

OPTIMIZING MICRO, SMALL, AND MEDIUM BUSINESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS IN THE FOOD SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

Background: The effectiveness of mentoring programs for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) needs to be evaluated in order to develop effective mentoring programs. Each MSME requires a different mentoring program, so it is necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of the existing mentoring program in order to design the next mentoring program.

Purpose: This research aims to determine the effectiveness of the community empowerment program through mentoring MSMEs in improving the welfare of meatball traders in Jakarta implemented by Dompot Dhuafa.

Design/methodology/approach: Data collection Analysis includes secondary data, field observations, in-depth interviews, and documentation. Analysis was carried out using triangulation techniques which included data reduction, presentation, and drawing conclusions.

Findings/Result: The research findings can be stated as follows: 1) Collective Mentoring Program: The research results show that programs that focus on mentoring groups have a significant positive impact on cohesiveness and unity in the meatball trader community. This collaborative support plays an important role in advancing the development of micro and small businesses. Apart from that, the mentoring program is also effective in increasing traders' motivation and knowledge in entrepreneurship. 2) Financial Assistance Programs: This study underscores the importance of financial assistance programs in providing the necessary capital for microenterprises. However, this suggests that this form of aid is more suited to meeting short-term financial needs than as a long-term solution.

Conclusion: There are three types of mentoring programs carried out, namely Group Mentoring, Increasing Partner Capacity Through Training, and Financial Assistance. Of the three types of mentoring programs, mentoring groups, especially in forming cohesive and family groups (recruitment results), are considered the most effective in helping meatball traders survive during the pandemic. Especially in forming groups or communities that regularly hold meetings and collectively help solve problems, maintain the cleanliness of sales equipment (carts, plates, spoons, etc.), and try to develop or find out how to make the taste of these meatballs more popular. with customers. But what they appreciated most was a community meeting that had never been held before.

Originality/value (State of the art): There has been no evaluation of this program so it is very important to evaluate the implementation and impact of the mentoring program on business continuity, in order to improve the mentoring program in the future.

Keywords: MSMEs, mentoring program, evaluation, effectiveness, meatball traders

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INTRODUCTION

Community empowerment initiatives, a concept with a long history, became prominent as a response to the increasing rate of poverty in Indonesia, impacting both rural and urban areas. These initiatives aim to enable communities to independently meet their needs, as highlighted by Hamid (2019). Assessing the effectiveness of these community empowerment programs is necessary to determine whether the intended goals have been achieved, in accordance with established effectiveness standards, as outlined by Fausiah (2016). Effectiveness serves as a crucial criterion for evaluating the success of programs, helping to determine the program's ability to achieve its intended goals, as emphasized by Saputra (2019). Essentially, effectiveness measures the outcomes achieved, indicating that an activity is considered effective if carried out correctly. Empowerment initiatives can be implemented in various ways, including job creation, provision of capital assistance, and mentoring.

Each MSME mentoring program is unique, thus requiring an evaluation of how effectively a mentoring program is implemented. The results of this evaluation can serve as a reference for planning subsequent mentoring programs. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on various businesses, especially MSMEs. The effectiveness of mentoring programs can be seen in how the MSMEs manage to survive during such times.

Since 2011, PT Miwon has been involved in community empowerment efforts by providing capital support to meatball vendors across Indonesia (Febrinastri, 2019). The assistance provided by PT Miwon cumulatively reached 430 meatball vendors nationwide (Fikri, 2016). PT Miwon partnered with Dompot Dhuafa to implement this program, where Dompot Dhuafa selects meatball vendors eligible to receive assistance from PT. Miwon. This initiative was motivated by concern for the conditions of micro-scale meatball vendors who are still limited in terms of entrepreneurship, production, managerial skills, and marketing. Dompot Dhuafa initiated a program to support meatball vendors across Indonesia by providing a year-long mentoring program starting in 2019 (Kiswanto, 2021). The main goal of this assistance is to ensure the vendors' survival, independence, and competitiveness. Dompot Dhuafa's support comes in three main forms: 1) improving

vendors' financial and inventory management skills, 2) building institutional strength through the formation of associations, and 3) facilitating group meetings.

Dompot Dhuafa's mentoring program is also active in Jakarta, where many meatball vendors have emerged due to layoffs and the pursuit of business opportunities amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Previous research has explored the effectiveness of community empowerment in various contexts. Nufus et al. (2017) the problems formulated in this research were as follows: (1) studied the success of Sharia-based assistance for micro, small, and medium enterprises in Bandung. Mamangkey (2021) assessed the utilization of village funds for community empowerment in Tompasso village, Minahasa district. Fausiah (2016) researched the effectiveness of small-scale food processing business development conducted by the Ministry of Cooperatives and Trade in Sigi District. Saputra (2019) investigated the effectiveness of community empowerment programs for joint business groups. These studies highlight research gaps in understanding the effectiveness of micro, small, and medium enterprise (MSME) assistance programs, especially in the food sector in Jakarta. Moreover, the effectiveness of Dompot Dhuafa's specific MSME assistance program for meatball vendors has not been evaluated. This gap prompts researchers to investigate this theme. The uniqueness of this research lies in its exploration of how the community responds to economic challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. This research investigates the effectiveness of community assistance programs in sustaining micro-level businesses, enabling them to meet their household financial needs.

With Dompot Dhuafa's active mentoring program in Jakarta, this research becomes important due to the influx of meatball vendors, including those affected by layoffs and individuals seeking alternative paths amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The core of this investigation is the question: Is the implemented assistance program proven effective? Based on these considerations, the primary goal of this research is to evaluate the effectiveness of the MSME mentoring program, specifically the program implemented by Dompot Dhuafa for meatball vendors in Jakarta. This evaluation aims to determine whether the program successfully achieved its goals of helping meatball vendors improve their sustainability, independence, and competitiveness amidst the economic challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The main goals of this research include 1) Assessing the impact of the mentoring program on the sustainability of the meatball vendors' businesses, particularly in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, 2) Identifying factors contributing to the effectiveness of the mentoring program in assisting meatball vendors in Jakarta, 3) Analyzing the perceptions and experiences of meatball vendors who received assistance and mentoring from Dompot Dhuafa 4) Providing recommendations for future improvements in MSME mentoring programs based on the findings of the research.

METHODS

This research was conducted in the community of meatball traders assisted by Dompot Dhuafa in Jakarta spread across South Jakarta and West Jakarta. The community population is 430 meatball traders throughout Indonesia, while in Jakarta there are approximately 200 meatball traders for PTM 1 to 7 work programs. The process of selecting meatball trader participants is carried out using a purposive sampling approach, namely the deliberate selection of data sources based on certain criteria (Sugiyono, 2017). The criteria used are PTMs with meatball traders who are still active. Not all meatball traders under Dompot Dhuafa's guidance are still active today. Those who are still actively selling and participating in the Dompot Dhuafa mentoring program are meatball traders at PTM 5. Therefore, the research sample determined was meatball traders PTM 5. The number of samples determined was 50 MSMEs/PTM.

This research uses a mixture of quantitative and qualitative methods which will examine the effectiveness of the mentoring program in terms of clarity of objectives to be achieved, clarity of strategies for achieving objectives, and appropriate program formulation. The informants in this research were the accompanying parties, namely Dompot Dhuafa and the meatball traders under Dompot Dhuafa's guidance.

This study received research grant funding from the Ministry of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia. Data collection was carried out in several ways as follows: (1) field observation (observation), this technique was used to directly observe the behavior and activities of meatball traders as well as mentoring activities, (2) in-depth interviews, (3) distributing questionnaires to meatball traders, (4) Documentation,

this technique is used to search for data by studying reading materials (literature, magazines, newspapers) and documents belonging to related agencies and archives that are relevant to the research objectives. Data obtained from the analysis of secondary data, and primary data through interviews, questionnaires, or field observations, were analyzed using triangulation methods, with steps including data reduction, followed by data display, and concluded with drawing conclusions. The research framework is presented in Figure 1 from input, and process, to research output.

RESULTS

Implementation of the Assistance Program

PT. MIWON Indonesia synergizes with the Mandiri-Dompot Dhuafa Community and is concerned about the problems faced by MSMEs, especially meatball traders. Meatball traders are micro business entities that fall into the category of snack food traders. Generally, they can also be found and operate in urban areas such as Jakarta with heterogeneous consumer segments.

Bakso is the most popular snack food in Indonesia. In food processing, it is hoped that processed food can become a preferred food, good and safe for consumption. Knowledge of production management among meatball traders can be said to be still limited in terms of capacity, knowledge, attitudes, and skills. The pattern of good management of production aspects such as hygiene, capital, knowledge, attitudes, and skills is the key to success for food vendors so it greatly influences the achievement or positioning of a trader, in which the majority are dominated by small-scale meatball traders.

Seeing the conditions above, intensive and comprehensive assistance is needed, especially providing guidance towards independence for meatball traders. Therefore, since 2017 PT. MIWON Indonesia synergizes with the Independent-Dompot Dhuafa Community to implement the PTM 5 Program. PTM 5 partners are partners who have passed the selection to participate in this program, with the requirements 1). Small meatball traders (carts) 2). Productive age or married 3). Living (domiciled) in one program target area 4). Not following or receiving similar assistance from other parties 5). Follow and comply with the rules in the implementation of the program.

The fifth empowerment program for meatball traders was initiated to increase their capacity both from a production (food safety) and managerial (business development) aspect. This group-based empowerment program aims to make people aware of the importance of hygiene, safety, and halal so that it will have an impact on increasing sales turnover by optimizing the role of local institutions that oversee their activities. The Miwon Tough Trader Program (PTM) is the fifth meatball seller program with 50 meatball seller partners spread across Pasar Minggu, Kebagusan, Jagakarsa, Kuningan, and Pancoran.

The intensive and comprehensive mentoring program is mainly related to the increase in the meatball trader group carried out by PT. MIWON Indonesia synergizes with the Independent-Dompot Dhuafa Community, namely providing guidance towards independence, namely by supporting facilities in the form of business equipment (carts and their contents), business capital, routine group coaching meetings, capacity building, attitudes, knowledge and skills, ISM local institutional growth (Ikhtiar Self-Help Partners). This mentoring program consists of: (1) Group mentoring, (2) Partner Capacity Building Through Training, (3) Entrepreneurship Motivation Training, (4) Partner Capacity Strengthening Through Food Safety Training and Qualitative Testing, (5) Institutional Training, (6) Finance, and (7) Business development.

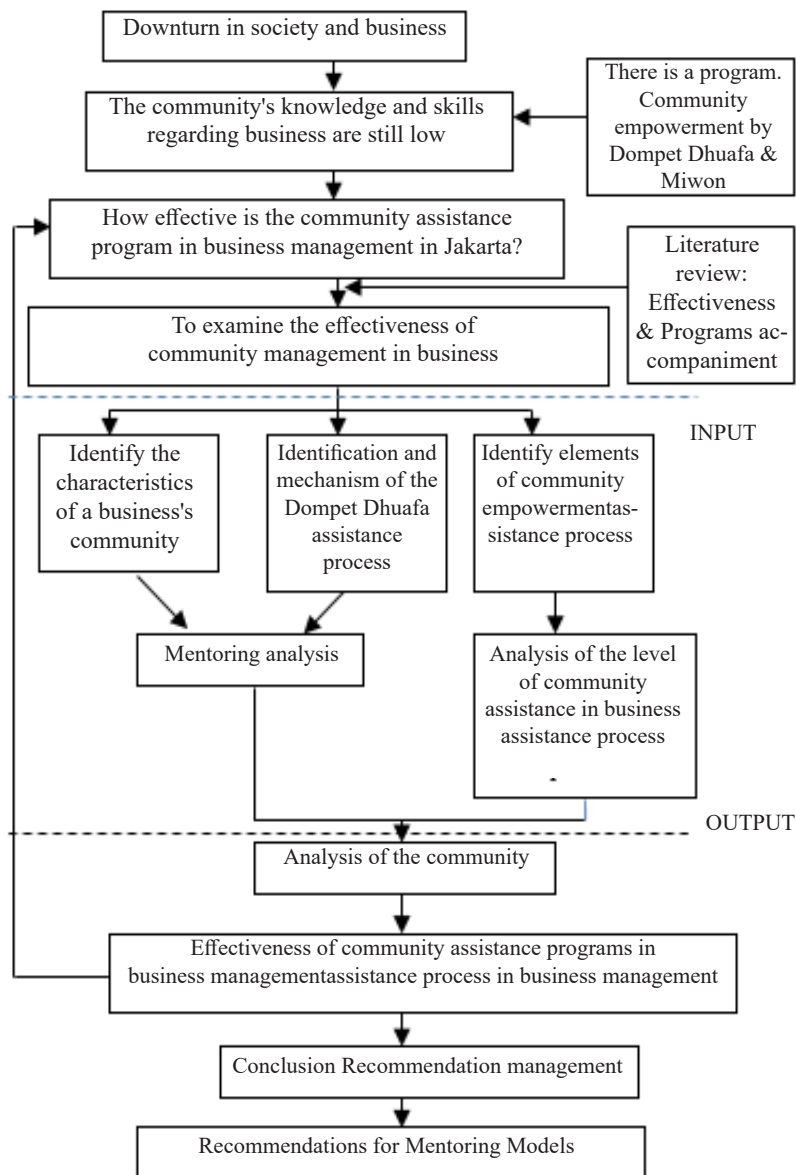


Figure 1. Research framework

The group mentoring process is directed at changing mindsets and behaviors, adding insight and partner skills. This is done as one of the stages towards the intellectual independence of the community. The methods used in group mentoring include group meetings, group monitoring related to business (financial) development, and monitoring of healthy and halal production processes. In addition, the delivery of material with a system of case studies, problem-solving, and field applications. It is hoped that group meetings which are held every two weeks with a duration of approximately 60 minutes will not interfere with their sales activities. Some of the activities in the meeting were the opening, and partner pledges, followed by discussions about business problems and the obstacles faced in the Miwon 5 tough trader empowerment program, strengthening materials were also given such as group philosophy, gratitude, discipline, and other religions.

In addition to increasing the capacity of partners through mentoring by assistants, in the Miwon 5 tough trader program several trainings are also provided related to partner capacity strengthening. The trainings that will be carried out include Entrepreneurship training, Food Safety training, and Institutional Training.

In the Miwon 5 resilient trader financial empowerment program, some funds are channeled to 50 partners who are members of 6 groups. Basically, the funds that have been distributed to Miwon 5 tough merchant partners are their rights. However, with the pattern of economic empowerment, it is hoped that these funds can continue to roll over. So it is necessary to apply financing systems to provide learning for partners who benefit from the importance of sustainability of business capital/ financial management, and the importance of helping and helping each other. Therefore, in the Miwon 5 tough trader program, the provision of business capital for Miwon 5 tough trader partners applies to the Qordhul Hasan contract or benevolent loans. In this case, the partner is only obliged to repay principal funds, savings, and social funds (infaq). When the installments for the first group of schemes are completed, they can access the funds they have repaid in installments of the same or a larger amount, increasing from the first scheme to the second scheme.

In developing the business, the target outlined in the output of this program is the realization of welfare, which is reflected by the indicator of increasing partner income from before joining the program until the end of the program. The increase in income increased by an average of 28.2%, one of the increases in income was due to the use of new, better, and neater carts.

Characteristics

The survey results regarding the characteristics of PTM have changed between 2017 and 2022, namely 1) Business area: in 2017, the business area of PTM 5 meatball traders was mostly in Jagakarsa at 46%, and the rest was in Pasar Minggu, Mampang Prapatan and Pancoran. The 2022 survey results show that most are still in Jagakarsa, while business areas in Mampang Prapatan and Pancoran are favored by traders; 2) Age: changes in the age of PTM 5 are relatively caused by increasing age, most remain at the age of 41-50 years. Several meatball traders died, but were then continued by their children; 3) Education: in the 2017 survey, no education survey was carried out, this is because education was deemed to have no effect on the business and skills of the meatball business. In the 2022 research, a survey was conducted on education, with the consideration that education is a factor that influences the skills and abilities of meatball traders in maintaining and developing their businesses. The survey results show that the majority of PTM 5 meatball traders' education is junior high school. This will influence the determination of training and mentoring methods that should be implemented; 4) Average sales per day: the highest average daily sales in 2017 was Rp350,000 – Rp750,000. Average sales in 2022 will increase, namely sales of more than Rp750,000. This shows that the average daily sales of PTM 5 meatball traders have increased after the implementation of the mentoring program in 2017. Even though from 2020 until now there is still the impact of the pandemic being experienced by all types of businesses. From the results of the interview, this is because the PTM 5 community is quite effective in establishing relationships, holding discussions, and finding solutions to overcome the business problems they face, including for several meatball traders who sell online and for meatball traders who are in shortage. understanding of the technology provided by other colleagues.

Questionnaire Answers

Distribution of Group Assistance Program Answers

On the effectiveness of the group mentoring program, there are 10 statement points submitted by researchers to respondents. The frequency distribution of respondents' answers regarding the effectiveness of the mentoring program is shown in Table 1. An overview of research results is obtained where the average response of respondents to the statement of the mentoring program is an average of 4.03 or good. There are 3 statements that have a maximum index of 4.06, namely the statement that in group meetings together they help each other solve problems with one another, maintain the cleanliness of selling equipment (carts, plates, spoons, etc.), try to develop or find out how to taste Meatballs are increasingly popular with customers. Meanwhile, the lowest index is 4.00, namely the statement that group meetings are held regularly until now.

Distribution of Partner Capacity Building Program Responses

In the partner capacity building program, there are 12 statement items submitted by researchers to respondents. The frequency distribution of respondents' answers regarding the effectiveness of the capacity-building program is shown in Table 2. An overview of the results of the research is obtained where the average response of respondents to the statement of the partner capacity building program is an average of 4.10 or good. The maximum index is 4.16, namely the statement I am proud to be part of the PTM group/association.

Assistance Program

From the results of the questionnaire, it was found that the average value of the questionnaire for the mentoring program was 4.03 or good. This means that PTM 5 meatball traders assess the mentoring program that has been implemented on average well, the thing they value the most is:

Table 1. Distribution of Assistance program answers

Statement	Average Answer Index
Group meetings are held regularly until now	4
In our group meetings together we help each other solve problems with one another	4.06
In group meetings we get enormous benefits. including knowledge. skills or input/suggestions	4.04
I take care of the meatball production process so that it is healthy and halal	4.04
I maintain the cleanliness of my selling equipment (cart. plates. spoons. etc.)	4.06
I take good care of the carts and selling equipment so that they are always attractive to customers	4.02
I'm trying to develop or find out how to make the taste of meatballs more popular with customers	4.06
Compared to 2017. the taste of my meatballs is getting better and more popular with customers	4.02
Monitoring from Dompot Dhuafa regarding the development of my business on a regular basis is still being carried out to this day	4.02
Monitoring regarding the production process of healthy and halal meatballs is still being carried out periodically to date	4.04
Maximum	4.06
Minimum	4
Average	4.03

Table 2. Distribution of responses to the capacity building program

Statement	Average Answer Index
I gained enough knowledge about "effort" after attending the training	4.12
I am even more excited about selling meatballs after attending the training	4.14
I understand more about financial planning	4.14
I thought about how to make the taste of meatballs more popular with customers	4.08
I thought about how to make customers like my meatballs even more	4.08
I understand healthy and halal food processing	4.06
I understand the correct production process so that food/meatballs are healthy and halal	4.06
I am happy and friendly with my group mates	4.12
I feel helped by the existence of a group formed by the Dompot Dhuafa	4.1
I want to remain part of my group	4.1
My group of friends and I are very compact	4.12
I am proud to be a part of the PTM group/association	4.16
Maximum	4.16
Minimum	4.06
Average	4.1

a. Group Meeting

In group meetings, they help each other solve problems with one another. This nature of helping one another makes them happy to always be present at community meetings. Besides, they come from areas that are not far from each other, namely the area of Central Java – Solo and its surroundings, this makes them feel in the same boat because they are the same. Together they migrate to make a living which causes them to have a strong sense of kinship. This sense of kinship makes them feel bound to one another. They consider community meetings and communication to be important because they meet friends from the area and these meetings can become an arena for information about their area. This is evidenced by the fact that the number of group members remains the same, namely 50 people, although some of them have died, the business and membership of the group are continued by their children or relatives. During the pandemic, the meatball traders really felt this, where they experienced a very drastic decline in sales. But thanks to this friendly community, they support and help each other. Even now there is their desire to form a cooperative, with the aim of being able to help each other among those who are experiencing financial difficulties. Until now, group meetings are still actively held once a month, except during PPKM due to a pandemic, they limit meetings, but they still carry out communication even though they don't meet in person, namely by telephone. Community meetings become an

arena for discussion and together to help each other to solve problems with one another. Especially during a pandemic, community members share information and experiences about their businesses.

b. Maintain the cleanliness of sales equipment (carts, plates, spoons, etc.)

They always instill the results of the training in 2017 in their business and activities, including maintaining cleanliness. Because it is believed that maintaining cleanliness will maintain the hygiene of their business so as to provide a sense of security and comfort for buyers.

c. Trying to develop or find out how to make the taste of meatballs more popular with customers.

Product and business innovation is one of the topics favored by the community. There are several activities that have been implemented:

1. Joint venture so that it will be able to increase its sales. One of them that is currently running is the Malang meatball business "Pak De", which already exists in 3 locations managed by the PTM 5 community. It is hoped that this business will develop further.
2. Selling frozen meatballs. So that it can be durable and practical for consumers or become a menu in the household.

Meanwhile, the innovations that they are still planning and hoping for are:

1. Interesting meatball cart improvements
2. Sales of meatballs using motorbikes

Meanwhile, the thing they value most is community meetings, which have not been held as routinely as before. This is due to the pandemic conditions during 2020 and 2021, which are still being felt today. This causes the limitation of communication between their communities. In these community meetings, they feel that they have received enormous benefits, including knowledge and skills or input/suggestions related to their business. In this community, there is no sense of competition because they occupy different areas or business locations.

Maintaining a healthy and halal meatball production process is also their concern. In accordance with religious teachings, they feel they are also responsible for public health, especially their meatball customers. So they pay attention to cleanliness and the composition of food ingredients that are healthy and halal. Because their business goal is for the long term, they prioritize customer loyalty.

For the image of the taste of meatballs or their product innovation, compared to 2017, they assessed that the image of the taste of their meatballs was getting better and more popular with customers. This is the result of sharing knowledge and skills between communities. They try the composition of the meatballs or spices that can enhance the taste of the meatballs, then share them with each other in the community.

Monitoring from Dompot Dhuafa for PTM 5 meatball traders is still being carried out, but only through the group leader, during a pandemic, because there is limited physical contact, it is only carried out by telephone asking about the progress and conditions of the community's business. This is not routinely carried out, but currently, Dompot Dhuafa is helping or having a joint business with PTM 5 meatball traders, namely selling packaged meatballs. So with this joint effort, communication is maintained between Dompot Dhuafa and PTM 5 meatball traders.

Currently, several PTM 5 work programs have been implemented and agreed upon by its members including: Member contributions, the funds of which will be used to help members in need and for business development

plans. For example, some members experience disaster, the funds are used to provide assistance to their families; Arisan, to save money and stay in touch with fellow members; Evaluate members' businesses, and jointly find solutions to the problems they face, especially during the 2020 and 2021 pandemics which greatly impacted their businesses; Joint business development plans by establishing a joint business, for example buying a meat grinding machine and selling meatballs with the same brand.

Partner Capacity Building Program

In the PTM 5 meatball trader capacity building program, the average score was 4.1 or good, meaning that they assessed that the Entrepreneurship training, Food Safety training, and Institutional Training that had been organized by Dompot Dhuafa went well. With the highest rating on their pride in being part of the PTM group / Association. To join the PTM, they have followed a fairly strict selection and they are selected meatball traders who can get help from PT. Miwon, not all meatball traders can get this so it is an honor for them to become PTM.

Meanwhile, what is considered lacking is a lack of understanding of healthy and halal food processing and a lack of understanding of the correct production process so that food/meatballs are healthy and halal. This may be due to the delivery of the training process for healthy and halal food processing which is not well received. Due to the education level of meatball traders who are on average junior high school, it may cause the assistants to look for training methods or delivery of material that is easy for participants to understand and adjust to. Given the importance of knowledge of healthy and halal food processing, it is necessary to extract information from partners on the right training methods so that the material can be understood by partners properly. In addition, because this knowledge is quite easy to be forgotten by humans in general, it needs to be carried out periodically just to remind meatball traders about the importance of producing healthy and halal food.

Although from the results of the questionnaire given they answered well in obtaining knowledge about "business" and obtaining great motivation to sell meatballs after attending the training. However, not all training materials can be understood properly, especially in the processing of healthy and halal food.

They have a better understanding of entrepreneurship and institutional training materials. This is because the entrepreneurship training material is related to their business and the institutional material is outbound so that they enjoy these exciting activities.

From the results of the training, they are happy and familiar with their group/community and even now they have a sense of brotherhood and the community is still active today, so they feel very helped by the PTM program.

Financing Assistance

Meatball traders rate for the financing assistance program an average of 4.09 or good. This means that they assess the financial assistance provided by PT. Miwon through Dompok Dhuafa is quite effective and helps them. The thing that is considered the best by them is that financial assistance is very helpful for their business. However, they consider that financial assistance is not what causes their business to develop. Because financial assistance only helps in the initial stages, but for the continuation, it is very dependent on their own efforts.

They admit that their sales have increased compared to 2017, and want to continue to develop their business as meatball traders by opening partnerships or adding branches. This is their motivation after obtaining

financial assistance, and they are proud to be partners with PT. Miwon – Dompok Dhuafa and feel great benefits so they want to invite their friends to join.

there are 2 statements with the lowest index being 4.06, namely statements I understand healthy and halal food processing and I understand the correct production process so that food/meatballs are healthy and halal. The first statement answered that most of them agreed because before attending the training, many of them did not know much about business knowledge. After the training, they know everything that is effective and efficient from the training.

c. Distribution of Funding Assistance Responses

In partner financing assistance, there are 9 statement items submitted by researchers to respondents. The frequency distribution of respondents' answers regarding their effectiveness in financing assistance is shown in Table 3. An overview of the results of the research is obtained where the average response of respondents to statements of financial assistance is an average of 4.09 or good. The maximum index is 4.24, namely the statement I was greatly helped by the financial assistance provided by PT Miwon - Dompok Dhuafa. Meanwhile, the lowest index is 4.02, namely the statement My business is growing due to financial assistance provided by PT Miwon – Dompok Dhuafa.

Table 3. Distribution of Financial Assistance Responses

Statement	Average Answer Index
I was greatly helped by the financial assistance provided by PT Miwon – Dompok Dhuafa	4.24
My business grew as a result of the financial assistance provided by PT Miwon – Dompok Dhuafa	4.02
My income is increasing from year to year	4.06
I want to always remain a partner of PT Miwon – Dompok Dhuafa	4.14
I believe and believe that the programs and activities provided by PT Miwon – Dompok Dhuafa are very useful for me	4.1
I am proud to be a partner of PT Miwon – Dompok Dhuafa	4.08
I feel the great benefits of being a partner of PT Miwon – Dompok Dhuafa	4.06
I would like to invite my friends to join as partners of PT Miwon – Dompok Dhuafa	4.06
I want to continue to develop my business as a meatball seller by opening partnerships or adding branches	4.06
Maximum	4.24
Minimum	4.02
Average	4.09

Results of the analysis of the effectiveness of the assistance program for micro, small, and medium enterprises in the food sector by Dompét Dhuafa

Based on the discussion, from the results of the questionnaire and interviews, it can be assessed the level of effectiveness of the mentoring program that has been carried out by Dompét Dhuafa. Of the three forms of assistance activities that have been carried out, namely:

1. Group Assistance, with the aim of forming community intellectual independence. Activities carried out in the form of:
 - a. Group meeting. The formation of groups or communities from the results of interviews was considered effective by members of PTM 5. This is indicated by the good relations between members and the activities they initiate to help each other and business development. Even though during the pandemic the community meetings had stopped, namely in 2020 – 2021 this was due to government regulations for Imposing Restrictions on Community Activities (PPKM), the relationship between them was still maintained. One form of sharing knowledge between them was during the pandemic, sales were carried out online, and there was collaboration to help each other.
 - b. Group monitoring related to business development. PTM 5 members considered monitoring activities to be less effective, the majority assessed that monitoring was carried out only for one year. But several members still maintain good relations with Dompét Dhuafa to this day, there is even cooperation between Dompét Dhuafa and meatball traders (Malang Pak De meatballs and packaged meatballs). However, this was not informed to other group members, so only certain people knew about the activity. This matter needs to be improved on the part of Dompét Dhuafa and the community so that cooperation and monitoring can be carried out more evenly.
 - c. Monitoring of healthy and halal production processes. Monitoring of the production process is considered less effective by members of PTM 5 because there is no monitoring at this time. We recommend that monitoring of the production process be carried out regularly and routinely.
2. Capacity Building Partners Through Training, with the aim of increasing knowledge. The training provided is entrepreneurship motivation training, food safety training, and qualitative testing, as well as institutional training.
 - a. Entrepreneurial motivation training. PTM 5 members considered this training to be effective. This training was felt to be able to increase the motivation of PTM 5 members to continue trying and developing their businesses. However, there are suggestions from them to periodically be given this training, so that motivation is always maintained.
 - b. Food safety training and qualitative testing. PTM 5 members considered this training to be less effective. There were several members of PTM 5 who felt they did not fully understand the healthy and halal production process from the training that had been given. This was made possible because the training methods and material delivery were not easy for members to understand, so the training methods needed to be adjusted to the education level of the training participants, namely meatball traders, the majority of whom were at junior high school level.
 - c. Institutional training. PTM 5 members considered this training to be effective. This can be proven by the solidity of their community, where they share knowledge and help one another.
3. Financing Assistance, providing business capital for PTM by applying the Qordhul Hasan contract, or benevolent loans. In this case, the partner is only obliged to repay principal funds, savings, and social funds (infaq). PTM 5 members considered it to be quite effective, they felt very helped by the existence of this financial assistance program. However, according to them, the program is not what has caused them to experience an increase in their current business. The thing that has had the biggest influence on improving their business so far is the partners in the community who help each other.
4. Based on the survey results in Table 16, it is known that the average change in sales of meatball traders is more than Rp750,000 per day, an increase from 2017 of 24% and 46% in 2022, resulting in an increase in average sales of 22%.

Nufus et al. (2017), Pranitasari et al. (2022), and Pranitasari et al. (2022) outlined that effectiveness holds significant importance in attaining the set goals or objectives within organizations, activities, or programs. It is deemed effective when the intended goals or objectives are successfully achieved as planned. Based on the description, it can be concluded as in Table 4.

Proposed designs or models for entrepreneurship assistance (MSMEs) that can promote prosperity

Based on the description in the discussion and the results of the assessment of the effectiveness of the assistance activities carried out by Dompot Dhuafa, it can be recommended that the design of an effective assistance program for MSMEs be as follows:

1. The importance of forming independent groups or communities. Forming a solid group to form a community that can help one another. The more solid the group, the easier it will be for sustainable business development. This is consistent with the statement that in running a business, community is one of the skills that an entrepreneur needs to have, including MSME actors. With a community, MSME actors can have wider acquaintances from various fields, ranging from fellow MSME actors, suppliers of raw materials, and financial institutions, to government agencies that can support business progress (Halim, 2020; Kompas.id, 2022; KumparanBisnis, 2021; Pranitasari & Trianah, 2020; Priyanto et al. 2022; TNP2K et al. 2020)small and medium business (MSME).
2. It is important to monitor the mentoring program regularly and periodically for the long term, at least 3 (three) years (Andyarini et al. 2022; TNP2K et al. 2020). This is to ensure community independence and business continuity, so that if MSMEs experience difficulties they can immediately receive guidance.

3. The importance of MSME capacity-building programs. Especially in terms of increasing entrepreneurial and institutional motivation (Hadiyanti, 2008; Hamid, 2019; Kareli et al. 2023). This will motivate MSMEs to always be enthusiastic about developing their business and cohesiveness in the community so that they can help one another.
4. The importance of training methods that are adapted to the education level of the participants, so that they can be understood by the participants (Ariyanti et al. 2021; Charismi, 2016; Dewa et al. 2023).
5. The importance of ongoing training for MSMEs, so they can always maintain motivation and increase their knowledge.
6. The importance of initial financing assistance for MSME business capital.

Based on the description above, the design or model of MSME assistance can be described as presented in Figure 2. The mentoring plan is divided into 5 (five) stages, namely pre-incubation, initial stage, development stage, advanced stage, and post-incubation (Bismala et al. 2019; Hasbullah et al. 2014; Rofieq et al. 2018; Sihombing, 2018; Sudrajat, 2022). The details of the mentoring program are as follows:

1. Pre-incubation is the selection stage by the MSME assistant, namely the MSME partner selection stage according to the criteria determined by the assistant party internally.
2. The Incubation Stage consists of:
 - a. The initial stage is the stage of preparing or forming groups or communities carried out by assistants and instilling familiarity, independence, and intellect. This stage is the most important in the mentoring program because it will create a solid group or community and help each other to develop themselves together.

Table 4. Summary of assistance program implementation

Activity/Activity	Purpose	Conclusion
group facilitation, among others, through group meetings, group monitoring	Solid group	Achieved
Capacity Building Partners Through Training	Entrepreneurial spirit, sound, and halal production process knowledge, solid team	Achieved
Funding Assistance	Helped business capital, business facilities, and infrastructure	Achieved
Sales	The increase in average sales per day was	Achieved

- b. The development stage is an increase in knowledge and skills training for MSMEs, the main training program is the provision to become a reliable entrepreneur and motivation in entrepreneurship. Supporting training in food safety to increase MSME knowledge in processing and serving merchandise. And no less important is institutional training, in the form of team building to form a solid community.
 - c. Financing Assistance, providing business capital assistance to MSMEs to increase business. In this case, the capital is to repair the meatball cart.
3. The advanced stage is the MSME mentoring stage which is carried out routinely to ensure the improvement of MSME businesses. Stages 2 and 3 are carried out for at least 3 years, especially developments that can be repeated and assisted regularly and periodically.
 4. The post-incubation stage, namely community development is always solid and increasing community networks so that they can help each other and work together to develop businesses. After confirming that the community is solid and developing, the mentoring program can be released.

Managerial Implications

This research, it can be determined Control and development program for more effective and sustainable forms of mentoring. Design or model of entrepreneurial assistance that can encourage the development of MSMEs.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The mentoring program that has been implemented since 2017, during the pandemic, has led to a conclusion about what makes this mentoring program unique. There are three types of mentoring programs carried out by PT. Miwon-Dompot Dhuafa in 2017, namely Group Mentoring, Capacity Building of Partners Through Training, and Financial Assistance. Of these three types of mentoring programs, Group Mentoring, especially in forming cohesive and familial groups (recruitment results), is considered an effective way to help meatball vendors survive during the pandemic. This is achieved by sharing information and assistance with each other, proven by a) The change in the business field of PTM 5 meatball vendors in search of more promising markets, b) There was an increase in the average sales in 2022, where all meatball vendors now earn an average sales of more than Rp. 750,000.

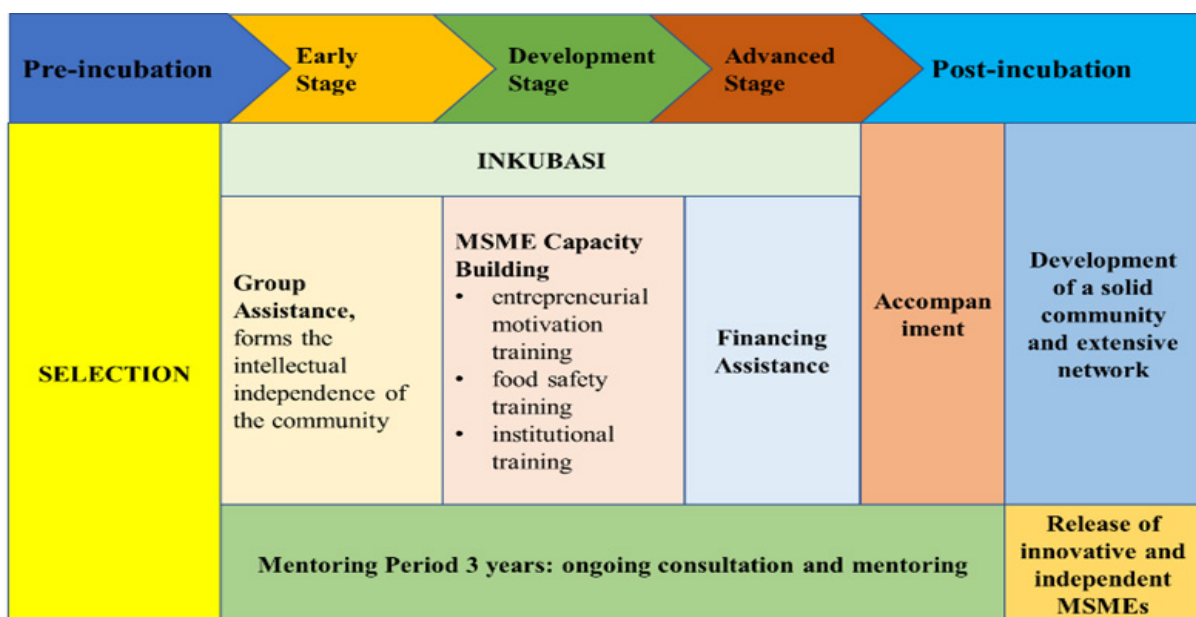


Figure 2. Design or Model of MSME Assistance

The mentoring program has been running well, particularly in forming groups or communities that regularly hold meetings and collectively help solve problems, maintain the cleanliness of sales equipment (carts, plates, spoons, etc.), and try to develop or find out how to make the taste of the meatballs more popular with customers. What they value most, however, is the community meetings that are not conducted as regularly as before. This is due to the pandemic conditions in 2020 and 2021, which are still felt to this day. Financial assistance is considered very helpful for PTM meatball vendors, although the development of their business is not solely due to this funding.

Recommendations

The group mentoring program has succeeded in forming a fairly solid group, but group assistance or monitoring should be carried out routinely and sustainably. The capacity building program through training has been able to motivate meatball traders in business. However, food safety training, with the aim of providing knowledge to meatball traders about good hygiene and sanitation, providing knowledge to meatball traders about dangerous additives, and providing knowledge to meatball traders regarding safe and healthy meatball production methods, is still not understood by traders. meatball. So that training methods and material delivery can be more adapted to the conditions and abilities of meatball traders. The capacity building program can be repeated on an ongoing basis with the same material or new material, with the aim of refreshing the knowledge of meatball traders. The mentoring program is carried out not only for one year but for at least three years to ensure that MSMEs are independent and developed.

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