

A SENSE OF BELONGING CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN DIGITAL ERA: A CASE IN SMALL AND MEDIUM ENTERPRISE (SME) INDONESIA

KONTRIBUSI RASA MEMILIKI TERHADAP KINERJA KARYAWAN DI ERA DIGITAL: KAJIAN PADA USAHA KECIL MENENGAH DI INDONESIA

Rizal Afif AN¹, Henndy Ginting²

¹School of Business and Management, Institut Teknologi Bandung, Indonesia

rizal_afif@sbm-itb.ac.id¹

ABSTRACT

Small Medium Enterprises (SME) is growing very fast in this recent digital era. With technology that is improving significantly, everything is made easier and possible. The number of employees in Small Medium Enterprises (SME) in Indonesia are relatively around 10 to 30 people. This makes the relation between each employee very close, even like family. They feel belong to each other; furthermore, they feel a sense of belonging and become a part of the company. A sense of belongingness experienced by the SME's employees at work could stimulate emotional awareness and deeper interpersonal relationship among them. Sense of belongingness is not just a superficial cognitive appraisal, but it is a feeling of authenticity within employees which leads them to work by inner motivation, not by reward or punishment. This motivation has a significant effect on their productivity and satisfaction. Based on this phenomenon, this paper investigates if an employee's sense of belonging is good and if it will contribute to the employee performance. Employee performance has to be managed because it will contribute to the productivity and effectiveness of the company. This research firstly collected data and insights into the employee performance based on their sense of belonging. The hypothesis of the research is a sense of belonging gives a positive influence on employee performance. The sample of the research consisted of 30 employees in one Small Medium Enterprise (SME) in Bandung, Indonesia. A sense of belonging scale was used to collect the data. And then, the data were analyzed through regression analyses with a 95% confidence interval. The regression result indicates that a sense of belonging contributes up to 69.4% of the variance towards employee's performance in Bandung SME. It means an employee with a higher sense of belonging has higher performance. On the contrary, an employee with a low sense of belonging has lower performance.

Keywords: Sense of belonging, employee performance, Small Medium Enterprise (SME).

ABSTRAK

Usaha Kecil Menengah (UKM) tumbuh lebih cepat di era digital ini. Dengan teknologi yang meningkat secara signifikan, semuanya menjadi lebih mudah dan mungkin. Karyawan Usaha Kecil Menengah (UKM) di Indonesia relatif sekitar 10 hingga 30 orang. Hal ini membuat hubungan antara setiap karyawan sangat dekat bahkan seperti keluarga. Mereka merasa memiliki satu sama lain, lebih jauh lagi, mereka merasa memiliki dan menjadi bagian dari perusahaan. Merasakan rasa memiliki di tempat kerja lebih dari sekadar rasa dan persahabatan yang baik. Rasa memiliki adalah apa yang memungkinkan karyawan untuk merasa bahwa mereka dapat menjadi diri mereka yang asli tanpa takut akan perlakuan atau hukuman yang berbeda, dan itu memiliki dampak besar pada kinerja dan retensi. Dari fenomena ini, makalah ini menyelidiki apakah rasa memiliki karyawan yang baik maka akan berkontribusi pada kinerja karyawan. Kinerja karyawan harus dikelola karena akan berkontribusi pada produktivitas dan efektivitas perusahaan. Penelitian ini mengumpulkan data dan memperhatikan wawasan tentang kinerja karyawan berdasarkan pada rasa memiliki mereka. Hipotesis dalam penelitian ini adalah rasa memiliki memberikan pengaruh positif terhadap kinerja karyawan. Sampel penelitian terdiri dari 30 karyawan di salah satu Usaha Kecil Menengah (UKM) di Bandung, Indonesia. Skala rasa memiliki digunakan untuk mengumpulkan data. Dan kemudian, data dianalisis melalui analisis regresi dengan interval kepercayaan 95%. Hasil regresi menunjukkan bahwa rasa memiliki berkontribusi hingga 69,4% dari varians terhadap kinerja karyawan di SME Bandung. Ini berarti seorang karyawan dengan rasa memiliki yang lebih tinggi memiliki kinerja yang lebih tinggi. Sebaliknya, seorang karyawan dengan rasa memiliki yang rendah memiliki kinerja yang rendah.

Kata Kunci: Rasa memiliki, kinerja karyawan, Usaha Kecil Menengah (UKM).

INTRODUCTION

Some employees work as if they were the owner of the company, even though it was not their company. For example, an army works in his or her corps wholeheartedly, some even want to sacrifice themselves to protect their country from the enemy's attack. Yet, some workers work inadequately; they work as if they worked only to fulfill their responsibilities and subsequently to earn wages; they simply just do what his or her commander says.

Previous research results show that a sense of belonging implies the success of an organization (Sue, 2018). The type of organization may be corps or a company. Meanwhile, the success of a company is underpinned by a good employee performance. Some research that measures a sense of belonging based only on negative statement items have been widely criticized by other researchers (Hagerty and Patusky, 1995). By measuring lack of sense of belonging, these scales have indirectly measured the sense of belonging, i.e. the General Belongingness Scale or (GBS). Malone et al. (2012) measures achieved belongingness instead of the need to belong. Need to Belong Scale (NTB) in Leary et al. (2013) is another commonly used measurement for belongingness, assessing motivation to be accepted by others and avoid rejection. Decreases in need to belong, according to the researcher, although it is a potent indicator, does not qualify as a true evaluation parameter to assess a sense of belonging.

On the other hand, Jena and Pradhan (2018) found that components of sense of belonging are being part of the company, inspiring someone to do more than what is expected, employees' having the sense of many common terms with their coworker, carry more positive emotion than negative ones during their job in the company. Overall, this researcher submitted positive statements from a sense of belonging.

A sense of belonging is very important for the success of the company since it can improve the performance of the employee. Yet, not every company has all employees with high performance because some of the employees have low sense of belonging. Every

company deems to want all their employees to have good performance. Employees of one SMEs in Bandung City, Cahya Nusa Pratama CNP (2020), for instance, show a variety of them employee performance. In this digital era, when long-distance communication is very reliable, an employee separated from their families will no longer feel the longing that has accumulated because now it will be very easy to contact their families. An employee can call his or her family whenever he/she wants so long as it does not disrupt his or her working hours and main activities. Technological advances like this can also build or improve a sense of belonging in employees, especially when the company provides facilities that make it easier for employees to contact their families, such as holding family teleconferences regularly or can also hold family gatherings. The employee will feel more relax and confident and he will more appreciate the company and furthermore, they will feel a sense of belonging to the company.

Sense of belonging has been found to be a significant predictor that proves that it serves as the most significant element of social capital in online learning environment as initially postulated by Rovai (2002).

Technological advances in the digital era also not only make it easier in matters of communication but also make it easier for people in terms of the learning process. with smartphone technology that can be online anywhere, people will be far easier if they want to learn, especially learning to improve their work skills and abilities.

Many variables are found to have affected employee performance, among others, self-awareness, motivation, workload, workplace environment, and sense of belonging. This paper is a prior research result that focuses on a sense of belonging factor. Further research will also involve the self-awareness variable to investigate employee performance.

The sample that used in this research is 30 employees of Cahya Nusa Pratama (2020). The research question is: "Sense of belonging give contribution to employee performance in the company". Data of the research will be

analyzed through regression analyses at the 0.05 significance level.

This research believes that employees who work with all their hearts are those who have a good sense of belonging. The result of the research will be very useful for the managerial implication to improve a sense of belonging of the employee so that the performance of the employee also improved. The research result also could enrich academic literature.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sense of belonging

The linking for social bonds and connections among employees in a company has a long history in psychological research and in general. Almost everyone loves and cares for people around them and everything that they have; yet, there are some people who do not care about what they have. This happens because some people have a sense of belonging (SOB) over things they have, so that they care about them; people that do not have a sense of belonging do not care about SOB. Jing-Lu (2015) found that a sense of belonging influences organizational commitment, work motivation, job satisfaction, and work performance. Richmond & Smith (2012) also found that experiencing a sense of belonging will help in achieving an educational goal. This educational goal in an organization's learning can foster employees' motivation and performances. In higher education, it is deemed that sense of belonging has been associated with key educational outcomes such as academic self-concept, self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation, academic success, and persistence (Ostrove, Stewart, & Curtin, 2011; Strayhorn, 2012). This sense of belonging is beneficial. Inferred from Jena and Pradhan (2018) that sense of belonging is human fundamental need and there is no substantial evidence for refuting the renowned Greek philosopher Aristotle's creed that "man is by nature asocial animal; an individual who is unsocial naturally and not accidentally is either beneath our notice or more than human. Society is something that precedes the individual".

The author has confidence and proposed a hypothesis that if the employee has a sense

of belonging in every job he is carrying out in his company, he will get good performance and he will provide benefit for the company. Some studies have examined about a sense of belonging and show results related to company growth. The high level of sense belonging and responsibility on the part of the employees led to a high level of profitability of a company such as a bank (Amah & Ahiauzu, 2011). High level of profitability means that employee in the organization run their responsibility and performance in the best condition.

Employee Performance

Company goals can only be achieved through all employees' contributions. Employees have a key factor in every company's wealth. Employees that do plan, implement and control, who always play an active role in realizing the company goals, are the employees who have good performance. As the main actors in realizing the company's goals, employees have thoughts, feelings, and desires that can influence their attitudes towards their work. Positive attitudes should be fostered in order to have a positive effect on the company and negative attitudes should be avoided so as not to have a negative effect on the company.

Few studies have examined that some employees can do their best work when they feel safe as they feel safe in their homes. Feeling safe and comfortable at work can be felt by employees who have a sense of belonging.

The definition of employee performance is the ability of an employee to achieve a specified task measured against predetermined standards of accuracy, completeness, cost, and speed (Sultan et al., 2012). Indonesian civil servant performance usually measures through the aspect of discipline, honesty, perseverance, and achievement of work targets.

Private companies, on the other hand, set their own aspects of the performance of their workers. SME CNP sets up the components of performance included honesty, discipline, responsibility, completing tasks as instructed.

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

One of the basic economies in supporting

economic growth is small and medium enterprises. Mostly, the small and medium enterprises are owned by private sectors and it keeps growing in most of developing countries. Some organizations in Indonesia also stated the small and medium enterprises, such as:

1. Ministry of State for Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises.
 - a. Small enterprises
 1. Having net worth less than IDR 2 million excluding land and buildings
 2. Having most of yearly income of IDR 1 billion
 - b. Medium enterprises
 1. Having net worth range of IDR 200 million 10 billion excluding land and buildings
 2. Having yearly income range of IDR 1 billion-50 billion
2. Ministry of Industry and Commerce/ Commerce Department.
According to the laws no. 9/1995, the small and medium enterprise are based on the investment less than IDR 5 billion, where the small enterprise has an asset less than IDR 200 million and maximum yearly income of IDR 1 billion.

Those small and medium enterprises have a big part in the economic growth for having opened a job opportunity for a lot of people, and they could make living from them. Because our country is based on the agriculture business, a small business with less than 20 employees is quite important.

METHOD

Research Design, population and sample

As a cross-sectional study, this research design is a type of observational study that analyzes data gathered from a population, or a representative subset, at a specific point in time (Saunders et al., 2007; Sekaran, 2003). The sample of the research included 30 employees of SME named Cahya Nusa Pratama CNP that located in Bandung City, Indonesia. The population is all of the employees at the same company.

Instrument

To measure the level of a sense of belonging among the employee, this paper uses positive and negative statements. The positives statement are developed from Jena & Pradhan (2018) aspects and the negatives statements are taken from the sense of belonging (SOB) questionnaire designed by Hagerty & Patutsky (1995).

Inferred from Jena and Pradhan (2018), sense of belonging consisted of the aspect of:

1. The convenience of working at the company
2. More emphasis on the word “we/us” than the word “they/them” as a subject.
3. Inspiration to work more than assigned
4. Feeling valued and rewarded for the work.

These four aspects are elaborated into 12 positive statements related to indicators of a sense of belonging (Jena & Pradhan, 2018). The positive statement of SOB included:

- (1) I am able to work in this company without sacrificing my principles.
- (2) I use to refer as “we/us” rather than “they/them” when I refer my company to outsiders.
- (3) I feel that there is a semblance between my company and my own values and beliefs.
- (4) I generally carry more positive emotions than the negative ones during my job.
- (5) Being a part of this company inspires me to do more than what is expected.
- (6) In my work unit I have many common themes with my co-workers.
- (7) Fairness is maintained while executing rules and policies in my company.
- (8) My personal needs are well met by my company.
- (9) Whenever I have any personal or professional issues my company extends necessary help and support.
- (10) My career goals are well considered by my company.
- (11) My company tries to make my job as exciting and promising as possible.
- (12) Accomplishments at work are adequately rewarded in my company.

All the items of the instrument were turned to positive questionnaire and rating scale using Likert-type with score 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (agree), to 4 (strongly agree) ratings were used for further study. In terms of a sense of belonging positive statements, score 4 would represent a low level of sense of belonging.

Negative statements of the scale (questionnaire) are taken from the sense of belonging (SOB) questionnaire designed by Hagerty & Patutsky (1995). SOB aspects included:

1. Feelings of uncertainty will suit colleagues.
2. Feelings of not having a comfortable place in the company.
3. Feelings of discomfort over differences in educational levels.
4. Feelings of disrespect for the boss.

These four aspects are then developed into 8 negative statements related to SOB with each score 1-4 on the Likert scale. The Likert-styling score from 1 (SD = Strongly Disagree) to 4 (SA = Strongly Agree). In terms of a sense of belonging statements, score 4 would represent a low level of sense of belonging. Meanwhile, the negative statements of SOB are adopted from Hagerty and Patutsky (1995). All of the six items were written in negative (listed below). The Likert-styling score shows 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 4 (Strongly Agree). In terms of sense of belonging negative statements, score 4 would represent a low level of sense of belonging. The negative statement of SOB included:

- (1) I am just not sure if I fit in with my colleagues.
- (2) I would describe myself as a misfit in most social situations.
- (3) I would like to make a difference to people or things around me, but I don't feel that what I have to offer is valued.
- (4) I don't feel that there is any place where I really fit in this company.
- (5) I am uncomfortable that my background and experiences are so different from those who are usually around me.
- (6) I am not valued by or important to my boss.

- (7) I cannot work in this company without sacrificing my principles
- (8) I do not feel in the company where I work in applying justice

Data Analysis

In this research data are being analyzed using simple regression analysis. A simple linear regression is performed to assess the relationship between a dependent variable, y , and a single explanatory variable, x , with data that include observations for both variables for a particular population. Sense of belonging sets as an independent variable (X), while work performance sets as a dependent variable (Y). The analysis will be run at 0.05 significant level with the aid of the SPSS software package. The hypothesis that will be tested is: "Whether a sense of belonging contributes to the work performance of the employee?" The estimation of the regression equation for the data obtained is:

$$\hat{Y} = b_0 + b_1X$$

Note: \hat{Y} = Employee performance
 b_0 = Intercept
 b_1 = Regression Coefficient
 X = Sense of belonging

Where b 's denote the population regression coefficients. Before a regression analysis is performed, the data normality test and the variance homogeneity test will be conducted first as a prerequisite for using regression analysis.

From the result of the analysis, we can elaborate on the relationship between sense of belonging and work performance, also the degree of a sense belonging contribution towards work performance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In psychology, a sense of belonging is the feeling that something is yours. An employee may sense that one's cubicle at workplace is his or hers and no one else's, but legal or real owner is the company's. People can have a sense of belonging to a variety of things: products, workspaces, ideas, and roles. An example of a

sense of belonging is the feeling that a product that an employee has developed is his or hers and no one else's.

Basically, a sense of belonging is about having or owning something, care and responsible, and have power over something. A sense of belonging is allegedly contributed to the work performance of the employee. To test the allegation the researcher has spread a questionnaire to measure the sense of belonging related to work performance.

Demographic Characteristic

The questionnaires used was obtained from 30 respondents. Out of 30 respondents, 23.3% were female whereas 76.7% were male. This implies that Cahya Nusa Pratama employs more male as compared to females. –Based on the age of the respondent, 63.3% were aged around 20 until 29; this was followed by 33.3% in the age group around 30 until 39 and the rest is aged over 40 years old. This implies that most respondents are youths with a high young spirit and full amount of energy, and it is guided by 33% of employees with enough experience to do their best performance.

Most Cahya Nusa Pratama employees have come from other cities, hence they work and live in one factory. They are provided a living place by the company so that they also live communally and spend the nighttime as a team. This situation also involves and helps form their feel of sense and belonging.

The regression analysis results reveal that sense of belonging has been shown to have a significant contribution on employee

performance ($\beta = .840$, $p < 0.05$), implying that sense of belonging is a significant predictor of employee performance.

From the results above, a unit change in sense of belonging will bring about 0.840 change in employee performance. Table 1 shows more detailed description of the regression results:

Discussion

The present study results indicate that a sense of belonging is a significant predictor of employee performance in the Small and Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) as shown in the regression analyses model. It is also indicated that there is a significant positive relationship between sense of belonging and employee performance which implies that an improvement in sense of belonging would cause also an improvement in employee performance in terms of competence, responsiveness, and productivity and profitability.

This result is also relevant with (Amah and Ahiauzu, 2011), who argued that the high level of sense belonging and responsibility on the part of the employees led to a high level of profitability of a company such as a bank. In (Rajan, 2015) study found that 61.4% agree or 30% strongly agree that a sense of belonging leads to more productivity. 65.7% agree and 32.9% strongly agree that a sense of belonging has a positive and a significant impact on motivation.

In Cahya Nusa Pratama SME, employee's relationship with each other tends to be a close friend or even family. In their work time, they work seriously, and they maintain their professionalism. At other times, on the other

Table 1.
Regression Model

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized coefficients		Sig
		<i>B</i>	Std. error	Beta	<i>T</i>	
	(Constant)	82.415	1.060		77.767	.000
1	Sense of belonging	.118	.14	.840	8.178	
<i>R</i> = .840		<i>R</i> ² = .705		Adjusted <i>R</i> ² = .694		F Statistic = 66.879

(Source: Primary data)

hand, when they meet during rest or break time, they will hang out with each other and laugh together. They exchange stories with each other and share their feeling and idea. Out of this situation grows a sense of belonging between each other in their personal feeling, and this becomes a positives impact on their motivation in doing work.

Good motivation in doing work will lead to good employee performance. Sudiardhita, et al. (2018) find that the motivation for work has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction and employee performance. Job satisfaction has a positive and significant effect on employee performance. With this, company management should consider increasing employee's sense of belonging, to assure their employees to have enough time to talk to each other, have social time and, make some employees gathering or even family gathering. In their time for social interaction, the company should maintain that they stay in good and positive talks and interactions. This will make a healthy working atmosphere that reflects the social impacts created by the company.

CONCLUSION

This paper aimed to find out the contribution of sense of belonging on employee performance using evidence from Bandung SME in the Digital Era. This was achieved through a questionnaire survey of 30 workers in private sector SME in Bandung.

Regression results indicate that a sense of belonging contributes up to 69.4% of the variance in employee performance. Since the research findings show that there is a significant positive relationship between sense of belonging and employee performance, managers should not develop policies, procedures and take decisions in isolation from employees but more to bring them in and involve them so employees will feel being a part of the company. This will make employees more volunteer to fulfill company goals through becoming dedicated.

The implications involve significant impact for company in terms of improvements in productivity and hence signify substantial

economic impact on the organization.

Like any other study, this study has limitations. This study was only a cross-sectional, and the employee questionnaire used a close-ended question. Close-ended questions limit a respondent's freedom to express their other opinion. The research results may generate different outputs in different situations and different company cultures. Further research may include more variables that support employee performance such as employee engagement, company culture, and behavior on employee and any others.

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