

The Role of Product Quality and Innovation in Improving Performance in Business Community Groups (Case Study of Gita Laras Business Group in Pancot Karanganyar)

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ABSTRACT

This research is a qualitative research. This study aims to find out how the influence of training activities has an impact on business performance. Training includes Pastry making. Pastry is a type of cake or dough-based food made from flour, fat (such as butter or margarine), water, and sometimes eggs, which generally has a layered and crispy texture. Pastry can be sweet or savory, and is often the basis for dishes such as pies, tarts, and other pastries. This community service activity aims to provide training and mentoring to the Gita Laras community business group in Pancot Village, Tawangmangu, to be able to produce quality pastry cakes. In this study, the methodology used was an in-depth interview. This community service was carried out in Pancot Village with the methods used, namely counseling, training, and mentoring. The training participants were the Gita Laras business group, considering that this group of housewives was designed to be a productive community business group. The training and mentoring were carried out for 5 meetings, the theme of counseling and training was carried out by providing practice accompanied by direct mentoring by the community service team. The results of this community service activity were increased knowledge and skills in pastry production. Indicators of success were measured by the level of participation and activeness of community service participants.

INTRODUCTION

Pastry is a type of cake or dough-based food made from flour, fat (such as butter or margarine), water, and sometimes eggs, which generally has a layered and crispy texture. Pastry can be sweet or savory, and is often the base for dishes such as pies, tarts, and other pastries. The importance of pastry in the culinary world lies in its ability to provide a rich variety of flavors and textures, as well as high aesthetic value through attractive presentation. Pastry also plays an important role in various events, whether as a dessert, snack, or even a gift. Furthermore, making your own pastry can be a fun and creative activity.

There are some key points about pastry: 1) it offers a wide range of flavors and textures, from sweet to savory, with crispy, soft, or layered textures, catering to a variety of preferences; 2) the attractive and artistic presentation of pastry is a major draw, whether in terms of design, color, or garnish; 3) it is often an integral part of celebrations, special events, or even as a gift, demonstrating cultural and social values; 4) making your own pastry can be a fun hobby and open up space for flavor exploration and creativity; 5) it plays a vital role in the culinary industry, particularly in the food and beverage departments of hotels and restaurants, providing a variety of desserts and snacks; 6) the pastry industry continues to evolve with innovations in recipes, production techniques, and presentation, creating new trends and challenges for pastry experts.

Making pastry involves several key steps. In general, these steps include mixing the ingredients, kneading the dough, chilling, rolling and folding (for layered pastry), and baking. The following are the general stages of pastry making: ingredient preparation, mixing, kneading, cooling, rolling and folding (for layered pastry), shaping, and baking. The primary challenges in pastry making are maintaining the dough's temperature and controlling the folding process to achieve crispy layers. Additionally, errors in ingredient usage, dough resting time, and oven temperature can also impact the final pastry result. Challenges in pastry making include technical issues, product quality, time management, raw material availability, and market competition.

Previous research on pastry making has explored various aspects, including pastry types, raw materials, and production techniques, as well as the impact of ingredients and processes on product quality. Some studies have concentrated on the impact of ingredient replacements (like tofu dregs flour in sweet pastry) or manufacturing methods (such as kneading techniques in short pastry) on the attributes of pastries. Additional research has explored various pastry varieties like puff pastry, choux pastry, and Danish pastry, along with the distinctions between pastry and bakery items. Additionally, several studies have explored how raw materials and manufacturing methods affect the overall quality of pastry products.

Previous studies indicated that factors affecting pastry product sales included minimal sales of pastry items and ingredients for cake production (Sukawati et al., 2019). Additional studies showed that raw materials had no impact on product quality, whereas the production process played a crucial role. Nonetheless, both the quality of raw materials and the manufacturing process affected product quality together (Adiningtiah et al., 2022). Ingredients and preparation methods are essential for the quality of pastries (Simatupang, 2023).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The community's economy is greatly bolstered by the pastry industry (Yusuf & Agustina, 2025). The findings from additional studies encompass fresh concepts, advancements, innovations, and management strategies applicable to dry cake and pastry items (Pudjowati et al., 2025). Pastries are frequently presented as options for hotel patrons (Susilawati, 2022). The Pastry Section is responsible for delivering and handling pastry items, including preparation, processing, and the end product. Actions are taken through employee awareness, ingredient choices for products, supply chain management, cleanliness requirements for equipment, storage of ingredients, recipe guidelines, ambient temperature, and site selection. The quality of products greatly influences guest satisfaction, encompassing both appealing aesthetics and a well-balanced flavor (Desmafianti & Fauzzia, 2021).

The abilities of community business groups in pastry making are still quite restricted and diverse. Typically, they acquire foundational knowledge of pastry creation, processing methods, and different categories of pastry items. They can utilize this knowledge to create pastry that fulfill quality standards. The fundamental problems in pastry creation typically stem from misunderstandings of fundamental principles, mistakes in processing methods, insufficient diversity in educational materials, and restricted innovation and technological tools. Moreover, certain members of the business group who are homemakers face challenges in analytical, critical, and creative thinking when addressing problems that emerge during practice. Here are a few particular challenges that individuals commonly encounter when creating pastries:

1. **Insufficient Comprehension of Fundamental Ideas, about Materials and Techniques:** Groups of housewives in business do not comprehend the properties of pastry components like flour, fat, and liquid, and how these affect the end result. They might also be missing fundamental skills like folding dough, rolling, and effective baking methods. Variations in Pastry Types: Groups of homemakers often struggle to differentiate between various pastry types, including puff pastry, Danish pastry, and short pastry, along with their unique features.
2. **Technical Issues**
Temperature and Time: Frequent mistakes involve setting an incorrect oven temperature, letting the dough sit at room temperature for an excessive period, or failing to cool the pastry dough appropriately
Dough Management: Mistakes in folding, rolling, or shaping the dough may lead to pastries that don't rise correctly, inconsistent layers, or chewy dough.
Devices: Inadequate skills in handling devices like rolling pins, pastry knives, or ovens can serve as an obstacle.
3. **Insufficient Diversity in Learning Resources**
Modules and Video Tutorials: Certain groups of housewives do not have adequate learning modules or engaging video tutorials to aid participants in grasping the content and applying it.
4. **Absence of Analytical Thinking Abilities**
Problem Solving: Groups of housewives in business face challenges in identifying the reasons behind cake-making failures and developing suitable

remedies. Creative Thinking: Insufficient creative thinking abilities may impede business groups made up of housewives from generating innovative recipes or concepts for cake-making

METHODOLOGY

This research is a case study. The research design was carried out by a qualitative method where data collection was carried out by means of observation, interviews, and documentation according to the results of research in the field. Data analysis method with triangulation. The triangulation method is a test carried out to test the credibility of data by checking data to the same source with different techniques. The data obtained by the researcher using interviews, observations, and documentation. Triangulation The method in this method is to check research data with interview, observation and documentation data collection techniques so that the data is credible.

Data source triangulation is to explore the truth of certain information through various methods and sources of data acquisition. For example, in addition to interviews and observations, researchers can use participant observations, written documents, archives, historical documents, official records, personal notes or writings and pictures or photographs

The research location is in Pancot Village, Tawangmangu District, which is the slope of Mount Lawu. The location of community service is shown on the following map:



Figure 1. The Location of the Community Service Activity in Pancot Tawangmangu Village

The community service method is a crucial basis for guaranteeing efficient community service initiatives and beneficial effects on the community. This method also contributes to fostering positive relationships between the community service team and the participants.

The flow of this qualitative research can be presented as follows :



Figure 2. Qualitative Research Flow

The standard procedures for the community service process include: proposing community service, surveying the service location, executing the community service, and assessing and evaluating the service. The phases of carrying out community service include: Preparation, Execution, Assessment, and Documentation. The methods of activity consist of Counseling and Training, which assist individuals in grasping the community service subject, as well as Mentoring, which serves multiple critical purposes: raising awareness and comprehension among group members, aiding the learning journey and skill enhancement, bolstering unity and collaboration among participants, and improving efficiency and effectiveness in reaching collective objectives.

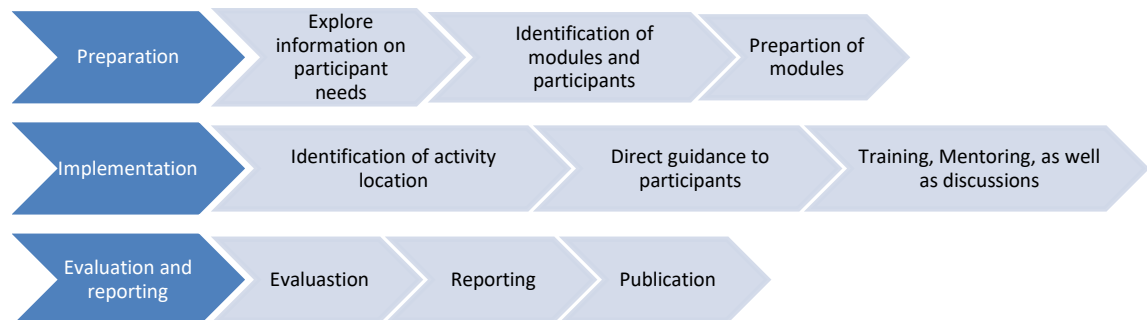


Figure 3. The Flow of Activity Implementation

RESEARCH RESULTS

The community service program has been implemented at the head of the Gita Laras Association, Pancot Tawangmangu Village, on September 24, 2025. One month earlier, the community service team had surveyed and was welcomed by the Gita Laras business group in Pancot and then scheduled to provide counseling, training, and mentoring. The Community Service Team provided counseling and training, starting with healthy food material, pastry, and donut production, accompanied by donut products, and then ended with a discussion section. Participants were very enthusiastic about listening to and trying what was conveyed by the community service team.



Figure 4. Community Service Team's Socialization on Healthy and Hygienic Food



Figure 5. Enthusiasm of Gita Laras Association Participants

This community service activity produced significant results and impact, as evidenced by the following achievement indicators:

1. The enthusiasm of participants was demonstrated by intensive question-and-answer discussions between participants and the community service team.
2. Strong motivation among participants to put each community service team's instructions into practice.
3. Product prototypes were produced and enjoyed.
4. Active participation by Gita Laras administrators and members in the practical activities; and
5. The community service activity ran smoothly and effectively, filled with a spirited atmosphere.

Typically, indicators of effective training and mentoring encompass considerable advantages for both individuals and the organization, such as enhanced knowledge and skills, shifts in workplace behavior, better

performance, and beneficial effects on the organization, including heightened productivity and customer satisfaction.

Table 1. Stages of Implementation of Pastry Production Training and Mentoring Activities

NO	ACTIVITES	RESULTS
1	Identification of the Problem	The problem faced is the weak motivation of participant groups to save money, amidst the tendency of society to be consumptive.
2	Identification of Modules	The module is organized based on requirements, is functional and straightforward, aiming to encourage participants.
3	Identification of the participant	Participants were housewives who were members of the Gita Laras association in Pancot Tawangmangu Village.
4	Identification of speakers	The speaker is a lecturer at ITBK Bukit Pengharapan Tawangmangu who has the ability and competence in the field of pastry production.
5	Socialization of the community service activities	Socialization was carried out by conveying the aims, objectives, and targets to be achieved by the Bukit Pengharapan ITBK community service team to the Gita Laras Association.
6	Preparation of modules, ingredients, and tools	The availability of materials, ingredients, tools, and training support, including pastry production materials and tools, includes various basic ingredients such as flour, fat (butter or margarine), sugar, eggs, and liquid (milk or water). Tools used include an oven, mixer, rolling pin, spatula, baking pan, and various cutting and decorating tools.
7	Location identification	The activity location is in Pancot Tawangmangu Village.
8	Participants	a. Participation of approximately 20 participants. b. Pastry practice that increases participant motivation.

DISCUSSION

The community service team from ITBK Bukit Pengharapan conducted training to enhance the quality of pastry production. Participants engaged with enthusiasm and eagerness. Creating pastry products entails multiple intricate steps, ranging from preparing ingredients to the baking process. Grasping every stage and the correct methods is essential for creating high-quality pastries.

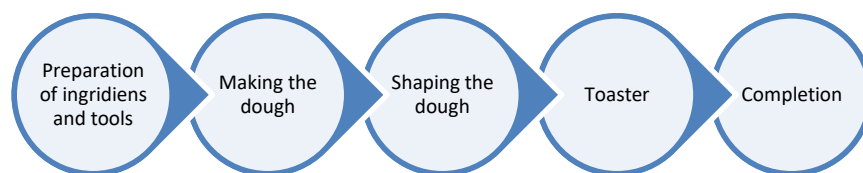


Figure 6. The Flow of Pastry Cake Production Process

The resulting pastry products are a variety of cakes and breads featuring a layered, crunchy, and flavorful texture. Pastry items encompass different kinds of croissants, puff pastries, and pies, along with an assortment of baked goods and loaves of bread. This community service event encouraged engaging two-

way communication between participants and the service team. Indicators of the success of this community service include the publication of research in academic journals, print and digital media, enhanced knowledge and skills, heightened work motivation, and growth in production and sales volume. The community service initiatives conducted by the ITBK Bukit Pengharapan team, in collaboration with the community, can be outlined as follows :



Figure 7. The Flow of Community Service Activity

The success of this community service activity was measured by increased interest among participants. The key to successful pastry training and mentoring lies in a combination of solid formal education, intensive practical experience, creative skill development, and the ability to collaborate within a team. Effective training also requires a comprehensive curriculum, a qualified team, and the provision of clear materials and recipes as references. Indicators of successful pastry training and mentoring in this business group can be seen in the increase in participant skills and knowledge, participation rates, application of skills in the workplace, participant satisfaction, and retention of training materials. Furthermore, aspects such as participant readiness, material delivery, and training outcomes also need to be considered.

Table 2: Indicator and Achievement of Community Service Activity

No	Indicator	Achievement
1	Improvement of skills and knowledge	- Participants will know basic pastry-making techniques, such as mixing ingredients, shaping dough, and baking. - Participants will understand various pastry types and their characteristics. - Participants will be able to identify and use tools and ingredients appropriately. - Participants will be able to create a variety of pastries according to expected standards.
2	Participant participation level	- Participants were active in every training and mentoring session. - Participants were willing to ask questions and discuss the material presented. - Participants demonstrated a high level of interest and motivation in learning.

3	Application of Skills in the Workplace	• Participants will be able to produce quality pastries in their workplace or business. • Participants will be able to apply sanitation and food safety principles in the pastry-making process. • Participants will be able to manage time and resources effectively in the pastry production process.
4	Participant Satisfaction Level	• Participants were satisfied with the training content and mentoring provided. • Participants felt helped in improving their pastry skills and knowledge. • Participants felt motivated to further develop themselves in the pastry industry.
5	Contents Retention	• Participants will be able to remember and understand basic pastry concepts after the training. • Participants will be able to apply the knowledge gained in real-life situations. • Participants will be able to develop new ideas in pastry making.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Community service activities by the ITBK Bukit Pengharapan Tawangmangu community service team have gone well for the participants . In making pastry products, there are definitely obstacles involved . The challenges encountered in creating pastry cakes or other items include understanding the wishes of participants and processing the products as effectively as possible, ensuring that the final products are of good quality . The strategy to enhance the quality of pastry production is to maintain the production process according to existing SOP standards. The efforts made to improve the quality of pastry products within the productive community business group involve deepening knowledge of pastry by attending training or seminars related to pastry and creating unique and attractive pastry products , ensuring that consumers are satisfied with the outcomes of this community business group 's performance

ADVANCED RESEARCH

This advanced research proposes a mixed-method longitudinal study to examine the sustainability and scalability of pastry training and mentoring programs for community business groups by integrating product quality metrics, innovation capability, and market performance outcomes. Building on qualitative insights from the Gita Laras business group, future research should incorporate quasi-experimental designs with control groups, objective performance indicators (e.g., defect rates, cost efficiency, sales growth), and innovation outputs (new product variants, process improvements). Additionally, the study should assess the mediating role of learning resources, analytical problem-solving skills, and digital adoption (e.g., online tutorials and market platforms) in translating training into sustained business performance. Such an approach would provide stronger causal evidence and practical frameworks for optimizing community-based culinary empowerment programs.

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