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Work Motivation and Organizational Commitment in the Sustainability of Culinary SMEs

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Abstract

This study examines the important role of work motivation and organizational commitment in supporting the sustainability of culinary Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). Using a qualitative approach, data were collected through in-depth interviews, participant observation, and document analysis involving SME owners and employees. The results of this study revealed that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation significantly influence employee commitment to the organization, which is essential for long-term business resilience and success. Intrinsic motivations such as personal passion for culinary work, a sense of purpose, and a desire to create encourage employees to remain dedicated and proactive in their roles. On the other hand, extrinsic motivators such as financial incentives, career advancement opportunities, and recognition for achievements further enhance their drive and job satisfaction. The study found that high levels of organizational commitment, especially when shared by owners and staff, contribute to SMEs' ability to survive amidst market volatility and intense competition. To foster such commitment, this study recommends that business owners create a supportive work culture by investing in employee training, ensuring open communication, and recognizing performance.

Keywords

Business Sustainability, Culinary SMEs, Organizational Commitment, Work Motivation

1. Introduction

Human Resource Management (HRM) plays an important role in ensuring organizational effectiveness and efficiency, especially in today's dynamic business environment. HRM is the foundation for achieving organizational goals, as success largely depends on the quality, motivation, and commitment of employees. Dessler (2020) defines HRM as the process of acquiring, training, appraising, and compensating employees, and attending to their labor relations, health and safety, and fairness concerns. In the context of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), where resources are often limited, the effectiveness of human capital is crucial for increasing productivity and business sustainability (Sulistamtama et al., 2024).

Work motivation and organizational commitment are especially important for MSMEs, as businesses may struggle to survive in competitive markets without strong motivation and commitment. Putra and Utama (2022) emphasize that organizational commitment has a significant influence on employee behavior, which ultimately affects the performance and longevity of small businesses. Meyer and Allen (1991) classify organizational commitment into three components: affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Meanwhile, work motivation, which drives individuals to work effectively, involves both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Sari and Hidayat (2021) note that employee work motivation is closely linked to loyalty and productivity, particularly in MSMEs. This research focuses on culinary MSMEs, a dynamic culinary hub with more than 2,500 active businesses. Despite the sector's significant economic contribution, high competition has led to a high employee turnover rate and limited business sustainability. Rahmawati et al. (2023) highlight that the sustainability of culinary MSMEs is highly influenced by internal factors such as owner motivation and employee commitment to the business.

According to Robbins and Judge (2022), motivation is the process that accounts for an individual's intensity, direction, and persistence of effort toward attaining a goal. Ramadhani and Prasetya (2021) found that employees who feel appreciated both financially and non-financially tend to have higher levels of motivation. Yusuf and Handayani (2022) also state that a transformational leadership style can increase employees' intrinsic motivation through individual attention. Saputra et al. (2024) add that work motivation culinary MSMEs is more influenced by personal relationships and recognition of performance. However, many culinary MSMEs still struggle with low work motivation and weak employee commitment, which results in high turnover rates and inconsistent productivity. Saputra et al. (2024) conclude that one of the main causes of operational instability in culinary MSMEs is the lack of work motivation and employee loyalty. This underscores the need to explore internal strategies that can enhance motivation and commitment to ensure business sustainability (Andoko et al., 2024).

Culinary MSMEs face challenges such as low employee motivation, high turnover rates, weak organizational commitment, limited employee development programs, and uninspiring leadership. These challenges lead to operational instability and declining service quality, highlighting the need for improved HRM to enhance motivation, commitment, and business sustainability. Setiawan and Pratama (2021) found that work motivation plays an important role in creating a positive work climate, which ultimately contributes to business sustainability. Likewise, Rahman and Yuliana (2022) revealed that employee commitment to the organization increases a sense of responsibility that impacts business stability. Sari et al. (2023) concluded that continuous employee training and development is essential in maintaining morale and loyalty. Taufik and Fitria (2020) stated that good leadership can increase employees' sense of attachment to organizational goals, which in turn supports business sustainability. Hidayat and Wulandari (2024)

emphasized that a supportive organizational culture increases employee motivation and commitment to achieving shared goals. Although these findings highlight the importance of work motivation and organizational commitment, research specifically linking these aspects to the sustainability of culinary MSMEs especially in a local context remains limited. Therefore, this study aims to fill that gap by exploring how work motivation and organizational commitment can enhance the sustainability of culinary businesses based on data obtained through semi-structured interviews, participatory observations, and relevant document analysis.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The Meaning of Work Motivation in the Context of Culinary MSMEs

Work motivation plays a critical role in driving individuals to achieve goals and maintain a strong work ethic. According to Robbins and Judge (2020), motivation is the process that directs, activates, and sustains an individual's behaviour to achieve organizational goals. In the context of culinary SMEs, work motivation becomes even more crucial as it directly affects employee performance, productivity, and job satisfaction. When employees are motivated, they are more likely to put forth the effort needed to achieve high standards of work, which ultimately contributes to the overall success of the business. For culinary SMEs, this means a motivated workforce is essential for maintaining quality service, ensuring customer satisfaction, and meeting operational targets. A motivated employee will go beyond just fulfilling basic duties, offering creative input and contributing to the innovation and growth of the business (Dayanti & Nurchayati, 2023; Samal et al., 2025).

The impact of work motivation on business sustainability is evident in culinary SMEs, as a motivated team leads to increased employee retention, improved work quality, and greater overall productivity. Rina and Hidayat (2021) emphasize that work motivation is strongly linked to increased employee loyalty and productivity, which are crucial factors for maintaining business continuity in competitive and challenging market environments. In culinary businesses, where service quality and innovation are vital for attracting and retaining customers, work motivation becomes an indispensable factor for long-term sustainability. By fostering both intrinsic motivations, such as passion and job satisfaction, and extrinsic motivation, such as financial rewards and recognition, SME owners can create a motivated workforce that drives business growth, resilience, and long-term success.

2.2. Interpretation of Organizational Commitment by MSME Employees

Organizational commitment refers to an employee's emotional attachment, loyalty, and sense of responsibility toward the organization they work for. According to Allen and Meyer (2021), organizational commitment involves three key components: emotional, normative, and calculative attachment. Employees who are emotionally committed to the organization are more likely to engage in behaviours that benefit both the organization and them. In the context of culinary SMEs, this commitment is crucial for fostering a positive work culture, as employees who feel a strong attachment to the organization are more dedicated to their tasks, which ultimately leads to higher productivity and better performance (Rizqulloh et al., 2024). Moreover, employees with high organizational commitment tend to stay with the company for longer periods, reducing turnover and promoting stability within the business.

Research by Wijayanti et al. (2023) highlights the significance of organizational commitment in the sustainability of businesses, particularly in small and medium-sized enterprises. Employees who feel committed to their organization are more likely to contribute positively to the work environment and improve the quality of their work. In culinary SMEs, organizational commitment is vital not only for maintaining a stable workforce but also for creating strong relationships between

owners and employees. These relationships, built on trust and loyalty, help the organization to navigate challenges, improve customer satisfaction, and ensure long-term business sustainability. Therefore, organizational commitment plays a fundamental role in promoting business success and longevity in the highly competitive culinary industry (Maheshwari et al., 2020).

2.3. Employee Perception of the Sustainability of Culinary MSME Business

Business sustainability in SMEs reflects the ability of businesses to survive and grow in the long term by balancing economic, social, and environmental aspects. According to Iqbal and Putra (2022), the desire of SMEs is determined by the ability to adapt to market dynamics, maintain product quality, and increase operational efficiency. These factors are crucial for SMEs to remain competitive, be able to respond to changes in consumer demand, and manage resource limitations effectively. With the right strategy, SMEs can create sustainable value, strengthen competitiveness, and support inclusive and environmentally friendly economic development.

In the context of culinary SMEs, sustainability is influenced not only by external conditions like consumer purchasing power or market trends but also significantly by internal organizational factors. Among these, employee motivation and organizational commitment play a central role. Motivated and committed employees are more likely to contribute to innovation, maintain service and product quality, and support the overall goals of the business. A stable and dedicated workforce ensures consistent operations, fosters strong customer relationships, and helps the business navigate uncertainties more effectively. Therefore, strengthening these internal factors is key to ensuring that culinary SMEs can survive and thrive in a competitive and ever-changing environment (Widyawati et al., 2023).

3. Method

This study employs a qualitative research method to gain an in-depth understanding of the roles of work motivation and organizational commitment in supporting the sustainability of culinary SMEs in Bogor City. This research was conducted for three months, from November 2024 to January 2025. This time frame is considered ideal to allow for thorough data collection, intensive engagement with participants, and comprehensive analysis of findings. A qualitative approach is appropriate for this study because it facilitates in-depth exploration of complex social phenomena, including the subjective experiences, attitudes, and behaviors of SME owners and employees in the context of motivation and commitment.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the study, data collection techniques will be used including semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and analysis of relevant documents such as business reports, employee handbooks, or marketing materials. Furthermore, semi-structured interviews provide flexibility in exploring individual perspectives while maintaining a consistent focus on the core research theme. Participant observation will be conducted by researchers who are directly involved in or observe the day-to-day operations of the business, allowing for a better understanding of the work culture, interpersonal dynamics, and commitment in practice. Document analysis will complement these methods by providing contextual information and supporting evidence.

Thematic analysis will be used to interpret the data. This process begins with transcribing interview recordings and compiling detailed observation notes. Data will be coded and categorized into emerging themes, such as intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, emotional and normative commitment, and the influence of these factors on business continuity. An iterative approach will be applied, continually refining themes and validating them through triangulation of data sources. By combining interviews, observations, and documents, this study aims to provide a rich and

accurate representation of how motivation and commitment contribute to the long-term sustainability of culinary SMEs in Bogor City.

4. Results

The main factors that influence the long-term sustainability of SMEs come from internal aspects of the organization, such as employee motivation, commitment to the company's vision and goals, adaptive leadership style, effectiveness of training programs, and an organizational culture that supports innovation and collaboration. These findings are drawn from various studies that explore internal aspects such as employee motivation, organizational commitment, leadership style, training programs, and organizational culture.

Table 1. Research Results on Culinary SME Business Sustainability

Factor	Key Findings	Influence in Business Sustainability
Intrinsic Work Motivation	Employees who feel they have passion and high dedication to their work tend to be more committed.	Improving product quality and innovation that has a positive impact on business competitiveness.
Extrinsic Work Motivation	Financial incentives and material rewards can increase employee morale and loyalty.	Encourage increased productivity and employee retention which leads to business stability.
Organizational Commitment	The high level of commitment between owners and employees creates a harmonious and mutually supportive working relationship.	Assist in making strategic decisions and strengthening the market position of culinary SMEs.
Human Resources Management (HRM)	HR training and development is very important to improve employee quality and skills.	Increase operational effectiveness and strengthen the competitiveness of the culinary business.

Table 1 indicate that the sustainability of culinary SME businesses is strongly influenced by two key internal factors: work motivation and organizational commitment. Work motivation, which includes both intrinsic and extrinsic aspects, plays a crucial role in fostering high employee commitment. Intrinsic motivation, such as a passion for the job and personal satisfaction, drives improvements in product quality and innovation. Meanwhile, extrinsic motivation, such as financial incentives and recognition, enhances productivity and employee retention. These motivational factors contribute to a stable work environment and encourage employees to perform at their best.

High organizational commitment from both business owners and employees plays a crucial role in ensuring the stability and long-term growth of culinary SMEs. Business owners who are highly committed tend to invest time and resources into improving service quality, encouraging innovation, and maintaining high levels of customer satisfaction. This proactive attitude not only enhances the competitiveness of the business but also creates a strong foundation for sustainable operations. Committed owners are more resilient in the face of challenges, as their dedication extends beyond profit-making to include the welfare of their employees and the trust of their customers.

On the other hand, employees who demonstrate a strong commitment to the organization are more likely to stay loyal, show initiative, and exceed performance

expectations. Their willingness to contribute beyond their basic responsibilities leads to increased productivity, better teamwork, and a more positive workplace environment. Organizational commitment among employees also reduces turnover rates and contributes to the consistency and reliability of business operations. Moreover, the implementation of effective human resource strategies, such as regular training, skill development, and performance recognition, further strengthens employee engagement and job satisfaction. As highlighted by Srimulyani and Hermanto (2021), the development of human resources has a direct impact on improving work quality, fostering employee loyalty, and enhancing the overall sustainability of culinary SMEs. Therefore, cultivating strong organizational commitment, supported by strategic HR practices, is essential for the long-term success of small culinary businesses.

From the results of interviews with owners and employees of culinary SMEs, work motivation in the culinary sector is largely influenced by intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Most respondents indicated that they were motivated by a love for the culinary industry and a desire to provide the best service to customers. Business owners also emphasize the importance of creativity and innovation in managing their businesses so that they can remain relevant to changing trends in the market. For example, a business owner said that always trying to create new products that consumers love and provide a different culinary experience is his main motivation. However, there is also extrinsic motivation which plays an important role in encouraging employee performance, such as financial incentives and awards given by business owners to employees who succeed in achieving targets or show good performance (Yudhanto et al., 2023). An employee stated that he felt more motivated when given a bonus or incentive if there was an increase in sales. This statement reflects that although intrinsic motivation, such as job satisfaction and opportunities for self-development, play an important role in improving performance, extrinsic motivation in the form of material rewards still has a significant impact in motivating employees. These financial incentives and bonuses not only increase employee morale but also create a sense of appreciation for the efforts they have made, which ultimately strengthens their commitment to the company (Najib et al., 2020).

High organizational commitment was found in most culinary SME employees involved in this research. This commitment is reflected in their persistence in completing tasks and their desire to see the company they work for develop. Most employees feel that their work is not just a source of income, but also part of a bigger goal, namely the sustainability of the culinary business they run. Business owners also demonstrate high commitment to the organization, which is reflected in their efforts to maintain product and service quality even when faced with unstable economic challenges. One business owner stated, despite the many challenges we face, I feel responsible for keeping this business running and growing, not only for me, but also for our employees and customers. This statement shows that the business owner's commitment is not only focused on personal success, but also on employee welfare and customer satisfaction. Business owners who have a strong commitment will continue to innovate, maintain quality standards, and adapt to market changes to ensure the business continues to run well. With a commitment like this, they create a stable work environment, support employees to contribute more optimally, and maintain customer loyalty which is the key to business sustainability (Octora et al., 2021).

Business sustainability in the culinary SME sector is significantly shaped by two critical internal factors: work motivation and organizational commitment. The findings of this research reinforce the notion that when these two factors are present at high levels, SMEs are more capable of navigating business challenges such as economic instability, evolving consumer preferences, and tight competition within the culinary industry. For instance, SMEs with strong leadership that fosters a

culture of innovation and employee recognition tend to show consistent growth. A culinary SME that has operated for over five years demonstrates this by continuously launching new menu items based on customer feedback, maintaining quality service, and cultivating a motivated workforce. The owner's proactive role in involving employees in decision-making, offering skills development opportunities, and maintaining open communication contributes to an environment where workers feel valued and committed to the business goals.

On the other hand, SMEs that fail to maintain employee motivation and organizational commitment often face stagnation or decline. In some cases, businesses report decreased turnover and customer retention due to employees' lack of enthusiasm, low productivity, and inconsistent service delivery. This is commonly linked to insufficient financial incentives, limited opportunities for growth, and a lack of recognition. When employees feel disconnected from the company's mission, their performance suffers, and this has a cascading effect on customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. Furthermore, low organizational commitment often results in a high employee turnover rate, which disrupts operational consistency and increases training costs. A demotivated workforce can also contribute to a negative workplace atmosphere, where collaboration weakens and internal conflicts become more frequent, ultimately undermining business sustainability. To address this, SME owners must focus on strengthening both intrinsic motivation such as by aligning work with employee values and interests and extrinsic motivation through fair compensation and recognition. Creating a supportive, inclusive, and empowering work culture is essential not only to retain employees but also to encourage their active contribution to the long-term success of the business.

5. Discussion

The results of this research show that work motivation and organizational commitment in culinary SMEs is closely linked. Meyer and Allen (2020) argue that high work motivation strengthens organizational commitment and positively affects employee performance. Similarly, Wahyu (2021) found that SME employees who feel appreciated and appropriately motivated tend to show higher commitment to the organization. The findings also support Dewa (2021), who state that motivation driven by financial incentives and rewards not only boosts morale but also enhances organizational commitment, contributing to long-term business sustainability. Committed employees are generally more productive and loyal, supporting the growth and operational stability of SMEs.

Beyond extrinsic factors, this study also highlights the role of intrinsic motivation in retaining employees and supporting sustainability. A passion for work and the desire to deliver quality service are core drivers of employee dedication. Sari and Suryani (2022) reinforce this, noting that intrinsic factors like personal satisfaction and a sense of responsibility play a greater role in shaping organizational commitment in SMEs, especially in the culinary sector. This underlines the importance of creating work environments that nurture intrinsic motivation, enabling employees to feel personally connected to their role (Oktaviani et al., 2023).

Organizational commitment itself is central to business sustainability. Owners and staff with strong commitment are more likely to persevere through operational challenges. Hermawan (2023) emphasizes that such commitment enhances resilience against market pressures and economic shifts. Similarly, Ambarwati (2021) found that high organizational commitment is not only linked to employee loyalty but also correlates with successful innovation in products and services, which enhances competitive advantage. In this research, culinary SMEs that survived and were typically those with clear organizational visions and a strong commitment to customer satisfaction and service quality.

The research also revealed that some SMEs face sustainability issues due to weak commitment and poor human resource management. This includes a lack of attention to employee development and unclear organizational direction. Utami (2022) observed that insufficient owner involvement in fostering employee commitment can lead to declining service standards and business instability. This lack of commitment from both leadership and staff hinders adaptation to changing market conditions and affects long-term sustainability. Segarwati et al. (2023) stress the need for owners to be actively engaged in human resource strategies and to maintain a strong organizational vision to promote business growth and continuity.

Based on these findings, several strategic implications emerge for SME owner's culinary sector. First, fostering a work culture that enhances both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation is critical. This can be done through training opportunities, recognition programs, and fair compensation all of which increase employee responsibility and attachment to the company. Second, developing strong organizational commitment requires clear communication, alignment between employees and management, and a shared vision and mission. These measures help unify efforts toward long-term sustainability (Suriyankietkaew et al., 2022).

By integrating high work motivation and organizational commitment, culinary SMEs can better navigate challenges and thrive in competitive environments. Strong motivation encourages employees to perform at their best, while commitment supports consistent and cooperative work relationships. As a result, SMEs can improve service and product quality, respond to market dynamics, and retain customer loyalty. According to Kusumawardhani (2024), the synergy between motivation and commitment forms the foundation for sustainable growth and competitiveness, especially in dynamic and high-pressure sectors such as culinary SMEs.

6. Conclusion

This research explored the role of work motivation and organizational commitment in enhancing the sustainability of culinary SME businesses. The findings indicate that high work motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic is closely linked with organizational commitment, which in turn impacts the sustainability of culinary SMEs. Employees who feel valued and receive incentives demonstrate greater commitment to the organization, encouraging them to contribute more toward achieving shared goals. Strong organizational commitment is a key factor in maintaining business continuity, even amidst challenges such as intense competition and market changes.

Culinary SME owners with a clear vision and the ability to foster a work environment that supports both intrinsic and extrinsic employee motivation tend to have more stable and growing businesses. In this regard, a positive work environment enables employees to feel motivated to perform at their best, further strengthening their commitment to the organization. However, the study also found that some SMEs struggle to sustain their businesses due to a lack of motivation and commitment from both management and employees, often stemming from poor human resource management, such as inadequate attention to employee needs or ineffective communication.

Therefore, the research highlights the importance of culinary SME owners focusing on balancing work motivation and organizational commitment. A key recommendation is to improve human resource management through strategies like training, providing rewards, and fostering effective communication. These steps can boost employee morale and commitment, ultimately supporting long-term business sustainability. By prioritizing human resource development, culinary SMEs can better navigate market challenges and ensure sustained business growth in the future.

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