

The Role of Entrepreneurial Motivation in Mediating the Effects of Success, Failure, and Work Quality on Business Sustainability

Dhea Lara Puspita^{1*}, Suhardi², Rahmad Firdaus³

¹⁻³Department Management, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Pertiba, Indonesia

Corresponding Author's e-mail : cellid6381@gmail.com

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Abstract : Micro-businesses, such as Pentol Ceriwis, play a vital role in the local economy, yet their sustainability is often challenged by cycles of success and failure. This study aimed to analyze the influence of business success, business failure, and work quality on entrepreneurial sustainability, with entrepreneurial motivation as a mediating variable. A quantitative approach was employed, utilizing survey data from 100 micro-entrepreneurs within the Pentol Ceriwis network. Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results indicated that business success and work quality had a significant positive effect on entrepreneurial motivation, while business failure exerted a negative impact. Furthermore, entrepreneurial motivation was proven to significantly mediate the relationship between these independent variables and long-term business sustainability. These findings suggest that maintaining high work quality and psychological motivation is crucial for micro-entrepreneurs to navigate business challenges and ensure longevity.

Keywords: Business Success, Business Failure, Entrepreneurial Motivation

INTRODUCTION

The Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) sector serves as a crucial catalyst for national economic growth through massive job creation and its contribution to gross domestic product stability. In an increasingly competitive global market, entrepreneurial sustainability has become a primary focus for business actors to remain relevant and survive in the long term. The phenomenon of micro-culinary businesses, such as "Pentol Ceriwis," reflects the resilience of the grassroots economy while simultaneously demonstrating high vulnerability to shifts in consumer preferences and fluctuations in operational costs. Sustainability in this context is not merely operational continuity but the ability of a business entity to consistently integrate economic value, social impact, and the psychological resilience of its owner (Ahmad et al., 2021; Munoz et al., 2019; Priyono et al., 2020).

The urgency of this research is based on the reality that many micro-enterprises experience failure in the early stages of growth due to an inability to manage success expectations and the trauma of failure. The rationalization for studying the "Pentol Ceriwis" business unit is to dissect how internal and external variables interact in determining business trajectories within the labor-intensive informal sector. A primary issue that frequently arises is the disconnect between objective business achievements and the subjective perceptions of entrepreneurs, which ultimately impacts the decision to continue operating or exit the market. Therefore, a deeper understanding of the coping mechanisms and motivational drivers that allow micro-businesses to exist amidst volatile market pressures is required (Belas et al., 2020; Hadjielias et al., 2022; Kuckertz et al., 2020).

Business success is a vital determinant that provides external validation and internal satisfaction for an entrepreneur. Success is no longer defined solely by financial profit accumulation

but also through the achievement of strategic targets, customer base growth, and emotional satisfaction in running the business. Current literature indicates that the gradual accumulation of small successes builds strong self-confidence, which is essential for facing more complex managerial challenges. In the micro-business ecosystem, every positive achievement acts as a stimulus that strengthens the commitment to future business sustainability (Ahmad *et al.*, 2021; Li *et al.*, 2023; Zheng *et al.*, 2022).

On the other hand, business failure is often regarded as a destructive threat, whereas theoretically, failure contains valuable learning points for maturing business strategies. The resilience of an entrepreneur is tested when they can transform operational or financial failures into tacit knowledge that mitigates future risks. Failure managed with a learning perspective enhances adaptive capabilities; however, without proper stress management, it can lead to a drastic decline in entrepreneurial intention. The dynamics between the trauma of failure and the desire to rise again is a central issue in contemporary entrepreneurial behavior studies (Belas *et al.*, 2020; Cardon *et al.*, 2021; Hadjielias *et al.*, 2022).

Work quality emerges as a fundamental pillar in maintaining service standards and consumer trust in the snack food industry. Quality encompasses technical dimensions such as product hygiene, service speed, and process efficiency, as well as interpersonal dimensions related to customer interaction. In micro-scale businesses, consistent quality is often the sole competitive advantage that distinguishes one outlet from another amidst market saturation. Maintaining high-quality standards not only ensures customer loyalty but also creates professional pride for the owner, directly contributing to long-term operational stability (Li *et al.*, 2023; Munoz *et al.*, 2019; Priyono *et al.*, 2020).

Entrepreneurial motivation acts as a psychological variable that mobilizes an individual's entire resources toward achieving organizational goals. Motivation serves as an internal engine that directs behavior, enhances persistence, and strengthens the focus on business sustainability despite facing heavy obstacles. Recent motivational theories emphasize that intrinsic motivation, derived from personal passion and vision, is far more stable than extrinsic motivation in ensuring business survival during crises. Understanding how motivation is influenced by business outcomes is key to predicting the sustainability behavior of micro-entrepreneurs (Kuckertz *et al.*, 2020; Stephan *et al.*, 2023; Zheng *et al.*, 2022).

Theoretically, business success and high work quality are believed to increase motivation by strengthening the entrepreneur's self-efficacy. Individuals who feel competent and see tangible results from their efforts will have a stronger drive to invest more time and energy into their business. Based on this logic, the research hypothesis suggests that business success and work quality positively influence entrepreneurial motivation, which then becomes a strong predictor of business sustainability. This relationship forms a reinforcing cycle where good performance creates higher motivation for subsequent growth (Ahmad *et al.*, 2021; Li *et al.*, 2023; Stephan *et al.*, 2023).

Conversely, the relationship between business failure and motivation is often complex and multidimensional, where failure can decrease motivation due to resource loss but can also trigger reactive motivation to improve conditions. In many cases in developing countries, financial failure in micro-businesses is often a major psychological barrier that breaks the motivational chain to remain in the world of entrepreneurship. Therefore, this research hypothesis points to the negative influence of failure on motivation, unless other moderating factors can transform failure into learning motivation (Belas *et al.*, 2020; Cardon *et al.*, 2021; Kuckertz *et al.*, 2020).

The mediating role of entrepreneurial motivation in bridging operational and psychological variables toward business sustainability is an original contribution of this research. Motivation is considered a filter that determines whether success, failure, and work quality will be translated into concrete actions to maintain business continuity. Without activated motivation, objective achievements will not have a strong enough meaning to sustain the business in the long term. This integrative model is expected to address the literature gap regarding the internal mechanisms that allow street food MSMEs to exist amidst intense competition (Hadjielias *et al.*, 2022; Stephan *et al.*, 2023; Zheng *et al.*, 2022).

The primary objective of this study is to analyze and empirically prove the influence of business success, business failure, and work quality on entrepreneurial sustainability in the "Pentol

Ceriwis" network, with motivation as a mediating variable. The problem-solving plan is carried out through a quantitative approach using PLS-SEM analysis techniques to validate the proposed structural model. The results of this study are expected to provide a rational foundation for micro-entrepreneurs in managing their mental resilience and work standards, as well as provide policy recommendations for relevant agencies in designing more comprehensive and sustainable MSME development programs in Indonesia (Ahmad et al., 2021; Munoz et al., 2019; Priyono et al., 2020; Stephan et al., 2023).

RESEARCH METHODS

This study adopts a quantitative research design with a descriptive-explanatory approach to dissect the structural relationships between business success, business failure, work quality, and entrepreneurial sustainability. Chronologically, the research commenced with the identification of critical issues within the "Pentol Ceriwis" MSME network, followed by a rigorous synthesis of literature to construct a robust conceptual framework. The research population encompasses all entrepreneurs within the "Pentol Ceriwis" ecosystem, where sampling was conducted using a purposive sampling technique to select 100 respondents who had been operational for at least one year. This criterion was established to ensure that participants had navigated sufficient business cycles to provide valid data regarding their experiences with success, failure, and the consistency of work quality required to maintain business operations (Ahmad et al., 2021; Hadjielias et al., 2022; Priyono et al., 2020; Stephan et al., 2023).

The data acquisition procedure involved the distribution of a structured digital questionnaire utilizing a 5-point Likert scale to measure respondents' perceptions across all research variables. This instrument underwent face validity assessments and initial reliability pilot testing to ensure that each item was precisely understood by micro-entrepreneurs in the field. Technically, the data analysis followed a multi-stage algorithm of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), divided into two primary phases. The first phase involved evaluating the measurement model (Outer Model), which included testing convergent validity through loading factors (> 0.7) and Average Variance Extracted (AVE > 0.5), alongside discriminant validity using the Fornell-Larcker and HTMT criteria. The second phase focused on the structural model (Inner Model) to test the hypotheses through a bootstrapping procedure with 5,000 subsamples to generate accurate t-statistics and p-values (Cardon et al., 2021; Fryer & Dinsmore, 2020; Li et al., 2023; Zheng et al., 2022).

The rationalization for utilizing PLS-SEM in this study is based on its superior capability in handling complex research models involving mediation variables and relatively small sample sizes while still providing robust estimations. Mediation analysis was performed by examining specific indirect effects to determine the extent to which entrepreneurial motivation bridges the influence of independent variables on business sustainability. The entire research process was conducted under strict academic ethical standards, ensuring respondent anonymity and the integrity of the primary data obtained. Through this systematic methodology, the research is expected to produce scientifically verified and accountable findings that contribute significantly to the development of entrepreneurial theory and management practices within the MSME sector in Indonesia (Ahmad et al., 2021; Cronje, 2020; Fryer & Dinsmore, 2020; Stephan et al., 2023).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the demographic profile of the 100 micro-entrepreneurs within the "Pentol Ceriwis" network. The data indicates a dynamic distribution of age, gender, and experience, providing a comprehensive context for the subsequent structural analysis.

Table 1. Demographic Profile of Respondents (n=100)

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	42	42%
	Female	58	58%
Age	< 25 years	15	15%
	25 – 45 years	65	65%
	> 45 years	20	20%
Education Level	Secondary School (SMA/K)	72	72%

	Diploma (D3)	12	12%
	Bachelor's Degree (S1)	16	16%
Business Experience	1 – 2 years	35	35%
	2 – 5 years	52	52%
	> 5 years	13	13%

The demographic data in Table 1 reveals that the "Pentol Ceriwis" micro-business ecosystem is predominantly managed by women (58%), which aligns with the general trend of female participation in the Indonesian micro-culinary sector. In terms of age, a significant majority of respondents (65%) fall within the 25–45-year range, suggesting that the business attracts individuals in their prime productive years who possess the physical and mental stamina required for street-food operations. Regarding educational background, most entrepreneurs (72%) completed secondary education, indicating that this business model serves as a vital economic vehicle for those seeking self-employment outside of formal corporate sectors. Furthermore, the experience profile shows that 52% of respondents have survived the initial 2-year threshold and are now in the "growth and stability" phase (2–5 years). This longevity is crucial for this study, as it ensures that the participants have encountered a sufficient variety of business cycles, successes, and failures to provide reliable insights into the factors influencing entrepreneurial sustainability.

The descriptive analysis of the research variables reveals a strong positive perception across most constructs. As shown in Table 2, variables such as Work Quality and Entrepreneurial Motivation exhibit high mean scores, suggesting that despite facing challenges, "Pentol Ceriwis" entrepreneurs prioritize product standards as a primary survival strategy. A relatively low mean score for Business Failure indicates that while failure experiences exist, they are managed effectively to prevent total business collapse. These descriptive insights provide the necessary context for the structural model testing, confirming that the respondents possess the psychological and operational readiness to pursue long-term entrepreneurial sustainability (Li *et al.*, 2023; Zheng *et al.*, 2022).

Table 2. Descriptive Analysis of Research Variables

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Business Success	4.15	0.48	High
Business Failure	2.25	0.85	Low
Work Quality	4.38	0.42	Very High
Entrepreneurial Motivation	4.28	0.45	High
Entrepreneurial Sustainability	4.20	0.52	High

The evaluation of the measurement model was conducted to ensure that each construct possesses adequate validity and reliability before proceeding to hypothesis testing. This assessment includes convergent validity, discriminant validity, and internal consistency reliability. Based on the data analysis, all research indicators exhibited loading factors above the 0.70 threshold, indicating that these indicators accurately represent their respective latent constructs. Furthermore, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all variables exceeded the 0.50 limit, confirming that more than 50% of the variance of the indicators can be explained by the construct (Ahmad *et al.*, 2021; Li *et al.*, 2023).

Table 3. Validity and Reliability Test Results

Construct	Items	Loading	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
Business Success (X1)	BS1-BS4	0.782 – 0.890	0.685	0.892	0.845
Business Failure (X2)	BF1-BF3	0.750 – 0.845	0.620	0.855	0.812
Work Quality (X3)	WQ1-WQ5	0.810 – 0.912	0.715	0.910	0.885
Ent. Motivation (M)	EM1-EM4	0.795 – 0.885	0.690	0.898	0.855
Sustainability (Y)	ES1-ES5	0.820 – 0.905	0.742	0.925	0.902

The reliability testing results in Table 3 show that the Composite Reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha values for all variables exceeded 0.70. This demonstrates that the research instrument possesses excellent internal consistency and is reliable for further analysis. With all validity and reliability criteria met, the measurement model is declared fit and appropriate for structural testing (Stephan *et al.*, 2023; Zheng *et al.*, 2022).

Once the measurement model was validated, the structural model was evaluated to determine the model's predictive power and the relationships between variables. The strength of the model was measured using the R² (R-square) values for endogenous variables. The analysis revealed an R² value of 0.642 for Entrepreneurial Motivation and 0.718 for Entrepreneurial Sustainability. This indicates that the research model possesses strong predictive capabilities, with 71.8% of the variance in business sustainability being explained by the variables within the model (Cardon *et al.*, 2021; Priyono *et al.*, 2020).

Table 4. Hypothesis Testing Results (Direct and Indirect Effects)

Hypothesis	Relationship	Path Coefficient	T-Statistics	P-Values	Result
Direct Effects					
H1	Business Success -> Motivation	0.345	4.120	0.000	Supported
H2	Business Failure -> Motivation	-0.215	2.850	0.004	Supported
H3	Work Quality -> Motivation	0.412	5.340	0.000	Supported
H4	Motivation -> Sustainability	0.520	6.150	0.000	Supported
Indirect Effects					
H5	Success -> Motivation -> Sustainability	0.179	3.450	0.001	Supported
H6	Failure -> Motivation -> Sustainability	-0.112	2.540	0.011	Supported
H7	Quality -> Motivation -> Sustainability	0.214	4.210	0.000	Supported

Based on the hypothesis testing in Table 4, all direct relationships were found to have a significant influence. Work quality emerged as the most dominant influence on entrepreneurial motivation (0.412), followed by business success. Conversely, business failure consistently exerted a significant negative impact on motivation. Furthermore, indirect effect (mediation) analysis showed that Entrepreneurial Motivation significantly mediates the influence of the three independent variables on Entrepreneurial Sustainability. These findings reinforce that entrepreneurial motivation is a crucial internal mechanism for "Pentol Ceriwis" entrepreneurs to transform operational inputs and business experiences into long-term entrepreneurial sustainability (Ahmad *et al.*, 2021; Hadjielias *et al.*, 2022; Stephan *et al.*, 2023).

The results of the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis provide a robust empirical foundation for understanding the drivers of entrepreneurial sustainability within the "Pentol Ceriwis" micro-business network. The initial phase of the analysis focused on the measurement model (outer model), which confirmed that all research constructs—business success, business failure, work quality, entrepreneurial motivation, and entrepreneurial sustainability—met the stringent criteria for convergent and discriminant validity. The loading factors for all indicators exceeded the 0.70 threshold, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct was well above 0.50, ensuring that the latent variables captured more than half of the variance in their respective indicators. Furthermore, composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha values for all constructs surpassed 0.70, indicating high internal consistency and instrument reliability. These preliminary findings establish a scientifically valid baseline for the subsequent structural model assessment and hypothesis testing (Ahmad *et al.*, 2021; Li *et al.*, 2023; Zheng *et al.*, 2022).

The structural model (inner model) evaluation revealed that the proposed framework possesses significant explanatory power, as evidenced by the R-square values. Entrepreneurial motivation, acting as the primary mediator, showed an R-square of 0.64, suggesting that 64% of its variance is explained by business success, business failure, and work quality. More importantly, the R-square for entrepreneurial sustainability reached 0.72, indicating that the model explains a substantial portion of the factors required for a micro-business to remain viable in the long term. The bootstrapping procedure, conducted with 5,000 resamples, yielded path coefficients that support most of the hypothesized relationships. Business success and work quality were found to have a significant positive impact on motivation ($p < 0.05$), while business failure exerted a significant negative influence, highlighting the psychological volatility inherent in micro-entrepreneurship (Belas *et al.*, 2020; Cardon *et al.*, 2021; Stephan *et al.*, 2023).

The discussion regarding business success confirms that for "Pentol Ceriwis" entrepreneurs, tangible achievements serve as a critical psychological anchor. Success experiences do not merely improve financial liquidity but fundamentally enhance the entrepreneur's self-efficacy and

intrinsic drive. This finding aligns with the Self-Determination Theory, where perceived competence derived from success fosters a higher degree of autonomous motivation. When entrepreneurs witness the growth of their customer base or the achievement of sales targets, their commitment to the business intensifies, creating a proactive mindset oriented toward long-term sustainability. This empirical evidence suggests that fostering small, incremental successes is vital for preventing burnout and ensuring the longevity of micro-scale ventures (Ahmad *et al.*, 2021; Stephan *et al.*, 2023; Zheng *et al.*, 2022).

Conversely, the negative impact of business failure on motivation underscores the precarious nature of the informal economy. Failure in the context of street food vendors often translates to immediate resource depletion and a sense of hopelessness, which significantly erodes the motivation to persist. However, the discussion further explores the nuance that the severity of this negative impact depends on the individual's resilience levels. While failure generally hampers sustainability by diminishing the psychological energy required to innovate, it also serves as a "filtering mechanism" that tests the entrepreneur's adaptive capacity. The results suggest that without external support or internal resilience, repeated failures in the "Pentol Ceriwis" network are likely to lead to business exit rather than a learning-based recovery (Belas *et al.*, 2020; Cardon *et al.*, 2021; Hadjielias *et al.*, 2022).

Furthermore, work quality was identified as a non-negotiable determinant of both motivation and sustainability. In the high-competition landscape of micro-culinary businesses, maintaining high standards of hygiene, taste consistency, and service speed provides the entrepreneur with professional pride and customer loyalty. This dual benefit creates a stable operational environment where the entrepreneur feels a sense of mastery over their craft. The positive correlation between work quality and motivation indicates that operational excellence is not just a technical requirement but a psychological prerequisite for sustainability. Entrepreneurs who prioritize quality are more likely to develop a "sustainability mindset," as they see their business as a valuable contribution to the community rather than a mere survival tool (Li *et al.*, 2023; Munoz *et al.*, 2019; Priyono *et al.*, 2020).

The mediation analysis conclusively proves that entrepreneurial motivation is the "linchpin" that converts operational and experiential inputs into sustainable outcomes. The indirect effects show that business success and work quality significantly enhance sustainability precisely because they bolster the entrepreneur's internal drive. Motivation acts as a buffer that absorbs the shocks of business failure and amplifies the benefits of success. Without a high level of motivation, even a successful or high-quality business may fail to sustain itself if the owner lacks the vision or energy to navigate future market shifts. This finding emphasizes that the sustainability of MSMEs like "Pentol Ceriwis" is as much a psychological endeavor as it is an economic one, necessitating a holistic approach to entrepreneurship development that balances technical skills with mental fortitude (Ahmad *et al.*, 2021; Kuckertz *et al.*, 2020; Stephan *et al.*, 2023).

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the factors identified in the introduction—business success, business failure, and work quality—play a decisive role in shaping the sustainability of micro-enterprises within the "Pentol Ceriwis" network through the crucial mediation of entrepreneurial motivation. The results confirm the initial expectation that sustainability in the informal culinary sector is not merely a product of financial gain but is deeply rooted in the psychological resilience and operational standards of the entrepreneur. Specifically, the high positive impact of work quality and incremental business success reinforces the entrepreneur's internal drive, while the negative pressure of business failure highlights the necessity of robust coping mechanisms. The empirical evidence provided in the results and discussion chapters successfully validates the proposed structural model, proving that motivation acts as the primary engine that transforms daily operational experiences into a long-term commitment to business continuity.

The prospects for the development of these research results are significant for both academic and practical applications. From a theoretical perspective, this study provides a foundation for future researchers to further explore other moderating variables, such as digital literacy or social capital, which may mitigate the negative effects of business failure on motivation. Practically, these

findings offer a strategic roadmap for "Pentol Ceriwis" management and relevant government agencies to design intervention programs that focus not only on technical business training but also on psychological reinforcement and quality consistency. Future studies are encouraged to adopt a longitudinal approach to observe how the dynamics of motivation and sustainability evolve over a longer period, particularly in response to shifting global economic trends and digital transformation within the micro-culinary industry.

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