



Research Article

The Role Of Production Process And Product Quality On Business Success: A Case Study On The Lamongan Planting Micro Business

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Abstract. This study aims to analyze the influence of production processes and product quality on the success of the Penyetan Lamongan culinary MSME. Based on data collected through interviews and direct observation, the findings indicate that production efficiency and consistent product quality in terms of hygiene, taste, and presentation significantly contribute to customer satisfaction and business competitiveness. The implementation of simple yet consistent strategies in managing production and quality has proven effective in supporting the sustainability of this small-scale culinary enterprise.

Keywords: UM, Production Process, Product Quality, Business Success, Local Culinary.

Abstrak. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis pengaruh proses produksi dan kualitas produk terhadap keberhasilan UMKM kuliner Penyetan Lamongan. Berdasarkan data yang dikumpulkan melalui wawancara dan observasi langsung, temuan menunjukkan bahwa efisiensi produksi dan kualitas produk yang konsisten dalam hal kebersihan, rasa, dan presentasi memberikan kontribusi signifikan terhadap kepuasan pelanggan dan daya saing bisnis. Penerapan strategi yang sederhana namun konsisten dalam mengelola produksi dan kualitas telah terbukti efektif dalam mendukung keberlanjutan usaha kuliner skala kecil ini.

Kata kunci: UM, Proses Produksi, Kualitas Produk, Kesuksesan Bisnis, Kuliner Lokal.

INTRODUCTION

The Lamongan penyetan micro-enterprise (UM penyetan Lamongan) represents an essential segment of the culinary sector in Lamongan Regency. This enterprise is widely known for offering dishes with distinctive flavors at affordable prices, and it has become a local culinary identity enjoyed by various segments of society. Its existence not only contributes to the preservation of regional food culture but also delivers significant economic impacts, such as job creation, increased community income, and the stimulation of local economic growth.

However, UM penyetan Lamongan faces increasingly complex challenges, especially amid fierce competition in the culinary business and rising consumer expectations regarding product quality. Today's consumers demand not only delicious taste but also place great importance on cleanliness, presentation, and consistency of product quality. Other common challenges for culinary micro-enterprises include limited capital, simple production technology, and shortages in human resources skilled in both technical and operational management (Halimatus Sa'diyah, Bima Abhiseka, Irpandi, Tita Setiawati, 2024).

In this context, production efficiency and product quality improvement become pivotal for maintaining competitiveness and business sustainability. Efficient production processes can help micro-enterprises reduce costs, boost productivity, and ensure consistent product availability (Halimatus Sa'diyah, Bima Abhiseka, Irpandi, Tita Setiawati, 2024). Meanwhile, well-maintained product quality encompassing taste, hygiene, and presentation enhances customer satisfaction, strengthens loyalty, and drives sales growth. Previous studies have emphasized the importance of systematic product development approaches such as Quality Function Deployment (QFD), which aligns product specifications with consumer needs and desires, while maintaining quality through proper raw material selection, production techniques, and quality control systems (Halimatus Sa'diyah, Bima Abhiseka, Irpandi, Tita Setiawati, 2024).

Micro-enterprises in the culinary sector play a crucial role in driving local economic growth. In addition to creating employment opportunities for nearby communities, culinary micro-enterprises serve as a channel for product innovation rooted in local wisdom and for reinforcing regional culture (Khalik, Nugroho, Ilmu,

& Universitas, 2022). They found that leveraging information technology in marketing and business operations can improve the welfare of culinary micro-enterprise actors in the digital era. Nevertheless, this sector still faces several obstacles, such as limited access to capital, low digital literacy, and intensifying competition from larger-scale businesses. (Alex Five Putrael Waruwu, 2025) revealed that many culinary micro-entrepreneurs struggle to manage finances, impacted by a lack of financial literacy and underutilization of technology. Therefore, collaboration between government and financial institutions is essential particularly in the form of training and technology provision to continuously enhance the capacity of culinary micro-enterprises in confronting existing challenges.

The production process comprises a series of activities aimed at transforming various inputs into outputs that hold market value for consumers. For micro-enterprises, success in managing the production process efficiently and effectively is crucial for business survival and competitiveness. Despite often facing resource limitations, micro-entrepreneurs are required to optimize every stage of production. (Utami, 2021) emphasized the importance of implementing quality management in the production process of micro-enterprises as a strategic measure to enhance efficiency and ensure product quality meets consumer expectations. Her research demonstrated that quality control systems based on fundamental ISO 9001 principles can guide micro-entrepreneurs to manage production in a structured and sustainable manner.

Product quality is one of the key aspects determining the success of culinary micro-enterprises, as it directly influences customer satisfaction and market competitiveness. Effective quality control enables micro-enterprises to maintain consistency, reduce defective products, and increase operational efficiency. For example, (Ilham Budiman, Sopyan Saori, Ramdan Nurul Anwar, 2021) found in their study of Mochi Kaswari Lampion a micro-enterprise in Sukabumi that well-implemented quality control significantly reduced product defects and boosted customer satisfaction. Similarly, (Devi Sonalia, 2013) highlighted the importance of quality control during the production of tofu in three micro-enterprises in Bogor Regency to ensure product standards were met. (Fredy Sumasto, Safril, 2022) also demonstrated that applying Total Quality Management (TQM) in a fried rice micro-enterprise in Depok effectively enhanced service quality and complaint handling, positively impacting business performance. Thus, the right quality control strategies are essential for culinary micro-enterprises to continuously improve their product quality and sustain their business in the long term.

The success of culinary micro-enterprises is influenced by a combination of internal and external supporting factors. Internally, entrepreneurs' personal characteristics and competencies play a vital role. Business management skills, product innovation, and creativity serve as primary assets in managing and developing the enterprise. (Agus Syam, Muhammad Jufri, Asmayanti, Sudarmi, Mahmuddin, 2022) showed in their research in Sidenreng Rappang Regency that entrepreneurial characteristics and competencies significantly affect the success of culinary micro-enterprises, with regression coefficients of 0.338 and 0.624,

respectively. Externally, the utilization of digital technology and social media also greatly contributes to competitiveness amid intense market rivalry. (Muhammad Haikal Faran Fajri, Nabil Naufal Zaki, Randy Arista Pratama, 2024) emphasized that the success of culinary micro-enterprises relies on menu innovation, excellent service, social media promotion strategies, and adaptation to digital technology in business operations. Therefore, the synergy between entrepreneurs' internal capabilities and the exploitation of external opportunities is a key driver of success for culinary micro-enterprises.

Accordingly, this study is relevant for conducting an in-depth analysis of how production processes and product quality are managed by UM penyetan Lamongan, and how these two aspects influence business success amidst dynamic competition and evolving consumer preferences.

RESEARCH METHODS

This study employs a qualitative method to explore in depth the perceptions of penyetan lele vendors regarding their production processes and product quality. It is conducted in Telang Village, whose population largely consists of university students. Respondents were selected using simple random sampling, ensuring that each of the approximately seven penyetan lele micro-enterprises had an equal chance of being chosen; one micro-enterprise was thus randomly selected as the study sample. Primary data were collected directly from the respondent through in-depth interviews guided by a pre-designed question set, and were supplemented by field observations to verify actual production practices. Finally, all findings were analyzed descriptively to identify the stages of the production process and the quality characteristics of the local micro-enterprise products.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Penyetan Lamongan is a micro-enterprise in the culinary sector that has demonstrated operational resilience and consistency for over a decade. Founded in 2009, this business has endured and grown for 15 years, reflecting the adaptability of its operators in facing various market dynamics and the common challenges encountered by micro-enterprises. It was established by a migrant from Lamongan, East Java, who brought the distinctive flavors of penyetan his regional culinary identity to the area where the business now operates. That unique taste has become one of the main attractions in building customer loyalty.

Interestingly, the enterprise is managed independently and efficiently by just two people: the owner, who serves as the main informant for this study, and his wife, who acts as his work partner. Despite the limited workforce, daily operations run smoothly thanks to their strong family cooperation and effective role division. A combination of experience, consistency in maintaining quality, and commitment to authentic flavor forms the vital foundation supporting the business's continuity. The resilience of Penyetan Lamongan exemplifies how even at a small scale a micro-enterprise can survive and compete sustainably when well managed.

Production Process

Penyetan Lamongan follows a structured and systematic production process to preserve flavor quality and expedite customer service. Each day, vegetables are sourced directly from Pasar Kamal to ensure freshness, while protein-based ingredients such as chicken, catfish, liver, gizzard, and fish are supplied regularly by trusted partners who deliver them directly to the business location. This distribution pattern not only helps maintain ingredient quality and availability but also saves time and effort, since the operators need not shop at the market every day.

The first step in production involves marinating the main ingredients in a traditional penyetan spice blend that has been perfected over generations. This marination enriches the flavor and ensures the spices penetrate thoroughly. After soaking, the ingredients are cooked until half-done, a strategy designed to speed up final preparation when orders arrive without compromising freshness or quality.

When an order is placed, the par-cooked ingredients are fried again until fully done. This second frying step preserves a crispy texture and releases the dish's characteristic aroma. Meanwhile, the tomato sambal accompaniment is prepared according to a standardized recipe refined through prior trials. Setting this precise measurement is key to maintaining the consistent taste that defines Penyetan Lamongan.

Production Challenges

In running the business, Penyetan Lamongan has faced challenges, especially during its early days. The main obstacle was finding the correct spice proportions. When the business was new, no fixed standards existed for mixing spices, causing the flavor to vary frequently. This inconsistency inevitably affected customer satisfaction and undermined the flavor consistency the business sought to establish.

However, these challenges were overcome through continuous trial and error. The operators actively evaluated and refined the spice blends and sambal proportions until they found a formula that could be applied consistently. The result of this process now underpins the daily production system, guaranteeing stable flavor and boosting customer confidence in product quality.

Product Quality

Penyetan Lamongan demonstrates a strong commitment to product quality in terms of cleanliness, taste, and presentation. For large orders, the business uses specially designed Styrofoam containers. These packages are not only practical but also keep the food warm and hygienic until it reaches the customer.

Hygiene standards are prioritized at every stage of presentation. One consistent hygienic practice is using tongs to arrange side dishes instead of bare hands, a measure taken to prevent cross-contamination and ensure food safety.

Regarding ingredient quality, the operators pay particular attention to key components such as sambal, rice, and main proteins like chicken or fish. Each ingredient is checked routinely: vegetables must be clean and fresh, rice must be perfectly cooked, and proteins must meet specific texture and doneness criteria.

Sambal consistency the strong identity of the penyetan menu is also carefully maintained. Its spiciness level and flavor richness serve as customer satisfaction benchmarks, prompting operators to adjust the taste thoughtfully based on their experience and customer feedback.

Efforts to Maintain and Improve Quality

To ensure consistent product quality, the operators have established standard measurements for spice compositions, especially for sambal and marinade ingredients. These measurements are not arbitrary but stem from empirical experience and trial-and-error processes conducted since the business's inception.

Beyond consistent spice formulations, selecting fresh raw materials remains a primary principle. Ingredient storage follows simple yet effective standards to keep them in optimal condition until production time. Quality control is also performed daily through straightforward but impactful steps: checking freshly cooked rice quality, ensuring sufficient and hygienic sambal preparation, and sorting vegetables to remove any that are wilted or spoiled. Through a combination of strict hygiene practices, flavor consistency, and standardized presentation, Penyetan Lamongan has succeeded in maintaining stable product quality. This demonstrates that, even at a small scale, micro-enterprises can apply effective quality-control principles to support business sustainability and customer satisfaction.

CONCLUSION

Based on interviews and observations of UM Penyetan Lamongan's business processes, it can be concluded that the enterprise's success hinges on two main aspects: production process efficiency and product quality maintenance. The semi-cooked production method enables rapid service without compromising flavor quality or food warmth. Procuring raw materials through a subscription system and direct market purchases also supports smooth daily operations.

In terms of product quality, the operators demonstrate a strong commitment to hygiene and taste standards, such as using food tongs during serving, controlling the doneness of rice and side dishes, and preserving the distinctive sambal flavor. These strategies serve as key factors in building customer satisfaction and competitive advantage amid the intense competition in the culinary micro-enterprise sector.

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