

THE INFLUENCE OF COMPETENCE, COMMUNICATION, AND PROFESSIONALISM ON EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION AT UD. SAMI ASRI TULUNGAGUNG

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ABSTRACT

Employee satisfaction represents a key indicator of organizational performance that reflects the quality of human resource management. This study aims to analyze the influence of competence, communication, and professionalism on employee satisfaction at UD Sami Asri Tulungagung, a producer of Tulungagung's, signature rambak crackers. A quantitative approach with an associative design was employed. The study involved all 35 employees as the population. Data were collected using a 1–5 Likert-scale questionnaire, supplemented by brief interviews. The research variables consisted of competence, communication, and professionalism as independent variables, and employee satisfaction as the dependent variable. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, simple regression, and multiple regression with SPSS version 25. The results indicated that competence ($p < .001$, $R^2 = 0.401$), communication ($p < .05$, $R^2 = 0.125$), and professionalism ($p < .001$, $R^2 = 0.595$) each had a positive and significant effect on employee satisfaction. Among these, professionalism exhibited the most dominant influence ($B = 0.543$, $p < .001$), suggesting that work ethics, integrity, and adherence to quality standards are central to enhancing satisfaction within small-scale food manufacturing environments. The simultaneous regression model demonstrated that the three independent variables collectively accounted for 67.1% of the variance in employee satisfaction ($R^2 = .671$). These findings imply that strengthening professional behavior alongside technical competence and effective communication can improve employee satisfaction, reinforce organizational loyalty, and support the operational sustainability of UD Sami Asri Tulungagung.

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INTRODUCTIONS

Human resources (HR) play a pivotal role in modern economic development, which is oriented towards enhancing productivity and sustainable competitiveness. In the food processing sector, workforce quality determines the consistency of product output and the capacity to maintain consumer trust. Many SMEs in Indonesia continue to

face structural and managerial constraints in human resource development. Limited access to formal training, informal recruitment patterns, and the absence of standardized operating procedures reduce the effectiveness of human capital utilization. Improving workforce quality through training, education, and competency-based recruitment systems is imperative to face increasingly fierce industrial competition. According to a 2024 report by the Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS), approximately 59 percent of workers in Indonesia are still predominantly high school graduates, creating a gap between individual skills and industry needs (Ariansyah et al., 2024). This situation results in low productivity and suboptimal job satisfaction levels in many business sectors, particularly in the small and medium-sized industries (SMEs), which play a significant role in labor absorption.

The national economic transformation, which emphasizes innovation and creativity, makes human resource development a primary prerequisite for increasing competitiveness. The Indonesian government, through the 2020 - 2024 National Medium-Term Development Plan, emphasized the priority of strengthening human resource quality as a driving force for regional economic growth (Rindrasih & Saputra, 2025). The implementation of this strategy includes improving workforce competency, developing a productive work culture, and fostering the professionalism of civil servants and private sector workers. Within this framework, every business organization, both large and small, is expected to foster a work environment that encourages active participation and employee satisfaction. This goal aligns with the direction of human resource development, which places worker welfare as a key component in increasing national productivity.

A prevalent phenomenon within the small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) sector in various regions illustrates the persistent gap between human resource development policies at the macro level and their implementation at the company level. Many businesses still focus on production and marketing aspects without paying close attention to the quality of work interactions, individual competencies, and employee professionalism (H. Hill, 2001). This situation creates various problems, such as poor coordination between divisions, delays in work completion, and decreased morale, which indirectly reduce employee satisfaction. Such conditions can also hinder business growth because workforce productivity becomes unstable and difficult to control (Mabindisa & Legoabe, 2021).

Human resource management in organizations requires a deep understanding of employee characteristics that influence performance and job satisfaction. The concept of competency, introduced by McClelland (1973), emphasizes that an individual's ability to complete tasks is determined not only by technical knowledge and skills, but also by job-relevant behaviors and personal attributes. Competencies include the ability to analyze problems, adapt to change, take initiative, and interpersonal skills that support teamwork. This competency model has become the foundation for various companies in designing selection, training, and performance evaluation systems so that each individual who joins can contribute optimally to achieving organizational goals.

The food processing industry in Indonesia contributes significantly to the absorption of labor and regional economic activity. Nevertheless, this industry often relies on traditional production systems that depend heavily on individual worker experience. The absence of structured human resource development programs causes variability in work performance, which affects employee satisfaction and overall business sustainability. Studies by R. Hill & Stewart (2000), emphasize that human capital development in small enterprises remains less systematic than in large corporations, which are supported by formalized training and evaluation systems.

The application of competency theory in the context of small and medium industries, including UD Sami Asri Tulungagung, is significant given the nature of the business, which is based on the production and distribution of local products such as rambak crackers. Employees in this sector are faced with production processes that require specialized technical expertise and the ability to interact with coworkers and consumers. A mismatch between individual competencies and job requirements can lead to work stress, reduced productivity, and decreased job satisfaction. Research conducted by Anatan & Nur (2023) in the processed food industry in East Java showed that improving employee technical and non-technical competencies significantly impacted job satisfaction and employee

retention. These findings confirm that competency development is a key factor in building an adequate work environment to encourage employee motivation and engagement.

Communication, as a mechanism for transferring information, plays an equally important role in organizational effectiveness. Shannon & Weaver (1998) in their “Mathematical Theory of Communication” describe communication as a linear process involving a sender, message, channel, receiver, and potential interference that can reduce the clarity of the message. In organizational practice, effective communication enables employees to understand tasks, receive clear direction, and receive constructive feedback. Research by Hendriati et al. (2024) in the small and medium-sized business sector shows that good internal communication positively impacts employee perceptions of the work environment and job satisfaction. Unclear communication or information disruptions can lead to miscommunication, confusion in task execution, and interpersonal conflict, ultimately reducing morale and organizational productivity.

Professionalism is the third dimension that must be considered in human resource management. Richard Hall, in 1968, defined professionalism as individual attitudes and behaviors that reflect dedication, competence, responsibility, and a high level of service orientation. Professionalism is measured not only by technical expertise but also by integrity, work ethic, and the ability to maintain consistent performance standards. Research by Candra et al. (2023) shows that employee professionalism is positively related to job satisfaction and organizational performance. In the context of a business like UD Sami Asri Tulungagung, employee professionalism encompasses precision in the production process of rambak crackers, consistent product quality, and the ability to serve customers ethically and responsibly, all of which directly impact the company’s image and customer loyalty.

Employee satisfaction is a consequence of the interaction of various factors within an organization, including competence, communication, and professionalism. The Two-Factor Theory, proposed by Herzberg et al. (1993), distinguishes between motivating and hygiene factors in determining job satisfaction. Motivating factors such as achievement, recognition, job responsibility, and development opportunities directly increase employee job satisfaction. Hygiene factors, such as working conditions, salary, company policies, and interpersonal relationships, prevent dissatisfaction. The application of this theory in small and medium-sized industries shows that companies that balance these two factors successfully create a conducive work environment, increase motivation, and reduce employee turnover.

The interaction between competence, communication, and professionalism has a complex influence on employee satisfaction. Adequate competence without effective communication can lead to task misalignment and misunderstandings in work execution (Idris et al., 2023). High professionalism without the support of communication skills can also lead to interpersonal distance and internal conflict. Therefore, a modern human resource management approach emphasizes the need for integrated development of these three aspects to build a stable and productive work environment (Agustian et al., 2023).

Within a theoretical framework, competency, communication, and professionalism can be used as independent variables that act as predictors of employee satisfaction. Competence serves as the basis for an individual’s ability to complete tasks effectively, communication serves as a means of conveying information and coordination, while professionalism ensures ethical standards and work quality are maintained. However, most existing studies on these variables have been conducted in large corporations or the service sector. There is a scarcity of empirical evidence examining the simultaneous influence of competence, communication, and professionalism on employee satisfaction within small-scale, family-owned food manufacturing businesses in Indonesia, which often have unique organizational cultures and structures.

UD Sami Asri Tulungagung represents a relevant case for such analysis. The company produces traditional rambak crackers and employs a small workforce across production, packaging, and distribution units. The firm depends on manual processing methods and informal communication among workers who often share close kinship ties. Employee satisfaction in such settings is closely associated with professionalism and commitment to product quality, as the reputation of the brand depends on the consistency of output and customer trust. Understanding the

influence of competence, communication, and professionalism on employee satisfaction in this enterprise provides empirical insight into the human resource dynamics that shape productivity within Indonesia's small-scale food manufacturing sector.

METHODS

This study employed a quantitative approach with an associative design, aiming to empirically determine the relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The quantitative approach was chosen because it emphasizes numerical measurement of the variables studied and statistical analysis to draw conclusions. The associative method was used to assess the strength and direction of the influence of competence, communication, and professionalism on employee satisfaction. This approach enabled the researcher to test hypotheses and obtain valid empirical evidence regarding the relationship between variables, in accordance with the principles of quantitative research proposed by Sugiyono (2013) and Creswell & Poth (2016).

The research location was UD Sami Asri Tulungagung, which produces and distributes Tulungagung's signature rambak crackers. This business employs 35 employees across various divisions, including production, packaging, distribution, and administration. The research was conducted in 2025, with data collection times adjusted to the company's operational schedule to ensure uninterrupted production activities. This location was chosen based on the relevance of the research object to the phenomenon being studied: the influence of competence, communication, and professionalism on employee satisfaction in small and medium-sized manufacturing companies.

The study population included all 35 employees of UD Sami Asri Tulungagung. Given the relatively small population size and the accessibility of all members of the population, this study employed a total sampling technique, selecting all employees as respondents. This approach aligns with the principle explained by Charter (1999) that when a population is less than 100, the entire population can be sampled to increase data validity and reliability.

This study utilized primary data collected via a questionnaire with a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5. The Likert scale was used to measure employee perceptions of the research variables, with categories ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. This questionnaire instrument was designed based on theories relevant to each variable. The primary data were supplemented with brief interviews to obtain additional information regarding work experiences and employee perceptions of professional practices and communication within the company. This collection technique refers to the quantitative research procedures described by Creswell & Poth (2016), which emphasize the integration of brief qualitative data to enrich the interpretation of quantitative data.

The variables used in this study include competence, communication, professionalism, and employee satisfaction. Competence is defined by McClelland (1973) as encompassing technical skills, job knowledge, and problem-solving. Technical competence reflects the skills required to perform operational tasks, job knowledge indicates an individual's understanding of work procedures and standards, and problem-solving ability refers to an employee's capacity to overcome obstacles and make effective decisions. The communication variable refers to Shannon & Weaver (1998), who emphasize message clarity, communication channel reliability, and the management of information interference. Professionalism is measured based on dimensions proposed by Hall (1968), including work ethic and integrity, professional autonomy in decision-making, and commitment to work standards and quality. Employee satisfaction, as the dependent variable, is measured using Herzberg et al. (1993) Two-Factor Theory, which includes general job satisfaction, satisfaction with working conditions, and turnover intention.

Instrument validity was evaluated using both expert judgment and statistical tests. The questionnaire was reviewed by two academic experts in human resource management and one practitioner from the food production industry to ensure content relevance and conceptual alignment. Construct validity was examined through item-total correlation analysis. According to methodological standards, an item is considered valid if its corrected item-total correlation value is greater than 0.30, indicating that each question has a meaningful relationship with the overall construct being measured. Instrument validity was tested using expert judgment, and reliability was assessed using

the Cronbach's Alpha method to ensure that each question consistently measured the intended construct. This procedure follows the guidelines proposed by Sugiyono (2013). In line with Hair et al. (2019), an instrument is considered reliable if its Cronbach's Alpha value exceeds 0.70, which reflects acceptable internal consistency. All items in this study met those criteria, with corrected item-total correlation values above 0.30 and Cronbach's Alpha coefficients greater than 0.70, confirming that the measurement instrument was both valid and reliable.

The collected data were analyzed using multiple linear regression analysis using SPSS version 25 software. This analysis aimed to determine the partial effect of each independent variable using a t-test and the simultaneous effect of all three variables on employee satisfaction using an F-test. The R^2 test of determination was used to measure the extent to which variations in employee satisfaction could be explained by variations in competence, communication, and professionalism. This research method was designed to produce valid and reliable data so that the findings can be used as a basis for managerial decision-making. A quantitative approach with an associative design enabled the researcher to provide objective empirical evidence regarding the influence of competence, communication, and professionalism on employee satisfaction. The results of this research are expected to provide a scientific contribution to the development of human resource management literature in small and medium industries in Indonesia, especially in companies engaged in the production of traditional processed foods.

RESULTS

Based on the research method applied to all 35 respondents at UD Sami Asri Tulungagung, data obtained from questionnaires and short interviews were processed to obtain a descriptive overview and analysis of the influence of competence, communication, and professionalism on employee satisfaction. The descriptive analysis shows that most employees meet the company's operational needs, as evidenced by the average value and standard deviation, which indicate a relatively stable data distribution. Details are presented in the following table.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Research Variables

Variable	N	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Std. Dev.	Category
Competence (X_1)	35	11,1714	5,00	15,00	2,58372	Good
Communication (X_2)	35	11,3429	6,00	14,00	1,64393	Good
Professionalism (X_3)	35	11,2857	4,00	14,00	2,38342	Good
Employee Satisfaction (Y)	35	11,6286	5,00	15,00	2,25030	Good

The descriptive results in Table 1 show that employee competency at UD Sami Asri Tulungagung, has an average value of 11.1714 with a minimum score of 5.00 and a maximum of 15.00 and a standard deviation of 2.58372. This data is categorized as good, indicating that most employees have technical skills, job knowledge, and problem-solving abilities that are in accordance with job demands. The communication variable shows an average of 11.3429 with a minimum value of 6.00 and a maximum of 14.00 and a standard deviation of 1.64393. This score is in the good category, which reflects a sufficient level of message clarity, reliability of communication channels, and the ability to manage information disruption within the company. Employee professionalism has an average of 11.2857 with a minimum value of 4.00 and a maximum of 14.00 and a standard deviation of 2.38342, which is also categorized as good. These results indicate that employees demonstrate work ethics, integrity, professional autonomy, and commitment to standards and work quality in a good capacity. The employee satisfaction variable has an average value of 11.6286 with a minimum of 5.00 and a maximum of 15.00 and a standard deviation of 2.25030, which is classified as good, indicating positive employee perceptions of work, working conditions, and the intention to stay in the company.

To test the research hypotheses, simple and multiple regression analyses were used. Simple regression tests each independent variable separately. Details are presented in the following table.

Table 2. Simple Regression Results

Independent Variable	B	t	Sig.	R	R ²	F	Sig. F
Competence (X ₁)	0.552	4,703	p < .001	0.633	0.401	22,120	p < .001
Communication (X ₂)	0.484	2,171	p < .05	0.353	0.125	4,711	p < .05
Professionalism (X ₃)	0.729	6,969	p < .001	0.772	0.595	48,570	p < .001

The results presented in Table 2 indicate that competence has a regression coefficient (B) of 0.552 with a t-value of 4.703 and a significance level of $p < .001$. These findings demonstrate that competence has a positive and statistically significant influence on employee satisfaction. The coefficient of determination (R²) of 0.401 implies that 40.1 percent of the variation in employee satisfaction can be explained by employees' competence levels. This result suggests that improvements in technical skills, job knowledge, and problem-solving abilities are associated with higher levels of satisfaction among employees. The communication variable shows a regression coefficient (B) of 0.484 with a t-value of 2.171 and a significance level of $p < .05$. This indicates that communication has a positive and significant effect on employee satisfaction. The coefficient of determination (R²) of 0.125 demonstrates that 12.5 percent of the variation in employee satisfaction can be explained by communication effectiveness within the organization. Although its contribution is smaller compared to competence and professionalism, effective communication still supports a conducive work environment that enhances employees' understanding of their tasks and responsibilities. Professionalism exhibits the highest influence on employee satisfaction, with a regression coefficient (B) of 0.729, a t-value of 6.969, and a significance level of $p < .001$. The R² value of 0.595 indicates that approximately 59.5 percent of the variation in employee satisfaction can be explained by professionalism. This finding suggests that strong work ethics, integrity, and adherence to quality standards substantially enhance employees' sense of accomplishment and satisfaction in their roles.

Table 3. Multiple Regression Results (X₁, X₂, X₃ → Y)

Model	B	t	Sig.	R	R ²	F	Sig. F
Constant	0.682	0,380	p < .05				
Competence (X ₁)	0.247	2,275	p < .05				
Communication (X ₂)	0.181	2,229	p < .05	0.819	0.671	21,028	p < .001
Professionalism (X ₃)	0.543	4,525	p < .001				

The results presented in Table 3 show that the constant value of the regression model is 0.682 with a significance level of $p < .05$. The regression coefficient for competence (X₁) is 0.247 with a t-value of 2.275 and a significance level of $p < .05$, indicating that competence has a positive and significant effect on employee satisfaction. The communication variable (X₂) has a regression coefficient of 0.181 with a t-value of 2.229 and a significance level of $p < .05$, suggesting that communication also exerts a positive and significant influence on employee satisfaction. Professionalism (X₃) has a regression coefficient of 0.543 with a t-value of 4.525 and a significance level of $p < .001$, demonstrating that professionalism has the strongest and most significant impact among the three independent variables. The overall regression model yields an R value of 0.819 and a coefficient of determination (R²) of 0.671. This means that 67.1 percent of the variation in employee satisfaction can be jointly explained by competence, communication, and professionalism, while the remaining 32.9 percent is attributed to other factors not included in the model. The F-value of 21.028 with a significance level of $p < .001$ indicates that the multiple regression equation is statistically valid for explaining the combined effect of the three independent variables on employee satisfaction.

The findings confirm that professionalism contributes the greatest influence on employee satisfaction at UD Sami Asri Tulungagung. Professionalism, which encompasses integrity, work ethic, autonomy, and adherence to quality standards, strengthens employees' sense of responsibility and recognition of their role within the company. Competence also plays an essential role through employees' mastery of technical skills and their ability to solve

operational problems effectively. Communication, while exerting a smaller influence than the other two variables, remains a significant factor that facilitates coordination and improves mutual understanding among workers. These results align with the principles of human resource management that emphasize the integration of ability, interaction quality, and professional behavior as the foundation for enhancing job satisfaction within small manufacturing enterprises.

DISCUSSION

The Influence of Competence on Employee Satisfaction

The analysis results indicate that competence exerts a positive and statistically significant influence on employee satisfaction. The simple regression analysis produced a regression coefficient (B) of 0.552 with a t-value of 4.703 and a significance level of $p < .001$, confirming that competence contributes meaningfully to variations in employee satisfaction. The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.401 shows that 40.1 percent of the changes in employee satisfaction can be explained by employees' competence levels. Descriptive analysis revealed an average competence score of 11.17 with a standard deviation of 2.58, reflecting that most employees possess relatively consistent and adequate abilities.

Competence in this study encompasses technical skills, job knowledge, and problem-solving ability. Employees with strong technical competence are able to perform production activities in accordance with the company's established quality standards, while adequate job knowledge enables them to carry out operational procedures more efficiently. Problem-solving competence allows employees to respond effectively to production challenges and administrative issues that arise during daily operations, thereby reducing disruptions to workflow.

These findings align with the assertion by Carvalho et al. (2020) that competence forms the foundation of employee motivation and performance, which in turn leads to higher job satisfaction. Ulfah (2023) also found that competence development through training and accumulated work experience enhances confidence, reduces job-related stress, and fosters organizational commitment. Within UD Sami Asri, employees who consistently meet production targets while maintaining the quality of pork rind crackers report higher satisfaction levels. This outcome suggests that competence not only supports operational effectiveness but also reinforces employees' perception of their professional value and their sense of psychological well-being within the workplace.

The evidence implies that competence serves as an intrinsic driver of satisfaction among employees in small-scale food manufacturing enterprises. When employees are equipped with sufficient technical ability and understanding of work procedures, they are more capable of meeting production standards, which enhances their confidence and sense of accomplishment (Appelbaum, 2000). These findings reinforce the theoretical notion that job satisfaction is not solely shaped by external incentives but also by employees' perception of their competence and mastery of their roles.

The Effect of Communication on Employee Satisfaction

The regression results indicate that communication has a positive and significant influence on employee satisfaction. The simple regression analysis yielded a regression coefficient (B) of 0.484 with a t-value of 2.171 and a significance level of $p < .05$, confirming that communication contributes significantly to the variance in employee satisfaction. The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.125 shows that 12.5 percent of the variation in employee satisfaction can be explained by the effectiveness of communication within the organization. Descriptive analysis revealed an average communication score of 11.34 with a standard deviation of 1.64, indicating that the overall communication climate at UD Sami Asri is relatively good and consistent across work units.

Communication in this study refers to the process of delivering, receiving, and interpreting information between management and employees, as well as among co-workers. Effective communication enables employees to understand instructions, align their roles with organizational goals, and reduce misinterpretations that could disrupt

production (Kabanda & Barrena-Martinez, 2025). At UD Sami Asri, where production activities rely on coordination among production, packaging, and marketing units, clarity of information plays an essential role in ensuring that work proceeds efficiently and cohesively.

The findings are consistent with the assertion by Kim et al. (2017) that transparent and structured internal communication enhances employee satisfaction by strengthening their sense of understanding and engagement with organizational objectives. Bukhari et al. (2025) also emphasized that ineffective communication may cause misunderstanding and dissatisfaction that lead to decreased productivity. The results of this study show that employees who perceive communication as clear, open, and responsive tend to experience higher satisfaction because they can perform tasks with a stronger sense of direction and support.

In the small-scale food manufacturing enterprises such as UD Sami Asri, communication often occurs through direct and informal interactions, which enable swift problem resolution and personal engagement between supervisors and employees. Such communication patterns contribute to a familial work atmosphere and promote trust between management and staff. When information flows effectively, employees are more confident in performing their duties and are more willing to collaborate with co-workers, resulting in improved job satisfaction.

These results imply that communication acts as a facilitating mechanism that links managerial expectations with employee performance. Although its statistical contribution to satisfaction is lower than that of competence and professionalism, communication remains a critical internal factor that sustains cooperation and cohesion in the workplace. Strengthening communication practices through regular briefings, feedback sessions, and transparent information channels may further enhance employee satisfaction and operational consistency at UD Sami Asri.

The Influence of Professionalism on Employee Satisfaction

The results of the regression analysis demonstrate that professionalism has the strongest and most significant influence on employee satisfaction compared to other variables examined in this study. The simple regression analysis produced a coefficient (B) of 0.729 with a t-value of 6.969 and a significance level of $p < .001$, while the multiple regression analysis yielded a coefficient of 0.543 with a t-value of 4.525 and a significance level of $p < .001$. The coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.595 indicates that 59.5 percent of the variation in employee satisfaction can be explained by the level of professionalism exhibited by employees. The descriptive results show an average professionalism score of 11.29 with a standard deviation of 2.38, reflecting that employees at UD Sami Asri generally demonstrate a strong work ethic, integrity, and adherence to quality standards.

Professionalism in this study encompasses responsibility, discipline, honesty, autonomy, and commitment to maintaining the quality of work. In a small-scale food production business such as UD Sami Asri, professionalism plays a vital role because production quality depends not only on technical ability but also on the consistency of ethical behavior and adherence to production standards. Employees who perform their duties conscientiously and follow operational procedures accurately help maintain product uniformity and consumer trust. When their efforts are recognized and associated with the company's reputation for quality, employees experience a heightened sense of satisfaction and pride in their work (Helm, 2011).

This finding aligns with the assertion by Hall (1968) that sustained professionalism in work practices enhances individual satisfaction through the internalization of occupational values and ethical responsibility. Brennan & Monson (2014) similarly noted that professionalism fosters a sense of belonging and strengthens employees' perception of the meaning of their work. The results in UD Sami Asri confirm that employees who maintain consistent quality, comply with workplace regulations, and exercise sound judgment in problem-solving experience stronger intrinsic satisfaction because their contributions are valued and visibly connected to organizational success.

The dominance of professionalism as the primary factor influencing satisfaction at UD Sami Asri can be explained by the nature of small and family-run enterprises, where trust, reliability, and consistent performance form the foundation of sustainability. In such organizations, the boundaries between individual work and collective responsibility are often fluid, requiring every employee to act with accountability and self-discipline. Professionalism

thus functions as a cultural mechanism that ensures reliability, mutual respect, and the preservation of product standards without heavy reliance on formal supervision.

These results indicate that professionalism not only shapes employees' attitudes toward their tasks but also reinforces the social and ethical framework of the organization. A professional workforce contributes to a more stable working environment, reduces operational errors, and fosters shared confidence among employees. Strengthening professionalism through ethics-based training, quality improvement initiatives, and transparent performance evaluation systems can therefore enhance both individual satisfaction and organizational effectiveness (Rathnayake, 2024).

The Simultaneous Effect of Competence, Communication, and Professionalism on Employee Satisfaction

The results of multiple regression analysis reveal that competence, communication, and professionalism collectively exert a positive and significant influence on employee satisfaction. The analysis yielded an R value of 0.819, a coefficient of determination (R^2) of 0.671, an F-value of 21.028, and a significance level of $p < .001$. These results demonstrate that 67.1 percent of the variation in employee satisfaction can be explained jointly by these three independent variables, while the remaining 32.9 percent is influenced by other factors not examined in this study. Among the variables tested, professionalism has the highest standardized coefficient ($B = 0.543$), followed by competence ($B = 0.247$) and communication ($B = 0.181$), indicating that professionalism exerts the most dominant effect in explaining variations in satisfaction.

The findings suggest that the interaction between professional behavior, employee capability, and communication quality creates a reinforcing mechanism that strengthens satisfaction among workers. Competence ensures that employees possess the technical and cognitive abilities necessary to complete tasks efficiently, while communication facilitates coordination, clarity, and mutual understanding across work units. Professionalism integrates these aspects through discipline, responsibility, and adherence to ethical and quality standards, forming a cohesive framework that sustains both individual motivation and collective performance.

In food-based micro and small enterprises, product quality and business continuity depend primarily on human reliability rather than advanced technology or formalized systems. Professionalism, manifested through integrity, consistency, and accountability, serves as an internal mechanism that maintains product uniformity and consumer trust. Technical competence enables employees to perform their duties accurately, and effective communication ensures coordination across production stages, but professionalism connects these elements through moral awareness and ethical responsibility. This integration explains why professionalism exerts a stronger and more consistent influence on employee satisfaction compared to competence or communication within small-scale food manufacturing settings such as UD Sami Asri.

Tsai (2011) emphasized that job satisfaction arises from the alignment between employees' skills, workplace interaction, and the values that govern organizational behavior. Nursaid et al. (2020) also found that work environments characterized by open communication, continuous competence development, and professionalism tend to achieve higher employee retention and satisfaction levels. These theoretical perspectives are consistent with the empirical findings at UD Sami Asri, where technical ability, effective information flow, and adherence to work ethics operate simultaneously to build a positive organizational climate.

The high R^2 value obtained in this study demonstrates that internal factors within the organization specifically competence, communication, and professionalism play a substantial role in shaping employee satisfaction. However, the remaining 32.9 percent of unexplained variance indicates that other determinants may also contribute to employees' perceptions of satisfaction. These factors may include compensation systems, leadership styles, peer relationships, opportunities for career advancement, and physical work conditions. In the context of a small-scale family-owned enterprise such as UD Sami Asri, the informal structure and limited financial resources may restrict the company's ability to address some of these aspects, which could explain the residual variance.

The simultaneous influence of competence, communication, and professionalism reflects the integrated nature

of human resource practices in small and medium-sized enterprises. When employees are competent in their work, receive clear communication, and uphold professional conduct, their satisfaction tends to increase because they perceive harmony between expectations, responsibilities, and recognition. This alignment not only enhances individual morale but also strengthens organizational performance and resilience. A systematic effort to sustain these factors through regular training, transparent communication channels, and reinforcement of ethical work culture may further improve satisfaction and reduce turnover among employees at UD Sami Asri Tulungagung.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study confirm that competence, communication, and professionalism collectively contribute to employee satisfaction at UD Sami Asri Tulungagung. Competence enhances satisfaction through mastery of technical skills, job knowledge, and problem-solving ability. Communication supports satisfaction by improving information clarity and coordination across work units. Professionalism, characterized by integrity, discipline, and commitment to quality, demonstrates the most dominant influence, reflecting its central role in maintaining trust and consistency in small-scale food enterprises. Together, these three variables explain 67.1 percent of the variation in employee satisfaction, indicating that satisfaction emerges from the synergy between individual capability, organizational interaction, and ethical work behavior.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that UD Sami Asri Tulungagung, prioritize the continued development of employee competencies through targeted technical training and structured problem-solving programs. Internal communication systems should be reinforced to ensure that all employees receive information clearly and consistently. The cultivation of professionalism can be strengthened through the implementation of standardized operating procedures, ethical awareness initiatives, and responsible decision-making practices. The integration of these measures is expected to enhance satisfaction, strengthen employee loyalty, and sustain long-term productivity within the organization.

This study was conducted using a single company as its research setting with a relatively limited number of respondents. The cross-sectional design also restricts the ability to infer causal relationships between variables. The use of self-reported data may introduce response bias that could influence the precision of the results. Consequently, the findings should be interpreted within the scope of these methodological boundaries.

Future studies are encouraged to involve a larger and more diverse sample of small and medium-sized enterprises to improve the generalizability of the findings. Incorporating mediator or moderator variables such as leadership style, compensation systems, or organizational commitment could provide deeper insights into the mechanisms linking competence, communication, professionalism, and satisfaction. A mixed-methods approach combining quantitative and qualitative techniques may also offer a more comprehensive understanding of employee experiences in similar small-scale manufacturing environments.

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