

Strategies of Maintain the Quality of Cylinary Micro, Small, And Medium Enterprise (MSMEs)

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ABSTRACT

Culinary businesses, especially in the MSME sector, face increasing pressure to provide high-quality products that satisfy customers. This study aims to investigate effective strategies in improving product quality in the context of the culinary business. The research method used is a case study with a focus on several MSMEs in the culinary sector that have successfully implemented these strategies. The results of the study indicate that there are several key strategies implemented by MSMEs in improving the quality of their products, including: 1. Process Simplification, 2. Detailed Written and Video SOP (Standard Operating Procedure) & SOC (Station Observation Checklists), 3. Routine Training and LMS (Learning Management System), 4. Audit and Mystery Shopper, 5. Routine Consumer Survey, 6. Monitor Review Sites and Social Media, 7. Control Receiving & Storage of Raw Materials, 8. Quality Standards of Raw Materials & Vendors, 9. Supporting Equipment and Supplies, 10. Rules and Culture at Outlets, 11. Reward & Punishment, 12. Outlet Organizational Structure. In addition, the findings also identify challenges faced by MSMEs in implementing these strategies, including high costs for high-quality raw materials, difficulty in finding trained workers, and the need to keep up with changing market trends. The implication of this study is the importance of a holistic approach in managing a culinary business, including the integration of comprehensive quality and service strategies to retain and attract customers. This study contributes to the literature on MSME management by offering practical guidance for culinary business owners to improve their competitiveness through a strong focus on product quality and service.

Key Words: Strategy; Maintaining Quality; MSME Products

INTRODUCTION

The development of the food and beverage industry sector in Indonesia is of great interest to investors. Product quality becomes very important because it is not only a reflection of customer expectations but also a critical factor for the sustainability of businesses in the long term. High-quality products foster customer loyalty, leading to repeat orders and positive recommendations. In a country as diverse as Indonesia, where culinary traditions vary greatly across regions, the food and beverage sector stands out as a key driver of economic growth. The unique flavors and rich heritage of Indonesian cuisine provide a competitive advantage, making the culinary landscape a promising field for entrepreneurship.

Furthermore, food and beverages represent fundamental human needs, as every individual requires sustenance for survival. This inherent demand ensures that the food and beverage industry remains resilient and adaptable, even in the face of economic fluctuations. The positive growth trajectory of this sector is evidenced by recent data from the Ministry of Industry, which reports that the growth of the food and beverage industry in the third quarter of 2022 reached 3.57%, surpassing the 3.49% growth recorded during the same period the previous year. Such statistics highlight the sector's robust performance and its potential to contribute significantly to Indonesia's overall economic development.

Given the vast culinary business opportunities in Indonesia, it is crucial for the government and industry stakeholders to prioritize the training and development of culinary businesses. By providing resources and support, the government can play a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of culinary MSMEs, ensuring that they not only meet local consumer demands but also compete effectively in the global market. Improved quality management can lead to increased productivity and innovation, enabling MSMEs to expand their market reach and improve their profitability.

Moreover, the culinary sector's growth has a broader impact on the national economy. It contributes to job creation, with culinary MSMEs absorbing a significant portion of the workforce. As these businesses thrive, they help uplift the livelihoods of countless individuals and families, particularly in rural and underserved communities. By fostering an environment conducive to culinary entrepreneurship, the government can also stimulate regional development and economic equity.

Another critical aspect of maintaining product quality is understanding the supply chain dynamics within the culinary industry. Ensuring the freshness and safety of ingredients is paramount for culinary MSMEs. This involves establishing strong relationships with local suppliers and farmers, emphasizing the importance of sourcing high-quality, sustainable ingredients. By promoting local produce, culinary businesses can enhance their offerings while supporting local economies.

In addition, leveraging technology plays a significant role in improving product quality and operational efficiency. Culinary MSMEs can adopt digital tools for inventory management, customer engagement, and quality control. By embracing technology, these businesses can streamline processes, reduce waste, and ensure consistent quality across their product lines. Furthermore, online platforms provide opportunities for marketing and customer feedback, allowing businesses to adapt quickly to changing consumer preferences.

Consumer awareness and preferences are evolving rapidly, with an increasing demand for healthy, sustainable, and ethically produced food. Culinary MSMEs must stay attuned to these trends to remain competitive. By incorporating health-conscious ingredients, sustainable practices, and transparent sourcing, these businesses can cater to the growing segment of consumers seeking quality over quantity. The integration of culinary education and training programs is essential for developing skilled professionals in the food and beverage sector. Institutions offering culinary arts programs can collaborate with MSMEs to provide hands-on training, ensuring that future chefs and entrepreneurs possess the necessary skills to maintain high-quality standards. By investing in education, the industry can nurture a new generation of culinary talent capable of driving innovation and quality improvement.

Lastly, maintaining the quality of culinary MSMEs is not solely the responsibility of individual businesses. It requires a collaborative approach involving government agencies, industry associations, and educational institutions. By fostering partnerships and creating platforms for knowledge sharing, stakeholders can collectively address challenges and implement strategies that elevate the quality of culinary products across Indonesia. In conclusion, the strategies to maintain the quality of culinary Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are multifaceted and require a holistic approach. By focusing on product quality, investing in training, leveraging technology, and understanding consumer preferences, the culinary sector can continue to thrive and contribute significantly to Indonesia's economic landscape. Through collaborative efforts, the government and industry stakeholders can ensure the sustainability and growth of culinary MSMEs, paving the way for a vibrant and prosperous food and beverage industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous Related Study

According to (Nasution, 1998), qualitative research is a research procedure that produces descriptive data in the form of written or spoken words, from people and observed behavior. In this research, an effort is made to collect as much descriptive data as possible which will be presented in the form of reports and descriptions.

Market globalization has implications for MSMEs who must compete in product marketing. The development of technology integrated with trade is moving so

rapidly that it has given birth to the industrial revolution 4.0. The problem is that MSMEs still rely on conventional methods to run their businesses. (Ariescy, 2021).

According to (Kotler, Philip & Ketler, 2020), quality is the extent to which a product meets its specifications. A product is a collection of real physical attributes assembled in an identifiable form. While the quality parameter of a product is how satisfied customers are, not only that, the product can mean having a function of how producers can maintain customers' assessment views of their products.

MSME Products

The introduction of MSME products given at the end of each session made participants more enthusiastic in introducing their product brands. Here they also shared with the facilitator about how to make their presentations more interesting. Here participants also discussed how to make the creative content they created acceptable to the public so that they were interested in buying. Although the discussion was not part of the training material, it provided new ideas for the development of further community service (Agustina et al., 2021; Armiani et al., 2022; Putri, 2022).

Product quality is "the ability of a product to perform its functions, it includes the product's overall durability, reliability, precision, ease of operation and repair, and other valued attributes" or the ability of a product to function as it should to meet needs. Things that are measured or dimensions are reliability, accuracy, durability, ease of operation and repair of the product. Product quality is one of the things that marketers pay attention to in positioning. Product quality has an influence on customer satisfaction. (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012:283; Yafie et al. 2016).

Consumer satisfaction is the experience of satisfaction that customers get after consuming a product or service. Customers can compare the results or performance of a product with other products, whether it exceeds consumer expectations or hopes. If the product's ability to work exceeds consumer expectations, it can be interpreted that consumers are satisfied and vice versa if the product does not meet expectations, it can be said that consumers are less satisfied. (Kotler & Keller, 2012:46; Ogi et al. 2016). In the journal studied by Hawkins and Lonney; Tjiptono, 2004:101; Maimunah & Sardjono, 2019 there are three indicators of consumer satisfaction that must be considered by companies, including: 1. Conformity to consumer expectations. 2. Consumer interest in returning. 3. Consumer willingness to recommend to other consumers.

In order to contribute positively to all company activities in achieving its goals (D.Anggraini, 2020) In today's tight business competition, the most important thing that must be prioritized by the company is the quality of the products or services offered. If a company wants its company to grow, then every company must be able to provide good quality and provide a sense of security to its consumers, because that is one of the determining factors for the success of a company.

RESEARCH METHOD

Design and Sample

This type of research uses a descriptive qualitative research method. Qualitative research is research that uses a scientific background, with the intention of interpreting the phenomena that occur and is carried out by involving various existing methods. In qualitative research, the methods usually used are interviews, observations, and document utilization. The concept analyzed from this study is the Strategy for Maintaining the Quality of MSME Culinary Products.

Instrument and Procedure

The data collection method used by the author is an interview. An interview is a conversation with a specific purpose. The conversation is conducted by both parties, namely the interviewer, who asks questions and the interviewee who provides answers to the statements. (Moleong, 2013). "Data analysis is a process of systematically searching for and compiling data obtained from interview results by organizing data into categories, describing them into units, conducting systems, arranging them into patterns, choosing which ones are important and which ones will be analyzed and making conclusions so that they are easy to understand by yourself and others". According to (Santori & Komariah, 2012), the stages of data analysis required are: Data collection. Data collection is carried out by means of observation, interviews and document review on the research subjects to be studied by the author. Data reduction (reduction) The data that has been obtained is then written in the form of a report or detailed data. The report is compiled based on the data obtained, summarized, the main points are selected and focused on the important things. Data display The next step is to reduce data or present data. Data presentation techniques in qualitative research can be done in the form of tables, graphs, and data presentation can be done in the form of brief descriptions, charts, relationships between categories, flowcharts and the like. Data display to facilitate and understand what is happening and also to plan further work based on what has been understood. Conclusion and verification Next is the drawing of conclusions and verification of what has been reduced previously. Verification is carried out throughout the research in line with triangulation so as to guarantee the significance or meaningfulness of the research results.

Data Analysis

Triangulation is a data validity checking technique that utilizes something other than the data for checking purposes or as a comparison to existing data. (Moleong, 2013) distinguishes four types of triangulation, namely utilizing sources, methods, and theories. The following is an explanation of the three types of triangulation above. The triangulation test conducted by the author is to obtain data through interviews with the four informants who have been determined, then the results of the interviews will be tested for validity using the source triangulation technique.

The answers of the five informants obtained from the interview results will be compared with each other to test the consistency of the interview results obtained.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research aimed to identify effective strategies for maintaining product quality in culinary Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The findings revealed several key strategies that can be implemented to ensure quality remains consistent, thus enhancing customer satisfaction and business sustainability.

One of the primary strategies identified was the simplification of processes. Lengthy production processes often lead to increased chances of errors. By simplifying processes, such as implementing single packaging and pre-mixing basic spices, culinary MSMEs can significantly reduce the potential for manufacturing mistakes. Shorter production times not only minimize errors but also enhance overall efficiency, enabling businesses to respond swiftly to consumer demands.

The establishment of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and Station Observation Checklists (SOCs) is critical for ensuring product quality. The research highlighted the importance of creating detailed written SOPs and SOCs, complemented by instructional videos. These resources serve as valuable training tools for staff, ensuring that every branch adheres to the same quality standards. The use of videos is particularly beneficial, as they provide a visual reference that enhances understanding and retention, emphasizing the importance of maintaining high-quality products.

Furthermore, regular training sessions and the implementation of a Learning Management System (LMS) were deemed essential for upholding quality standards. Ongoing training reinforces the importance of quality control and helps employees stay updated on best practices. The LMS offers a cost-effective means of delivering training materials, including SOPs and SOCs in video format, thereby facilitating consistent learning and quality assurance across all branches.

Conducting audits and employing mystery shoppers were also highlighted as effective strategies for maintaining product quality. Regular audits at various stages of the production process, as well as during service delivery, allow for the identification of potential quality issues. Mystery shopping, whether conducted in-person or through delivery orders, provides an objective assessment of the customer experience, enabling businesses to identify areas for improvement without bias.

The research emphasized the importance of conducting regular consumer surveys to gather feedback on product quality. Engaging directly with customers, particularly loyal patrons, allows culinary MSMEs to understand their preferences and address any concerns promptly. By actively seeking consumer input and responding to complaints, businesses can foster trust and encourage repeat patronage, which is crucial for long-term success.

Additionally, monitoring review sites and social media is vital for maintaining a positive brand image and responding to customer feedback. By keeping an eye on platforms like Google Reviews, Instagram, and TikTok, culinary MSMEs can swiftly address complaints and implement necessary improvements. Proactive engagement with consumers on these platforms not only enhances product quality but also builds a strong rapport with customers.

Another critical factor in ensuring product quality is the control of raw material receipt and storage. The research underscores the importance of establishing SOPs for the handling of raw materials, including guidelines for receipt and storage. Ensuring that vendors comply with quality standards is essential, as the quality of ingredients directly impacts the final product. Regular audits of raw material storage practices can help maintain high standards and prevent quality degradation.

The study also highlighted the necessity of setting raw material and vendor quality standards. By selecting high-quality ingredients that align with market demands, culinary MSMEs can enhance their product offerings. Establishing clear specifications for raw materials and diversifying vendor relationships mitigates risks associated with supply shortages and ensures a consistent supply of quality ingredients.

The role of supporting equipment and supplies in maintaining product quality cannot be overlooked. Standardizing equipment and supplies helps ensure that all culinary processes are performed consistently, which is particularly important in businesses where not all staff members are professional chefs. Detailed SOPs provide clear instructions, allowing staff to operate equipment effectively and maintain high standards.

Furthermore, instilling a culture of quality and adherence to established rules among employees is crucial. The research found that fostering a culture that values cleanliness and adherence to quality standards is essential for maintaining product quality. Employees should be educated on the importance of following SOPs and the consequences of deviating from established practices. Implementing a system of rewards and punishments based on quality performance can motivate staff to uphold high standards. Recognizing and rewarding employees for their contributions to maintaining product quality encourages continued dedication, while addressing quality issues through evaluations promotes accountability and improvement.

Lastly, the research highlighted the importance of a clear organizational structure within culinary MSMEs. A well-defined structure clarifies roles and responsibilities related to product quality, ensuring that directives are executed effectively. As businesses expand, it becomes essential to have competent personnel in place to manage operations efficiently, thereby contributing to sustained quality assurance.

In conclusion, maintaining the quality of culinary Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) involves a multi-faceted approach that includes process simplification, detailed SOPs, regular training, audits, consumer engagement, and a strong organizational structure. By implementing these strategies, culinary MSMEs can enhance product quality, foster customer loyalty, and ensure long-term success in a competitive industry.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results and discussion, the conclusion of this study is that for the strategy to maintain the quality of culinary products of MSMEs, 12 strategies or stages are required, 1. Process Simplification, 2. Detailed Written and Video SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures) & SOCs (Station Observation Checklists), 3. Routine Training and LMS (Learning Management System), 4. Audits and Mystery Shoppers, 5. Routine Consumer Surveys, 6. Monitor Review Sites and Social Media, 7. Control of Receiving & Storage of Raw Materials, 8. Quality Standards of Raw Materials & Vendors, 9. Supporting Equipment and Supplies, 10. Rules and Culture at Outlets, 11. Rewards & Punishments, 12. Outlet Organizational Structure To successfully launch a product must meet the 4 things above, so that the business can continue to be developed and recognized and accepted by consumers. So that the products produced continue to develop and become more widely known by the public. In order to win business competition, continuous innovation is needed to keep up with business developments, as well as the implementation of good management by professional employees.

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