and develop themselves.
- 2) Customer perspective. Small and medium enterprises should concern on marketing management which Carson, Gilmore and Rocks (2004) present research which shows that small and medium enterprises should use Marketing Network Processes to manage marketing strategy which consists of 3 dimensions which are 1. The dimension of structure is to focus on network infrastructure which are size, pattern, variety, density, sustainability and flexibility. 2) The dimension of relationship is to focus on the channel to link the strength which consists of reliability, consistency and collaboration. And 3) The dimension in term of use is to focus on marketing activities which including management of decision making on product, management of promotional activities, planning of marketing activities, price management, management of distribution, acquisition of marketing resources, increasing knowledge on marketing and marketing innovation.
- 3) Internal Process perspective (Teder, Venesaar, 2003). Due to the weakness of small and medium enterprises which have small size and have limited resources and also do not gain advantages of economies of scale to produce as large enterprises. Therefore, there would need to reduce vulnerability by creating networking which relevant factors are factor relating to company, factor on partnership, factor on relationship between companies which can cause the competition by organization's operators, the use of resources and networking, and affect company contribution directly.
- 4) Learning and Growth perspective of employee and role of the leader which important towards employees' innovative behaviour. However, the prudent foresight of leaders will stimulate employees on thought and usage on a daily basis (de Jong & Hartog, 2007). So, the study of skills development is also one important factor in developing human resources. Anyway, small and medium enterprises often face the obstacle on cultural attitudes of small and medium enterprises such as awareness, financial, accession, and preparation of training and opportunity to develop their other skills. To minimize the effect of these obstacles, it would need to create strategies on new skills, new initiation, and new staffs (Lang, Ottens & Taylor, 1999) which gives enterprises active in supporting continuous development of skills.
- 5) Corporate Social Responsibility and Environment Management. Corporate social responsibility being awareness and advocacy nowadays but small and medium enterprises are interested less on social responsibility which reveal in the research of Jenkins (2006) that found out that the goal of being good example and principles such as the stakeholder theory that need to achieve corporate social responsibility of small and medium enterprises.

1.3) The concept of success of the operation which means the result of the business operation that achieve its goals more effectively in order to meet customer or service recipient's requirement and satisfaction to people in the organization by applying the concept of Balance Scorecard or BSC of Pruek Usahawanichchkit (2004: 444) which refer to Garrison & Norren (2003: 445-446) including 1.3.1) Financial Perspective, 1.3.2) Customer Perspective, 1.3.3) Internal Process Perspective and 1.3.4) Learning and Growth Perspective and other important concept of Balanced Scorecard. BSC is a management tool to use in policy and strategy implementation by base on assessment which help the organizations to achieve consistency in unison that also balance the business in both short and long term.

From 4 perspectives according to the concept of Balanced Scorecards, there is cause and effect relationship by starting from Learning and Growth Perspective that result the continuous improvement of Internal Processes Perspective. Once Internal process efficiency and gain the maximum performance, then it would create customer satisfaction in the business which lead to significant financial performance in long term.

FIGURE 1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research instruments

This research is an Applied Research which categorized research instruments as follow:

2.1.1) Questionnaire which creates purpose and framework of the research by divided into 3 steps. Part 1: Overview of small enterprises of Thailand. Questionnaire is a checklist type for 4 questions including type of business, capital investment, total employees and age of the business. Part 2: Opinions on competitive advantages for 20 questions consists of 6 questions on differentiation, 5 questions on cost leadership, 5 questions on quick response and 4 questions on market focus. Part 3: Opinions on the success of the operation for 24 questions which are financial perspective on 5 questions, customers perspective on 6 questions, internal process perspective on 8 questions and learning and growth perspective on 5 questions. Questionnaire of part 2 and part 3 are the rating scale questionnaire by to score the questions (Nattapon Yajom, 2007). The scales measure five score level. The respondents chose 1 means the lowest agree until 5 means strongly agree. Means criteria average 5 levels are mean level 1.01 – 1.80 is in lowest agree level and mean level 4.21 – 5.00 is in strongly agree level.

2.1.2) Individual – Depth Interview with key opinion leaders which are small and medium entrepreneurs representative who success and well recognized among small enterprises, association executives or public sector of community enterprises management policy makers. The interview is a divergent interviewing to avoid blocking any information and to obtain width, depth and accuracy information from various parties. Also to meet the objective and framework of the research that determined by considering the detail that cover all the purpose by applied concept of competitive advantages of Miller and Dess (Siriwan Serirat et al, 1999: 179 – 200 referred from Miller and Dess 1996: 152) and the successful operation of Maneerat Sakulsirajit (2005: 161-165)

DATA COLLECTION DURATION

From 1st October 2010 until 31st March 2011.

SAMPLING AREA

Small enterprises entrepreneurs, small and medium entrepreneurs' representative who success and well recognized among small enterprises, association executives or public sector of community enterprises management policy makers in 9 provinces of Northern Thailand which are Chiang Rai, Chiang Mai, Nan, Phayao, Phrae, Mae Hong Son, Lampang, Lamphun and Tak.

SAMPLING AND SAMPLE COLLECTION

Sample selection is due to quantitative methodology on a group of entrepreneurs by selecting only small and medium enterprises. From the information of The Office of Small and Medium Enterprises Promotion, Northern region office, total amount of small enterprises' entrepreneurs in 9 provinces of Northern Thailand are 400 according to the calculation from formula for sample size of Yamane (Yamane, 1967; Nattapon Yajom, 2007) and using a stratified sampling design based on the proportion. Qualitative methodology are used on nonprobability sampling by using a specific sample which are small and medium entrepreneurs' representative who success and well recognized among small enterprises, association executives or public sector of community enterprises management policy makers in 9 provinces of Northern Thailand

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis and statistics used in this analysis are divided into 2 types which are quantitative approach and qualitative approach. For quantitative approach, descriptive statistics are used by finding frequency and percentage, test statistics on average, analysis of variance, multivariate analysis of variance: MANOVA, multiple correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis.

For qualitative approach, it was done by individual – depth interviewing which identify issues into categories by comparing each variable and synthesize the knowledge and interpretation the answer with Delphi technique to determine the objectives and goals of the research.

RESULTS

Entrepreneurs of small and medium enterprises in Northern Thailand are mostly run commercial business (38.25 percent) and service business (30.75 percent). Majority of their capital investment is under 10 million Thai baht (79.50 percent) and the other rank is with capital investment range 20-30 million Thai baht

(12.00 percent). Top rank of total employees is under 20 employees (59.75 percent) and next is total employees range 20-30 employees (18.25 percent). For age of business, the group that running business more than 15 years is at 35.68 percent and range 6-10 years at 24.31 percent.

Entrepreneurs of small and medium enterprises in Northern Thailand are agreed with management of competitive advantages in high level ($\bar{X} = 3.94$) when considered each aspect. The average order of 3 descending priority are differentiation ($\bar{X} = 4.06$), quick response ($\bar{X} = 4.06$) and cost leadership ($\bar{X} = 3.90$).

Entrepreneurs of small and medium enterprises in Northern Thailand are agreed with overall success of operation at high level ($\bar{X} = 3.83$) when considered each aspect which are all in high level. The average orders of 3 most to least are internal process perspective ($\bar{X} = 4.97$), customer perspective ($\bar{X} = 3.90$) and learning and growth perspective ($\bar{X} = 3.85$)

To compare the opinion towards the management of competitive advantages of entrepreneurs of small enterprises in Northern Thailand which type of business, capital investment, total employees and age of business are different. These differences don't make much different in term of management of competitive advantages as the result are $F = 0.979, 0.355, 0.316$ and 0.957 in respectively order. As a result, the relationship of type of business, capital investment, total employees and age of business that is different but make no different in term of management of competitive advantages for small and medium enterprises in Northern Thailand.

The multiple correlation analysis and multiple regressions are used to test the relationship and the impact of management of competitive advantages and the success of operation of small and medium enterprises in Northern Thailand. The researcher used the multiple correlation analysis, multiple regressions and also statistical forecasting methods as the hypothesis as follow:

1) Overall success of operation. (SOT)

The management of competitive advantages in term of differentiation (CDP), cost leadership (CLC), quick response (CFF) and market focus (CMF) are related to overall success of operation (SOT) significantly in statistic at 0.05 and the coefficient of forecast improvement (Adj R^2) equal to 0.518 which accepted hypothesis number 1, 2, 3 and 4 when use competitive advantages in term of differentiation (CDP), cost leadership (CLC), quick response (CFF) and market focus (CMF) to create a model of the coefficients forecasting equation as follow:

$$SOT = 0.439 + 0.196CDP + 0.236CLC + 0.354CFF + 0.007CMF$$

2) Financial perspective

The competitive advantages in term of cost leadership (CLC), and quick response (CFF) is associated with financial perspective (SF) of success of operation with statistically significant at 0.05, which accepted hypothesis number 2 and 3. For competitive advantages in term of differentiation (CDP) and market focus (CMF) are not correlated to success of operation in term of financial perspective (SF) when take competitive advantages in term of cost leadership (CLC) and quick response (CFF) to create the forecasting equation of competitive advantages in financial perspective (SF) which the coefficient of the forecast improvement (Adj R^2) equal to 0.450 as the equations as follow:

$$FP = 0.221 + 0.356CLC + 0.509CFF$$

3) Customer perspective

The competitive advantages in term of differentiation (CDP), cost leadership (CLC), quick response (CFF) and market focus (CMF) have relationship with success of operation in term of customer perspective (SC) significantly in statistic at 0.05 which accepted hypothesis number 1, 2, 3 and 4. Anyway, constants have no relationship with success of operation in term of customer perspective (SC) when use competitive advantages in term of differentiation (CDP), cost leadership (CLC), quick response (CFF) and market focus (CMF)) to create the forecasting equation of competitive advantages in customer perspective (SC) which the coefficient of the forecast improvement (Adj R^2) equal to 0.427 as the equations as follow:

$$SC = 0.393 + 0.185CDP + 0.311CLC + 0.300CFF + 0.009CMF$$

4) Internal Process Perspective

Competitive advantages in term of differentiation (CDP), cost leadership (CLC), quick response (CFF) have relationship with success in operation in term of internal process perspective (SI) significantly in statistic at 0.05 which accepted hypothesis number 1, 2 and 3. For competitive advantages in term of market focus (CMF) has no relationship with success of operation in term of internal process perspective (SI). Success of operation in term of internal process perspective (SI) creates the coefficient of the forecast improvement (Adj R^2) equal to 0.461 as the equations as follow:

$$SI = 0.629 + 0.290CDP + 0.241CLC + 0.307CFF$$

5) Learning and Growth Perspective

Competitive advantages in term of differentiation (CDF) and quick response (CFF) have relationship with success of operation in term of learning and growth perspective (SP) significantly in statistic at 0.05 which accepted hypothesis number 1 and 3. For competitive advantages in term of cost leadership (CLC) and market focus (CMF) have no relationship with success of operation in term of learning and growth perspective (SP) creates the coefficient of the forecast improvement (Adj R^2) equal to 0.361 as the equations as follow:

$$SP = 0.806 + 0.267CDP + 0.494CFF$$

For part of qualitative data from Delphi method from key opinion leaders, the researcher found out that small enterprises in Northern Thailand have the problem on issue relevant to the management of competitive advantages in term of success of operation because each business has no different in term of marketing especially on products and services. The differentiation is not value-added on product, service, distribution channels, marketing promotion and innovation of organization. As manufacturing process is mainly from wisdom of the community, then there is no technology used in production. Majority of financial are the loan from financial institutions and no accounting management then it can't be able to verify the financial status which also cause high cost in management. The government part continuing to support on giving knowledge but as there is no budget to support and follow up project evaluation. As a result, the management of competitive advantages of small enterprises in Northern Thailand cannot operate their business in current situation. Anyway, key opinion leaders have the solution to solve these problems that small enterprises should manage the competitive advantages for success of operation of small enterprises by create the strength in creating sustainable economic growth and get competitive advantages. Solving by creating and develop innovation of new products and focus on modern management which are general management, marketing management, financial management and service and product management. Solving by creating differentiation in product or service to be unique and different from other competitors in the same business and focus on the Economic of Scope. In other words, to create the ability to reduce the costs by sharing business resources including maintain nature of products and services which customer is important. To operate business to success requires adaptation, learning, and improving continuously to meet the changing of economic environment especially to respond the needs of customers in different ways.

DISCUSSION

Entrepreneurs of small enterprises in Northern Thailand have opinion towards the management of competitive advantages and success of operation in high level which is differentiation, cost leadership, quick response, market focus, financial perspective, customer perspective, internal process perspective and learning and growth perspective. The management of competitive advantages is important and necessary for business operation in aggressive competition in present situation. This corresponds to four main pillars of modern management which are general management, marketing management, financial management and manufacturing management that affecting comparative advantage. Then, clear strategy planning and competition policy will help to create capacity and competitive advantages of the business over competitors as clear strategy and future direction of operation can conduct business to reach their target and respond the needs of continuous market change. Nowadays, competitive advantages also used global competitive strategy which is total cost leadership, differentiation and focus on speed. (Portec (1980), Barncy (1991 and 2001), Ruiz-aliseda and Zemsky (2006))

Small enterprises entrepreneurs in Northern Thailand, who have different type of business, capital investment, total employees and age of business, agreed that overall competitive advantages and success in operation are not different. As majority of small enterprises in Northern Thailand unable to create competitive

advantages in their organization because their businesses are managed independently. Most of funding is personal fund which lack of opportunity to get the funding and loans from financial institutions. They also lack of experience in management because most of products and services meet only local or domestic market which lead entrepreneurs lack of skill in marketing, especially international market and this cause small enterprises in Northern Thailand are inefficient manage. Therefore, small enterprises in Northern Thailand need to increase efficiency and effectively management of competitive advantages for success of operation. This is related to Bureetho Zamarat (2005: 47) who stated that efficient management require operation target to achieve cost saving, efficiently use of existing resources to increase capability in competition of the organization. Concept of Porter, Michael E (1980) mentioned that business needs to consider how to approach company industry, understand the competitors and location of the competition. To create competitive advantages can be done by general competition strategy which is overall costs leadership, differentiation and focus. It must be considered each factor to success of each strategy before apply these strategy.

Impact and relationship between competitive advantages and success in operation of small and medium enterprises in Northern Thailand are in positive impact and success in operation in all aspect which are 1) Market focus. Company has to narrow down the area to focus on marketing or small market to supply goods or service to the target group for competitive advantages in market focus. The principle is that business be able to respond the need of specific target group which better, more efficiency and effectively than to gather all customer. Business, which success from this strategy, is normally able to respond the need of specific target group by offering unique product or service which different from competitors or being company with low cost in respond the need of the target group (Supanat Chouchinprakarn, 2003: 34-35). 2) Quick response, financial perspective, customer perspective, internal process perspective and learning and growth perspective. To operate business nowadays is more complicated and more aggressive in competition. Thus, to be success in business operation, the business needs adaptation and continues learning and develops to suit the changing of economic environment, Especially, to respond the needs of customers in different ways by focus on customer needs and feedback to ensure customer satisfaction and impression. These factors will bring good image and success of organization which corresponding to concept of Siriwan Serirat et al (1999: 193) that quick response means to create flexibility to meet customer needs such as offer new product, improve product or even the decision of the executive. Nowadays, many executives know that cost leadership or offering unique product is not enough, anymore, they must be able to respond customer needs quickly. 3) Cost leadership. To be low cost leadership is one way to create competitive advantages in operating business by aims to get most cost effective to achieve cost advantages. This strategy uses the cost when compare with competitors but may not the least cost. To achieve cost leadership, executives are required to maintain nature of products and services that customer need. This consistent with the concept of Suwannee Anansainon (2004: 83-86) stated that organization can create competitive advantages by focus on creating Economic of Scope which is ability to reduce cost by sharing business resources. This can be noticed that large plants tend to have lower production cost per unit due to big quantity of product made then they are able to share production resources with other unit which result cost saving in production. Main concept of Economic of Scope is focusing on production in large quantity to keep cost per unit down. And 4) Differentiation is one basic to be successful but not including the price factor. Therefore, to be success in differentiation in desirable way of the products or services, create brand loyalty on customers, reduce amount of product that buyer selected and reduce feeling towards price, all these mention strategies will help the business to gain higher profit without lower the cost down. This is corresponding to the concept of Supanat Chouchinprakarn (2003: 33) which stated that to create differentiation on product or service is to be unique from other competitors in the same industry. For example, make different in term of form of products, brand image, technology use to provide service to customer or dealer network and etc. To create differentiation, it can be one or many different. From mentioned differentiation, it will result customers to have greater loyalty to the company and allow customers to consider less on the price factor. As a result, business will be able to compete with competitors more effectively. March and Gunasegaram (1999) have proposed a conceptual model of business operation (The Domain of Marketing Operations) which presented by Adcock by representing the idea that the territory of business is divided into 3 issues, Firstly, the acceptant of the discovery of the needs or desires of customers, if lack of this, then business also lack of demand from customers. Secondly, if there is no possibility study of production capacity, then business with lack of some important skills. And lastly is the lack of appropriate comparison on competitive advantage which can lose in the competition.

The results of individual-depth interviews with key opinion leaders found out that small and medium enterprises in Northern Thailand should create strength in generate sustainable economic growth and competitive advantages by starting from developing innovation and new products to get competitive advantages in business and should be promoted by government organization and other funding group both local and national to help small and medium enterprises. This is corresponding to the concept of Porter, Michael E. that competitive advantages being used in business perspective nowadays by connecting competitive advantages with marketing concept. The important marketing concept is to create the competitive advantages in general which are cost leadership, differentiation, and focusing which come from modern management which are general management, marketing management, financial management and manufacturing or service management. (Porter, Michael E., 1980, Barney, 1991 and 2001, Ruiz-aliseda and Zemsky, 2006, Øystein, et al, 2007) Strategic management of small and medium enterprises is very important to create competitive advantages in the competitive as an important key of business of developing countries to survive in this globalization. Entrepreneur and owner of small and medium enterprises should notice the importance of business operation which focuses on important to business success base on 4 perspectives which are financial perspective, customer perspective, internal process perspective and learning and growth perspective. This is corresponding with Charin Asasongtham (2003) on concept of Balance Scorecard which stated that BSC is an important tool on management strategies to used in implementing the policy into practice bases on business evaluation that allows organization to be unite and balance the business both short and long term.

CONCLUSION

The management of competitive advantages is important on success of operation of small and medium enterprises in Northern Thailand. Each business of small and medium enterprises in Northern Thailand has to try to develop the innovation and new products base on customer needs and also understand the competitors. The competitive position in competitive advantages by evaluating business performance is very important thing that can help small and medium enterprises in Northern Thailand to know their situation and know their problem and solution. Management of competitive advantages of small and medium enterprises in Northern Thailand should focus on 3 aspects which are overall cost leadership, differentiation, and market focus.

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