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The Role of PT Madusari Nusaperdana Labor Union in Increasing Worker Productivity: A Case Study of Industrial Relations in Indonesia

This case study was written by Riani Rachmawati*, Elok Savitri Pusparini, Casman Gunawan Jaya, and Athiyyah Adhikaputri as a discussion material in class. The Authors never assert whether the situation described has been handled effectively. Furthermore, they may also conceal names and other information for confidentiality reasons. The information provided in this case is mostly taken from the public domain.

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Introduction

Any company must try their best to win the competition. Therefore, strategies are built, resources are prepared, and capabilities are improved to be a winner in an increasingly fierce business competition. It is undeniable that a company's performance is very much dependent on the people behind it; no matter how much capital it has, no matter how sophisticated the technology it uses, it will not produce results without a positive performance of its employees.

As a Human Resources (HR) Director who understands the direction of the company's business, Casman knows that creating a conducive industrial relations climate is one of the important aspects in maintaining worker productivity. PT Mitindo Usaha Sejati, where he works, is a meat processing company producing sausages, burger patties, meatballs, and smoked meat. The company's competitors are some of the big players in the industry, including Belfoods, Cimory, Charoen Pokphand and Japfa.

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One of the factories owned by the company is PT Madusari Nusaperdana located in Cikarang. This factory has a fairly active Labor Union, which was established in 2004

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under the name *Serikat Buruh Madusari Bersatu* (SBMB). In 2006, SBMB formed an affiliation with *Federasi Perjuangan Buruh Jabodetabek* (FPBJ), which later changed its name to *Federasi Perjuangan Buruh Indonesia* (FPBI) in 2013.

The relationship between the management and SBMB has seen its fair share of ups and downs, including, among others, long negotiations regarding changes in employees' benefits, improvements to the facilities and infrastructure, employees' bonus, and the Termination of Employment (PHK) process. One of the disputes that occurred regarding the use of contract workers that went beyond the terms set forth in the regulations of the Ministry of Manpower of the Republic of Indonesia even had to be settled through the Industrial Relations Court in 2019.

After the incident, the management and SBMB agreed to find the most approriate communication pattern, to ensure disputes are less frequent, and when it happens it can be resolved through bipartite negotiations. In addition, various negotiations between management and the Labor Union have also ensured the fulfillment of basic workers' rights such as complying with the Minimum Wages requirement (following the Bekasi Regency) and the protection of workers with BPJS (Employment Social Security).

With 260 employees, 40% of whom are unionized, and improvement in the company's industrial relation in the past four years, Casman feels that it is time for SBMB to play a bigger role in the company's business progress. For one thing, the company has seen a significant increase in its targets every year. For example, in 2023, the sales growth target is set at 25% from the previous year, an increase that requires a separate strategy to achieve. Historical data related to the growth of performance targets, achievements, and sales growth of PT Madusari is presented in Table 1 of the Appendix.

The 25% target was set after considering various aspects. Previously in 2019, PT Madusari Nusaperdana achieved a sales growth of 26.3%. This success became the benchmark for setting the following year's target at 25% because the company believes it could reach that objective. However, as it turned out until 2023, the company failed to achieve the target. One of the reasons for the failure was a lack of good cooperation between the management and the factory workers who in general were union members.

For that reason, Casman expects all workers at PT Madusari factory to take part and actively contribute to increasing productivity. Casman feels that it is time to change the direction of SBMB's thinking and narrative, from what was originally a normative

demand to a narrative that pays more attention to the condition and direction of the company, including increasing productivity.

Casman has asked the factory management and HR manager of PT Madusari Nusaperdana to intensify their efforts in building communication with SBMB regarding this matter. Communication needs to be clear to prevent any misunderstanding since a narrative of increasing productivity may be interpreted as an attempt by the company to exploit its workers if the message is not conveyed properly. If this happens, the relationship that has improved in the last few years can deteriorate to being a relationship based on suspicion and mutual distrust between the parties.

However, SBMB feels that they have never been included in the discussions with factory management on productivity improvement. Bani Israil, the Chairperson of SBMB said that SBMB is ready to support efforts to improve the company's productivity if invited to participate. Hitherto, SBMB has tried to estimate the company's performance only through field data, such as the total raw material purchased and total production yield as a basis for negotiating the workers' normative rights. According to Casman's view, such an approach is not suitable to describe the condition of the company, and if not corrected, it could potentially create conflicts that disrupt the industrial relations climate.

Casman continues to think and analyze the steps he needs to take so that SBMB can be more involved in increasing factory productivity without too much intervention so that the role of the factory manager and HR manager remains central in this matter. In addition, Casman also feels the need to maintain good industrial relations in the factory so that the mutual distrust between management and the Labor Union in the factory does not happen again.

Profile and History of PT Madusari Nusaperdana

Since its inception, PT Madusari Nusaperdana has always been committed to providing a variety of processed meat food products that are value-added, nutritious, affordable, and at the same time has opened up employment opportunities in Indonesia. The company's processed meat products include beef sausages, burger patties, smoked beef, meatballs and other processed meat products. All PT Madusari Nusaperdana products are guaranteed to be produced in a modern hygienic way, vacuum-packed, and stored in a refrigerator to maintain their quality so that they remain prime until they reach the consumers.

Over time, the company continues to grow and develop to serve the needs of consumers through various flagship products marketed under the Kimbo, Vigo, and Fino brands. PT Madusari Nusaperdana also serves the needs of its business partners (B2B) by providing processed meat products that can be adjusted to the needs of the company's

business partners in the future.

In 2010, Kimbo introduced a new product to create a new market niche of nutritious snacks consumption through products under the Kimbo Reddi brand, a pioneer of ready-to-eat protein-rich delicious long sausages at an affordable price. In the same year, Kimbo launched a series of ready-to-eat products (convenient meals) under the Kimbo Kitchen trademark, in response to the needs of an increasingly active society that only have a limited time to prepare delicious and nutritious food.

In producing high-quality and good-tasting products, PT Madusari Nusaperdana has implemented the HACCP food safety system, ISO 22000:2005 standard, and its products also obtained the MUI Halal Certificate and the distribution permit from the Food and Drug Supervisory Agency (BPOM) to provide a sense of security for the Indonesian people. PT Madusari Nusaperdana is always committed to continue innovating in order to follow the trend of times and present delicious and nutritious products for the good of Indonesian families.

PT Madusari Nusaperdana was established in 1995 with the first factory located in Bekasi as a food processing company using beef and chicken as raw materials. The company was built with a commitment to provide a variety of processed meat products that are value-added, nutritious, affordable, and with the aim of opening up employment opportunities in Indonesia. The products include, among others, beef sausages, burger patties, smoked beef, meatballs and other processed meat. These products were launched in stages; in 1996 under the Kimbo trademark, and in 2000 under Vigo, Fino and Madusari Foods trademarks, as an effort to expand the scope of target market segmentation, supported by a distribution strategy that covers the traditional markets and business partners in the B2B (Business to Business) food services.

Not limited to ordinary processed meat products, PT Madusari Nusaperdana also carries out several innovations and business developments in order to compete in the market. In 2010, Kimbo introduced a new product in the form of nutritious snacks through the Kimbo Reddi product, a pioneer in ready-to-eat protein-rich sausages at affordable prices. In the same year, Kimbo launched a series of ready-to-eat (convenient meals) products under the Kimbo Kitchen trademark, to answer the needs of an increasingly active society that only have a limited time to prepare delicious and nutritious food. With a growing line of business, PT Madusari Nusaperdana established a second factory in Boyolali, Central Java in 2013, which focuses on providing ready-to-eat Kimbo Reddi products. Table 2 of the Appendix Table 2 shows that the Vigo Sausage product from PT Madusari Nusaperdana has succeeded in occupying the top ranking for sausages recommended by consumers.

The company does not just sit back and rest on its laurels, and instead it continues to innovate by developing other products and expanding its market penetration. In 2016, Kimbo launched the Frozen Bratwurst, which is targeted at the middle to upper market

share. Furthermore, in 2019 PT Madusari Nusaperdana presented a new innovation through the Kimbo Sausage Side Dish & Serbaguna product. In the same year, on the sales side, PT Madusari Nusaperdana succeeded in developing a direct sales channel to online consumers through the Kimbo Official Store in 6 marketplaces; i.e., Tokopedia, Shopee, Blibli, Jd.id, Bukalapak, and Lazada. Finally, in 2021, PT Madusari Nusaperdana launched the Kimbo Probites product, a protein-rich snack to accompany and support every activity of teenagers and children.

History of the Establishment of PT Madusari Nusaperdana Labor Union (Serikat Buruh Madusari Bersatu)

At the beginning of its establishment in 2004-2005, a worker communication forum was formed as a reaction to the conditions of social inequality experienced and felt by the workers at that time. There were normative rights that were not fulfilled, such as the amount of wages, work systems, and calculations of overtime pay that were not done according to the rules. It became a forum to strengthen the bargaining position of workers with the company management. This forum became the forerunner of an organization with the same goal, i.e., to ensure that the normative rights of PT Madusari workers could be fulfilled by the company, and ultimately it was renamed the United Madusari Labor Union (*Serikat Buruh Madusari Bersatu*, SBMB).

One of the main roles of SBMB is to negotiate the fulfillment of the workers' rights. At that time, around 100 of the 150 full-time workers of PT Madusari were Union members. The agreement that has been successfully reached between the management and the Labor Union since 2008 was stated in the Company Regulation, which later incorporated into the Collective Labor Agreement (*Perjanjian Kerja Bersama*, PKB). Along the way, the contents of the PKB have developed in accordance with the rising quality of life standard of the workers. Items that initially were not included, such as the provision of scholarships for workers' children, became proposals in the following years.

In 2006, SBMB established an affiliation with the *Federasi Perjuangan Buruh Indonesia* (FPBI) on the basis of expanding knowledge related to improving the quality of human resources, opening up opportunities to access pertinent information that can be used in analyzing company conditions, competition in the industry, local and regional environmental conditions, as well as national to international ones that may affect the company so that the union can be more objective in making various decisions.

Since 2008, the company and SBMB have successfully initiated a Collective Labor Agreement (PKB), which contained the principal rules aimed at protecting the rights and obligations of both parties, while taking into account the business conditions and capacities of the company. Since 2010 until now, the Labor Union whose members are the company's full-time workers has continued to grow. Until now, the total number of active members of the Union is 145 people, with a mandatory contribution to the amount

of Rp 80,000 which is imposed and is directly deducted through the company's payroll system.

Various programs and activities are carried out with the aim of improving the capabilities and wellbeing of the members. The member recruitment system is carried out through program socialization and communication between Union's administrator and the workers without any coercion to join the Labor Union. SBMB administration structure consists of the main organs comprising the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and Division Chairperson consisting of Advocacy Division, Education Division, Economic Division, and Public Relations Division.

Since 2010, SBMB has been actively involved in activities organized by the Federation, both at the local and national levels. Among these activities are the Training Programs called Level 1 Education (Peta 1) and Level 2 Education (Peta 2). In Peta 1, members are given basic education with materials covering the history of labor movements, economics and politics, law and state administration, democracy education, and discussions related to current developments. Meanwhile, the Level 2 Education (Peta 2) is intended for prospective Speakers (Training of Trainers) with a training curriculum covering an in-depth exploration on Peta 1 materials and supplemented with philosophy education, economics and finance education, political education, and organizational management education, including how to read financial statement, how to understand economic conditions, negotiation skills, etc. To qualify, participants are required to complete the assessment and evaluation process, before they can receive a certificate as a Speaker (Trainer).

Industry Conditions: Opportunities and Challenges

In 2023, the Indonesian food industry is expected to experience significant growth. This can be seen from several factors, such as a stable economic growth, increased people purchasing power, and the widespread digital transformation in the sector. In addition, the government has also implemented various policies that support the development of the food industry, such as simplifying business permits, increasing access to technology, and providing incentives for small and medium industries. Thus, it is hoped that the Indonesian food industry will be increasingly competitive in the international market, and will be able to increase the competitiveness of Indonesian products at the global level. Meanwhile, efforts to improve product quality are also being carried out by the Indonesian food industry. This is done by increasing production standards, as well as paying attention to aspects of food safety and the environment. This is expected to increase consumer confidence in Indonesian products, as well as increase exports to other countries.

According to the external trends report in the Press Release of the Ministry of

Industry of the Republic of Indonesia (2023), the meat processing industry is growing rapidly. This is reflected in the increase in the Industry Confidence Index (IKI), which is an indicator of the degree of confidence of the processing industry that describes business prospects for the next six months. The IKI for the processing industry in January 2023 showed a figure of 51.54, which was higher than the IKI figure in December 2022 at 50.9. Several variables that lead to this rise include an increase in new orders, an increase in production and a decrease in the volume of product inventory.

Growth is also apparent from the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of food and beverage industry, which is part of the processing industry. Over the past decade, for example, the GDP of food and beverage industry in 2022 grew by 4.90% compared to 2021, which is consistent with the increase over the past decade (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2022). In the first quarter of 2023, the performance of the food and beverage industry per quarter (q-on-q) experienced a contraction or decline, while the annual growth of the food and beverage industry sector (year on year) until the first quarter of 2023 showed positive growth. This positive performance is a rebound and puts the food and beverage industry back to its performance from the previous years, which always showed positive values. The Food and Beverage Industry Growth Graph for 2011-2023 can be seen in Graphics 1 and 2 of the Appendix.

The biggest challenge in the food and beverage industry in Indonesia is the limited availability of raw materials. Indonesia is an agrarian country that relies heavily on agriculture as its main food source. However, the problem of dwindling agricultural land, unpredictable climate change, and various crop diseases that plague animals and plants are factors that hinder the productivity of this sector. This results in limited raw materials availability for the food and beverage industry, complicating the production process and increasing food prices on the market. Food safety issues are also a challenge for the Indonesian food industry. Cases such as leakage of hazardous substances, product expiration dates, and inadequate assurance on product hygiene can damage consumer confidence in Indonesian food products, and have the potential to harm the overall food industry.

The change in consumption patterns of people who are increasingly open to the influence of foreign cultures has made food consumption patterns become more diverse. It compels the food industry to adapt to the increasingly diverse needs of consumers, as well as to meet the ever-changing food needs. The food industry must be able to follow trends in the market, and produce food products that suit the needs and tastes of the Indonesian people. The lack of synergy between stakeholders in the food and beverage industry is also a challenge for the industry in Indonesia, which is characterized by various conflicts of interest between the stakeholders, which lead to a low level of synergy within the industry. This can hinder the production and marketing process of food products, as well as

complicate the development of the food and beverage industry in Indonesia.

Corporate Response to Industry Developments Promoting New Company Target

By observing the developments that occur in the industry, both in terms of opportunities and challenges, the company has set a business growth target of 25%. This figure was taken based on the consideration that the position of PT Madusari Nusaperdana's products is quite competitive in the market. This is supported by several recommendations from the results of market research conducted by various independent parties, as listed in Table 2 of the Appendix. The management is optimistic that the company's growth will continue to increase considering that the consumer market shows a positive trend after entering the post-Covid-19 pandemic period.

Some of the major players in this industry include Kanzler products from PT Cisarua Mountain Dairy, Tbk; So Good and So Nice products from PT Japfa Comfeed Indonesia, Tbk; Champ products from PT Charoen Pokphand Indonesia, Tbk; and Belfoods products from PT Sreeya Sewu Indonesia, Tbk. The performance of these competing products also shows a positive trend, supported by increasingly innovative product development strategies and marketing strategies. PT Madusari's flagship products such as Kimbo and Vigo are in the midst of an increasingly tough competition.

Various strategies have been implemented by the company to achieve this level of growth, such as appointing Chef Juna Rorimpandey as Kimbo's brand ambassador and approaching the workers, especially the Labor Union, to assist the company in boosting its productivity.

Labor Union Involvement in Increasing Productivity

To ensure the achievement of business targets that continue to increase significantly, Casman feels the need to increase worker involvement to be more active. To that end, Casman wants to involve the Labor Union as a representative of the workers. Increasing worker productivity needs to be built with better cooperation between the management and workers. Casman recalls an unpleasant previous incident, when a company that is a consumer of the Business to Business (B2B) segment, found flies in a product shipped by PT Madusari Nusaperdana. As a player in the food industry, the presence of flies in a product is a strong warning because it could potentially lead to losing a business partner. Casman really hopes that every worker in any line can play a role in maintaining product quality through disciplined work behavior.

In this case, SBMB plays a role in providing understanding to members about the importance of being actively involved in ensuring the quality of products produced,

especially aspects of quality in the food industry. In addition, SBMB is also expected to understand and convey to all its members the benefits that workers and management will gain if productivity increases. On the other hand, the Labor union also needs to ensure that increased productivity does not mean exploitation of workers by the management, so the basic workers' rights must be maintained.

Casman instructed the factory manager and the factory's Human Resources (HR) manager to start opening communication with the Union. Communication is central to this agenda because there is a stigma that increasing productivity only brings an advantage for management and a disadvantage for the workers. It is quite possible to achieve the objectives set in the productivity agenda by reducing costs related to workers in addition to improving production performance. If communication does not work, the Union may doubt the management's intention and become suspicious. This will damage the psychological contract that has been built between the management and the workers.

Casman wants the productivity to increase as a result of a sense of attachment of workers to the company, not because of coercion due to fear of losing their jobs if they do not comply with the company's agenda. Casman believes that by increasing productivity through a sense of attachment and commitment, workers will stay longer with the company because the psychological contract between the two parties is maintained.

Issues

Casman was reviewing the production report of PT Madusari Nusaperdana on his desk. The report showed that the sales figure for the fourth quarter of 2022 was close to the target and the year 2022 ended with satisfactory sales performance. However, there was something bothering him. Several SPMB administrators went to see him a few days ago and said something that made Casman feel like he had to do something immediately. Bani Israil (SBMB Chairperson), Riswan (SBMB Vice Chairperson), Suswandi (SBMB Secretary), and Pandji (SBMB Treasurer) claimed that they were almost never informed about the business direction and performance of the company.

Throughout this time, they have only tried to guess by observing the amount of raw material purchases and the factory total production. Casman is very concerned about this because those data cannot provide an accurate picture of the factory's performance. Moreover, this data is also used by SPMB in negotiating salary increases and workers' benefits with the management. Potentially, it could make the Union fail to see why the management could not meet their demand in the negotiation.

Casman is also concerned with the fact that the lack of effective communication

between management and SPMB will damage the existing psychological contract and harm the good relationship that has been established so far. One of Casman's goals, besides increasing productivity, is of course to manage the disruptions and the occurrence of open incidents due to conflicts between the two parties. If this happens, it will risk disrupting the production process and hindering the company from achieving its target, in addition to disrupting the efforts to maintain the conducive industrial relations that have been going on in the past few years.

Casman has reminded the factory management about the importance of building communication regarding the direction of production development to SBMB. This is also used as one of the indicators of management performance and is seen as one of the main keys to the company's success in increasing its competitiveness. Casman also realized that open communication with SBMB needs to be accompanied by the increasing capabilities of SBMB administrators and its members in understanding various aspects of the company, such as the understanding of industrial environment, the improvement in work quality, and the ability to communicate on more strategic matters.

Casman mulled over what he could do. As the HR Director of the parent company, Casman did not want to intervene by opening direct communication with SPMB. Casman believed that the factory manager and the factory HR manager need to play a more active role in increasing productivity that is sustainable. On the other hand, open communication with SBMB needs to be done immediately because the timeline for achieving the company's target is still running.

Closing

The involvement of the Labor union in the management agenda or objectives is important, especially for companies that have a relatively strong Labor Union. PT Madusari Nusaperdana has an active Labor union with a membership of 40% of all their full-time workers. This company also faces fierce business competition, so the parent company establishes a production target that continues to increase significantly every year.

Casman has ordered the management of the PT Madusari Nusaperdana factory to start building communication with SBMB regarding increasing productivity so that the increase occurs because of the understanding and commitment of the workers. Thus, each worker will feel responsible for maintaining the quality of production in addition to increasing the quantity of production. Casman does not want the company to lose business partners because of sub-standard products.

However, as it turned out SBMB claimed that they had never been invited to

discuss increasing factory productivity, either by how much or how to achieve it. SBMB was using rough data from raw material purchases and production volumes recorded manually by its administrators or its members and Casman was very concerned about the accuracy of this data. This could lead to a conflict in negotiations and harm the psychological contract that had been built so far. Casman realized that he had to do something immediately.

Discussion Questions

- a. What strategy should Casman implement to deal with this situation? Explain it in the form of a detailed activity plan and timeline.
- b. Explain why psychological contracts play an important role in increasing productivity in this case. Why is Casman very concerned about the potential for a bad psychological contract if communication with SBMB is not carried out immediately?
- c. There are several forms of bond between workers and the management/company. Which form is most appropriate to be applied at PT Madusari Nusaperdana so that increased productivity can be achieved? Provide supporting arguments.
- d. To what extent can the Labor union and workers play a role in maintaining the quality of products produced by the company? What can the management and SBMB do in the initiative to maintain/improve quality?
- e. Management has goals that affect the workers and the company's industrial relations. What are the management goals that can be found in this case and what is their impact on industrial relations?

Table 1. History of Targets, Achievements and Sales Growth of PT Madusari Nusaperdana 2019-2023 (in Tons)

Year	Target	Actual Achievements	Growth
2019	4,750,000	5,999,077	26.3%
2020	7,498,846.25	6,425,690	7.1%
2021	8,032,112.5	7,796,163	21.3%
2022	9,745,203.75	9,129,305	17.1%
2023	11,411,631.25	5,092,748	YTD July 2023

Source: Proprietary internal data of PT Madusari Nusaperdana

Table 2. Recommendations for the Best Sausage Brand Products*

No.	Product	Picture	Points of Excellence
1	Madusari Foods Vigo Grilled Beef Sausage		Sausage products that are suitable for selling hot dogs, more profit!
2	Bernard Horeca Pack Beef Breakfast Sausages		Cellulose made casing made, no need to peel it first
3	CP Food Champ Chicken Sausage		Inexpensive sausages that are suitable for cooking anything
4	Hot Singles Sausages Chancellor		Ready-to-eat sausage with premium quality meat and spicy flavor
5	Pureeland Petite Sausage MPASI		Free of preservatives and MSG, sausages that are safe for infants and pregnant women
6	Kimbo Mini Cheese Bratwurst	3	Kimbo's cheese-flavored bratwurst sausage, with a very special taste
7	Kemfood Beef Wiener Sausage	9	It is longer, and delicious as a grilled sausage
8	Hanzel Cocktail		Breakfast and snacks are more practical with mini-sized sausages
9	CP Food Fiesta Frankfurter Sausage		Frankfurter sausage with extra meat and extra savory
10	Japfa So Nice Ready to Eat Chicken Flavored Sausage		Good sausage brands to accompany soupy dishes

Source: Mulyani (2023) 10 Best Sausage Brand (Latest Year 2023) accessed from page https://id.my-best.com/51920

^{*} Review results of the best sausage products that are carefully selected by considering product quality, buyer reviews, and level of trust in the seller. Products are sorted by their popularity in the Shopee marketplace.

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Graphic 1. Growth Trend of Food and Beverage Industry 2011-2023

Source: https://www.dataindustri.com/produk/data-pertumbuhan-industri-makanan-dan-minuman/



Graphic 2. Quarterly Growth Trend of Food and Beverage Industry 2011-2023

Source: https://www.dataindustri.com/produk/data-pertumbuhan-industri-makanan-dan-minuman/