

## COVER LETTER

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9 April 2025

Dear,

We wish to submit an original research article entitled “**Sustainable Competitiveness through Community Empowerment and Success Factors of SMEs?**” for consideration by SINERGI.

We confirm that this work is original and has not been published elsewhere, nor is it currently under consideration for publication elsewhere. We promise not to withdraw this article after it has been processed by the Editorial Team. If there is a withdrawal, we are willing to pay a penalty of USD 150 (IDR 2000K) to the SINERGI Editorial Team.

In this paper, I/we report on / show that:

Field	:	industrial Engineering
Topic	:	Sustainable Competitiveness SMEs
Brief Background	:	<p>This article is a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) study that discusses the relationship between sustainable competitiveness and community empowerment in the context of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). The main objective of this study is to explore how community empowerment can serve as a supporting factor in enhancing the sustainable competitiveness of SMEs.</p> <p>The research uses data from the Scopus database (covering the period from 2021 to 2025) and the VOSviewer bibliometric tool for visual analysis. The study identifies that although both topics are important, they are still rarely discussed in an integrated manner.</p>
Research Problem	:	<p>The lack of integration between the concepts of sustainable competitiveness and community empowerment in studies related to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs).</p> <p>Although both are recognized as important topics, previous research has tended to address them separately. As a result, there is still a limited</p>

	<p>comprehensive understanding of how community empowerment can effectively support the achievement of sustainable competitiveness in SMEs.</p>
<p>Overview of Method :</p>	<p>This study adopts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to examine how community empowerment influences sustainable competitiveness in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The method was executed in several key stages as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Planning Phase <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The review was planned to cover literature published within the last 5 years (2021–2025).</li> <li>• The research questions were formulated to guide the review: RQ1: What is the current research development on sustainable competitiveness through community empowerment in SMEs? RQ2: What are the key success factors for SMEs to achieve sustainable competitiveness?</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Database Selection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Scopus database was selected for its comprehensive and peer-reviewed content.</li> <li>• Searches were conducted in March 2025 using combinations of the following keywords: "Sustainable Competitiveness SMEs" "Community Empowerment in SMEs"</li> <li>• Search fields were limited to Title, Abstract, and Keywords (TITLE-ABS-KEY) only.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Search and Filtering Process (PRISMA Framework) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial Search Result: 286 articles were retrieved.</li> <li>• Screening Steps: Language filter: English only. Type filter: Research articles only.</li> <li>• Relevance filter: Articles focused specifically on SMEs, sustainable competitiveness, and community empowerment.</li> <li>• Final Selection: After applying inclusion and exclusion criteria, 45 articles were retained for review</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Data Mapping and Visualization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VOSviewer was used as a bibliometric tool to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Map and visualize keyword co-occurrence and research trends.</li> <li>* Identify clusters of related concepts</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ol>

	<p>5. Synthesis of Results</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A detailed analysis was carried out on the selected articles to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Extract the Key Success Factors (KSFs) of sustainable competitiveness.</li> <li>* Group Dimensions the KSFs</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Significant finding</p>	<p>:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Limited Integration Between Sustainable Competitiveness and Community Empowerment Studies.</b> Although both are important topics in SME development, studies that directly integrate these two concepts remain scarce in the academic literature. This reveals a research gap that needs further exploration.</li> <li><b>Community Empowerment Plays a Crucial Role in the Social Dimension.</b> Findings indicate that community empowerment significantly contributes to SME sustainability, particularly by enhancing collaborative networks, social loyalty, and the well-being of local communities.</li> <li><b>Increasing Research Trend.</b> From 2021 to 2024, research on sustainable competitiveness and community empowerment in SMEs has shown a clear upward trend, reflecting growing academic interest in these issues.</li> <li><b>Identification of 6 Key Dimensions for Sustainable Competitiveness.</b> The study synthesizes Key Success Factors (KSFs) into the following six dimension</li> <li><b>"Community Empowerment" and "Sustainable Competitiveness" Keywords Are Not Yet Strongly Linked</b> Bibliometric analysis shows that these keywords have not formed a strong cluster in previous studies — indicating high potential for integrative research in the future.</li> </ol>

We have no conflicts of interest to disclose.

Thank you for your consideration of this manuscript.

Sincerely,  
Hayu Kartika



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## AUTHORSHIP STATEMENT

We wish to submit an original research article entitled “***Sustainable Competitiveness through Community Empowerment and Success Factors of SMEs?***” for consideration by SINERGI.

All persons who meet authorship criteria are listed as authors, and all authors certify that they have participated sufficiently in work to take public responsibility for the content, including participation in the concept, design, analysis, writing, or revision of the manuscript.

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## POTENTIAL REVIEWERS

Please send 3 (three) prospective reviewers (who are not yet registered in SINERGI) to speed up the review process who are competent for the topic and have a good reputation in the field. Please ensure that **they are willing to review** this paper.

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