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The Role of Budget Management in Maintaining Neighborhood Grocery Store Stability Amid Staple Price Fluctuations

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Abstract

Purpose: This study examines how budget management contributes to maintaining the operational stability of a neighborhood grocery store amid the fluctuating prices of staple goods in Makassar City.

Methodology: A descriptive qualitative approach was employed using in-depth interviews, observation, and documentation. Data were analyzed through the Miles, Huberman, and Saldana model, including data condensation, display, and conclusion drawing.

Results: Changes in staple goods prices affect procurement costs, working capital, and business profits. The owner responds by managing finances carefully, maintaining simple financial records, and allocating reserve funds to sustain cash flow and business continuity.

Conclusions: Budget management applied consistently, even in a simple form, plays an important role in supporting the stability of a neighborhood grocery store, helping the owner control spending, manage working capital, and adapt to staple price changes in the market.

Limitations: This study is limited to one informant and focuses only on budget management, so findings cannot represent all neighborhood grocery stores in Makassar City.

Contributions: This research offers an empirical picture of budget management practice among micro-enterprises and underscores the importance of financial management in sustaining business resilience amid economic uncertainty.

Keywords: *Budget Management, Business Stability, Micro-Enterprise, Neighborhood Grocery Store, Staple Price Fluctuation*

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1. Introduction

Micro-enterprise stands as one of the sectors contributing substantially to the community economy because of its capacity to create jobs and raise household income. Beyond that, micro-enterprise also drives regional economic growth and strengthens national economic resilience. One common form of micro-enterprise found throughout Indonesian neighborhoods is the neighborhood grocery store, known locally as warung kelontong, which functions as a supplier of staple goods and household necessities that support the daily economic activity of the community (Farisi et al., 2022; Quingco & Leonoras, 2020).

The continuity of a neighborhood grocery store is strongly shaped by the owner's capacity to manage finances, particularly through budget management. Budget management refers to the process of planning, organizing, implementing, and controlling the use of funds in order to achieve business objectives effectively and efficiently (Mang'ana et al., 2023). In practice, budget management covers the arrangement of working capital, the purchase of merchandise stock, the management of operating costs, and the control of profit earned. Sound financial management capability has been shown to improve the continuity and performance of micro-enterprises (Otoo, 2024).

Fluctuation in staple goods prices is one of the challenges frequently faced by micro-enterprise owners in Indonesia. Changes in the prices of commodities such as rice, cooking oil, sugar, and eggs are shaped by a range of factors, including inflation, distribution conditions, weather patterns, and government trade and food policy (Runtunuwu, 2021). This condition directly affects the cost of procuring goods and the setting of selling prices at neighborhood grocery stores. A rise in staple goods prices that is not matched by an appropriate budget management strategy can erode a business's profit margin (Rahman & Sari, 2022).

This phenomenon is also evident in Makassar City, one of the leading centers of trade in eastern Indonesia. Data from the Makassar City Statistics Agency show that the food, beverage, and tobacco group was one of the main contributors to regional inflation in 2025 (Rahman & Sari, 2022). This condition indicates that neighborhood grocery store owners in Makassar City face considerable challenges in maintaining business stability due to the periodic changes in staple goods prices. When an owner is unable to manage the budget effectively, price changes can trigger a decline in profit, disruption to cash flow, and a weakened capacity to sustain business operations. Conversely, sound budget management can help owners control cost, plan stock requirements, and maintain financial stability amid economic uncertainty (Anthanasius Fomum & Opperman, 2023).

A considerable body of research on Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) financial management already exists. Most of it, however, remains concentrated on general financial management, financial literacy, or the effect of inflation on MSMEs. Research specifically addressing the role of budget management in maintaining the stability of neighborhood grocery stores amid staple price fluctuation, particularly within Makassar City, remains relatively limited. Building on this research gap, this study seeks to examine in greater detail the urgency of budget management as a key factor in sustaining the continuity of neighborhood grocery store operations.

The remainder of this article is organized as follows. Section two reviews the relevant literature on budget management practice among micro-enterprises, the effect of staple price fluctuation on Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), and business stability, and develops the research propositions guiding this case study. Section three explains the research design, informant selection, data collection technique, and data analysis procedure. Section four presents the empirical findings together with a discussion of their theoretical and practical implications. Section five closes the article with concluding remarks, research limitations, and directions for future study.

2. Literature Review

Because this study applies a descriptive qualitative case study design rather than a variable-based quantitative model, the propositions developed below serve as analytical hypotheses that orient the fieldwork and subsequent interpretation, rather than statistical hypotheses subjected to significance testing. Each proposition is grounded in the theoretical and empirical literature reviewed and is examined against the evidence gathered from the case in Makassar City.

2.1 The Concept of Budget Management in Micro-Enterprise

Budget management is a process encompassing planning, organizing, implementing, and monitoring the use of funds to ensure business objectives are achieved effectively and efficiently. For MSMEs, budget management serves as an important instrument in regulating the use of financial resources, controlling operating cost, and supporting decisions related to business continuity. Mang'ana et al. (2023) found that preparing an operational budget among MSMEs helps owners plan business activities and control the use of cost, so that operations run in a more directed manner. Even so, many MSMEs have yet to apply a budgeting system optimally, so financial management is not carried out systematically.

In addition, Srbinoska et al. (2023) found that a budget managed effectively can improve the quality of financial planning and support the accuracy of an owner's decision-making. By contrast, a lack of budget management can lead to inaccuracy in calculating profit and weak control over spending. Budget management, therefore, functions not merely as a tool for recording and arranging finances but also as a strategic instrument that supports the growth and continuity of MSMEs in facing various business challenges. This aligns with broader evidence from Eton (2022), who found that small-scale business profitability in an emerging-market setting is closely tied to the consistency with which owners apply basic financial management practice, even where that practice remains informal.

Budget management in micro-enterprise essentially functions as a control mechanism linking planning to the realization of day-to-day business activity. Without adequate budget management, owners tend to make financial decisions reactively, acting only after a financial problem has already occurred rather than anticipating it beforehand. By contrast, budget management applied consistently, even in a simple form, allows an owner to maintain a clear picture of the business's financial condition, so that important decisions, such as when to add stock or when to hold back spending, can be made in a more measured way. Budget management, in this sense, functions not only as an administrative record but also as a basis for consideration in maintaining the balance between business income and expenditure. This is consistent with evidence that disciplined financial management practice supports the growth and profitability of micro and small enterprises more broadly (Matare & Sreedhara, 2020), and that entrepreneurial competencies interact with such practice to shape overall business performance (Kisubi et al., 2022). Access to adequate financing, in turn, is itself partly conditioned by the financial literacy an owner brings to the management of the business (Hj Talip & Wasiuzzaman, 2024).

2.2 Staple Price Fluctuation and Its Impact on MSMEs

Fluctuation in staple goods prices is one of the problems frequently faced by MSME in running their business activities. Continuous price changes are shaped by various factors, such as changing weather conditions, distribution disruption, rising production cost, inflation, and imbalance between the level of demand and supply in the market. Such conditions can raise operating cost, requiring MSMEs to adjust their business strategy in order to keep earning a profit. Research by Runtunuwu (2021) shows that several food commodities, such as rice, shallot, garlic, cooking oil, and chili, belong to the group of staple goods that frequently experience price changes and contribute to the inflation rate.

For MSMEs, staple price fluctuation carries a direct impact on production cost, the setting of selling price, and the level of profit obtained. When the price of raw materials rises, business owners face a difficult choice, namely raising the price of their product or maintaining the selling price so that consumers do not switch to other products. If the selling price is not adjusted, the profit margin shrinks. Conversely, if the selling price is raised, consumer purchasing power may decline. Findings from Rahman and Sari (2022) reveal that inflation and rising input prices negatively affect MSME profit because they raise business cost while simultaneously suppressing public purchasing power. Beyond affecting financial condition, staple price fluctuation also affects the decision-making process within a business. Price uncertainty often pushes MSME owners to be more cautious in managing stock, determining production volume, and purchasing raw materials. When prices continue to rise, owners may reduce production volume or delay stock purchases to avoid a greater risk of loss.

The impact of staple price fluctuation on MSMEs can also be seen from the uncertainty it creates for short-term business planning. When commodity prices move unpredictably, owners find it difficult to project cost and profit accurately, because the purchase price in one period is not necessarily the same as the purchase price in the following period. This condition requires MSME owners to be more flexible in adjusting purchasing strategy, for instance by buying stock gradually in smaller quantities more frequently rather than purchasing in a single large quantity that carries higher risk should prices subsequently fall. This kind of flexibility is a common form of adaptation applied by micro-enterprises in facing staple price instability, a pattern also documented among micro-traders elsewhere in Southeast Asia, where Ramli and Yekini (2022) found that active cash flow monitoring, rather than capital size alone, distinguished micro-traders able to withstand a sudden income shock from those unable to do so.

2.3 Stability of Neighborhood Grocery Store Businesses

Business stability is a condition reflecting a business's capacity to sustain operational continuity, maintain financial performance, and earn relatively consistent revenue despite facing various business challenges. In a neighborhood grocery store, business stability can be seen in the capacity to maintain merchandise stock availability, sustain healthy cash flow, meet financial obligations on time, and provide continuous service to customers. Business stability is an important aspect because a neighborhood grocery store operates within an environment vulnerable to price change, business competition, and shifting consumer behavior.

Findings from Lone and Bhat (2022) show that the level of financial literacy held by neighborhood grocery store owners affects their capacity to manage business finances. Owners with a good understanding of financial management tend to be better able to arrange spending, manage working capital, and maintain cash flow balance. This capacity helps a business keep running stably despite facing various forms of economic uncertainty. In other words, an owner's financial understanding plays an important role in sustaining operational continuity and maintaining the stability of a neighborhood grocery store. This finding aligns with Soetjipto, Utaberta, Wardoyo, and Hermawan (2023), who show that financial literacy improves MSME performance through sound financial behavior. Owners with adequate financial understanding tend to be better able to manage income, control spending, and make sound financial decisions, thereby supporting business continuity over the long term. A related strand of evidence shows that both conventional and digital dimensions of financial literacy jointly shape MSME performance (Diptyana, Rokhmania, & Herlina, 2022). This relationship is often mediated or moderated by broader financial inclusion, and that financial literacy remains a significant predictor of SME performance even across differing emerging-market contexts (Warokka, 2023; Lola, & Putu, 2023; Alonso-Galicia, Luna, & Sánchez-Torres, 2021.

Anthanasius and Opperman (2023) explain that business stability in a neighborhood grocery store can also be understood as the outcome of an interaction between internal financial management capacity and an owner's capacity to respond to external dynamics, such as market price changes or shifting customer habits. A business relying solely on financial capacity without a consistent operational policy, for instance regarding the extension of informal credit to customers, risks experiencing cash flow disruption even when its initial capital is fairly sufficient. Conversely, a business applying a clear and consistent operational policy, even with limited capital, tends to be better able to sustain its continuity over the long term. This underscores that the stability of a neighborhood grocery store cannot be seen solely from the size of its capital, but also from the consistency of the financial management policy applied in its daily operations.

2.4 Conceptual Framework

This study is grounded in the presence of staple price fluctuation that can affect the continuity of a neighborhood grocery store's operations. Periodic price changes have the potential to raise the cost of procuring goods, the working capital requirement, and the level of profit an owner obtains. Sound budget management is therefore required so that a business remains able to operate stably amid changing market conditions. In this study, budget management is understood as the range of efforts an owner undertakes to arrange finances, such as separating personal and business finances, keeping financial records, managing profit, controlling cash flow, and arranging merchandise stock. These steps form the strategy used to face the impact of staple price fluctuation on business activity. Building on the theoretical review presented above, this study's conceptual framework is used to explain the linkage among staple price fluctuation, budget management, and the stability of a neighborhood grocery store. Business stability in this study is reflected in an owner's capacity to maintain operational smoothness, sustain merchandise stock availability, manage cash flow, and preserve business continuity despite facing staple price change (Athia, Sudarmiatin, & Hermawan, 2023).

The conceptual framework in this study depicts the linkage among three principal concepts observed qualitatively. The first is staple price fluctuation as the context or condition faced by the neighborhood grocery store owner. The second is budget management as the primary focus of the study, covering the practice of separating finances, keeping records, managing profit, and controlling cash flow. The third is the stability of the neighborhood grocery store as the condition observed, reflected in operational smoothness, merchandise stock availability, and business continuity. These three concepts are not tested statistically but are instead understood in depth through the real experience and strategy applied by the owner in the field. Guided by this framework, the study develops three research propositions. Proposition one holds that budget management practice among neighborhood grocery store owners remains simple and experience-based rather than formally systematized. Proposition two holds that a set of interrelated budget management practices, namely separation of finances, simple recording, profit allocation, reserve funds, and credit limitation, together support cash flow control under price fluctuation. Proposition three holds that consistency in applying these practices, rather than the scale of capital alone, is what ultimately sustains business stability (Zimon, Nakonieczny, Chudy, Wójcik, & Kochanski, 2022).

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design and Approach

This study employs a descriptive qualitative research method to gain an in-depth understanding of how a neighborhood grocery store owner manages business finances amid staple goods price fluctuations. This approach enables the researcher to explore the participant's experiences, perceptions, and budgeting strategies within the context of daily business operations. According to Fadli (2021), qualitative research emphasizes a comprehensive understanding of social phenomena by examining participants' perspectives and the contextual factors influencing their experiences.

3.2 Research Subject and Location

The research subject consisted of one neighborhood grocery store owner in Makassar City selected through a purposive sampling technique based on specific research considerations. This approach was chosen to ensure that the selected informant possessed relevant knowledge and practical experience regarding financial management in the context of staple goods retailing. The inclusion criteria required the business to have operated continuously for at least two years, be located within Makassar City, and primarily sell staple goods that are directly affected by price fluctuations. In addition, the selected participant was required to be willing to take part in the study and provide detailed information regarding budgeting practices, financial decision-making, and business strategies implemented to maintain operational stability.

3.3 Data Collection Technique

Primary data were collected through three complementary methods to ensure comprehensive and credible findings. First, semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with the store owner using a standardized interview guide to explore budgeting practices, financial decision-making, and strategies for maintaining business stability. Second, direct observation was carried out to examine daily business operations and verify the information obtained during the interviews. Third, documentation of relevant financial and business records was collected to support the interview and observation results, thereby enhancing the validity and credibility of the research findings.

3.4 Data Analysis Technique

Data analysis in this study followed the model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which consists of four interconnected stages. The process began with data collection through interviews, observations, and documentation. The collected data were then condensed by selecting, simplifying, and organizing information relevant to the research objectives. Next, the data were presented in a narrative format to facilitate interpretation and identify emerging patterns. Finally, conclusions were drawn and verified based on the analyzed data to ensure that the findings accurately reflected the participant's experiences and the research objectives.

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Profile of the Neighborhood Grocery Store in Makassar City

The neighborhood grocery store studied, Toko Maju Jaya, is located on Jalan Muh Yamin Baru, Makassar City. The business has been operating for ten years with an initial capital of approximately IDR17,000,000, and its average daily sales revenue ranges between IDR1,000,000 and IDR2,500,000. All business activity is managed directly by the owner, although in certain conditions family members assist with store operations.

The merchandise available consists of staple goods, such as rice, sugar, cooking oil, flour, and eggs, along with various household necessities, such as soap, detergent, and toothpaste. The store also provides an assortment of packaged food and beverages needed by consumers. Stock is dominated by staple goods products that carry the largest inventory value, making changes in staple goods prices the primary challenge that can affect the financial management and stability of the store.

Figure 1. Interview session between the researcher and the neighborhood grocery store owner in Makassar City

Figure 1 illustrates the in-depth interview session conducted between the researcher and the owner of the neighborhood grocery store as part of the primary data collection process. The interview was carried out using a semi-structured interview guide to explore the store owner's experiences and budget management strategies in maintaining business stability amid fluctuations in staple goods prices. The interview findings served as the primary source of qualitative data for this study.

4.2 Budget Management Practice at the Neighborhood Grocery Store

Based on the interview and observation results, the neighborhood grocery store owner has applied a simple form of budget management in running the business. One step taken is separating business finances from personal finances so that the use of capital and business profit can be more easily monitored. In addition, the owner performs manual financial recording using a simple notebook containing information on daily revenue and spending on merchandise purchases. Although not carried out in detail for every transaction, this recording helps the owner understand the business's financial condition and monitor its development over time.

"I separate business money from personal money, and I record my revenue and merchandise spending every day." (Store Owner, 2025)

Based on further interview results, this financial recording is not carried out throughout the day for every transaction but rather in the evening as the store is about to close. The owner records only the total daily sales revenue without detailing the record by product type or by transaction. This practice shows that the financial recording applied remains very simple and oriented toward an end-of-day recapitulation rather than a detailed record that could be used for per-product cost analysis. Even so, this method is considered sufficient by the owner for monitoring the development of revenue from day to day.

Regarding the effect of price fluctuation on profit, the owner explains that the condition of profit or loss depends heavily on the difference between the purchase price of the prior stock and the market price prevailing when that stock is sold. If stock remains on hand while the market price has fallen, the store incurs a loss because the goods were purchased at a higher price than the selling price then prevailing. Conversely, if the market price rises while the stock on hand still originates from an earlier, lower purchase price, the owner obtains a larger profit.

The financial recording practice carried out shows the owner's effort to control the business's cash flow. Information on income and spending is used as a basis for knowing the amount of available funds and the requirements for the next stock purchase. This finding aligns with Nurhasan (2023), who state that simple cash flow recording can help business owners monitor the flow of funds in and out and support more planned inventory management. Thus, although still simple, financial recording continues to play an important role in supporting day-to-day business management, a pattern consistent with broader evidence that bookkeeping practice, even at a rudimentary level, measurably improves an owner's grip on business performance (Adela, Agyei, Frimpong, Awisome, Bossman, Abosompim, Benchie, & Ahmed, 2023). Comparable evidence from cash management research further indicates that structured recording of cash inflows and outflows helps MSME owners preserve liquidity and sustain daily operations (Amaliyah, Yasmin, & Hetika, 2024).

In managing profit, the owner prioritizes using profit to add merchandise stock so that customer needs continue to be met. In addition, a portion of profit is set aside as savings and business development funds, such as adding product variety or improving store facilities. The proportion of profit saved versus reused to purchase stock is flexible and adjusted to the amount of revenue obtained on a given day, meaning a larger daily revenue allows a larger portion of profit to be allocated both to savings and to additional stock. This shows that profit management at this store is adaptive on a daily basis rather than based on a fixed percentage or predetermined target. This strategy shows that the owner seeks to sustain business continuity through profit management focused not only on current needs but also on supporting future business development.

The owner also limits the extension of informal credit, or kasbon, to customers as a step to maintain the smooth turnover of business capital. According to the owner's explanation, the main purpose of this limitation is to ensure business capital keeps circulating and generates a more stable profit rather than being held up in the form of customer receivables. Notably, based on the owner's experience, this policy has not generated rejection from customers, who reportedly accept the credit limitation rule without objection. This condition differs somewhat from the common assumption that a credit limitation policy risks generating customer dissatisfaction, indicating that such a policy can be well received in the field when communicated consistently to customers. This result aligns with the findings of Nurwahid (2022), who explains that the application of financial management and simple recording can help MSME owners control cash flow and maintain business financial stability. Therefore, the budget management practice applied at this neighborhood grocery store shows that simple financial management continues to play an important role in supporting business continuity.

"I usually use profit again to add merchandise stock, save part of it, and limit informal credit so that capital stays available." (Store Owner, 2025)

4.3 Impact of Price Fluctuation on Store Operations

Unpredictable changes in staple goods prices affect the operational activity of the neighborhood grocery store studied. Goods such as cooking oil and eggs are among the commodities that frequently experience price change, whether rising or falling. This condition makes stock purchasing cost unstable, requiring the owner to adjust stock purchasing management according to prevailing market conditions. This situation also makes financial planning more difficult because capital requirements can change at any time.

Such price fluctuation also affects the level of profit the store obtains. When staple goods prices rise, purchasing cost rises as well, making the profit margin smaller if the selling price is not immediately adjusted. Even so, the owner cannot always raise the price directly because of the need to consider customer purchasing capacity. Conversely, when prices fall, profit can also decline because stock purchased at a higher price earlier is still on hand. This is consistent with Rahman and Sari (2022), who explain that price change and inflation can affect the decline in micro-enterprise profit due to the imbalance between purchasing cost and selling price.

This condition aligns with the owner's explanation that profit or loss experienced is strongly determined by the time gap between the purchase price of prior stock and the market price prevailing when the goods are sold. If remaining stock was purchased at a higher price while the market price is falling, the store incurs a loss because the selling price must adjust to the lower prevailing market condition. Conversely, if old stock was purchased at a lower price while the market price is rising, the owner obtains additional profit. This pattern shows that the timing of stock purchase becomes an important factor determining the extent of price fluctuation's impact on the store's profit.

In addition, price change also affects the business's working capital requirement. A rise in the price of cooking oil and eggs requires the owner to set aside a larger amount of funds to purchase the same quantity of stock as before. As a result, business capital requirements increase, and the owner often needs additional capital to keep goods availability intact. When capital is limited, stock purchasing is typically reduced, which can affect the availability of goods at the store. This is consistent with Zimon et al. (2022), who state that price fluctuation in micro-enterprise directly affects working capital requirements and business cash flow management.

Based on the interview results, the owner states that changes in the price of cooking oil and eggs greatly affect the condition of the business. When prices rise, the owner must add capital to purchase stock, while profit does not always increase because the selling price cannot be adjusted immediately. When prices fall, profit also remains reduced because stock purchased at a higher price is still on hand. This condition shows a challenge in maintaining balance among capital, merchandise stock, and business profit. An adjustment strategy is therefore required, such as regulating stock purchase, managing cash flow, and setting a more flexible price.

4.4 Budget Management Strategy in Maintaining Business Stability

The findings in the previous section show that staple goods price fluctuation, particularly for cooking oil and eggs, creates pressure on the working capital and profit margin of the neighborhood grocery store. In response to this pressure, the owner does not remain passive but applies a series of budget management steps that, although simple, prove reasonably effective in sustaining operational continuity. This study identifies five budget management strategies applied by the owner to maintain business stability amid staple goods price fluctuation.

The first strategy is separating business finances from personal finances. The owner's practice of separating business money from personal money is supported by Babajide et al. (2023), who found that separating personal and business cash flow has a positive and significant effect on MSME business continuity. Financial separation helps an owner control capital, monitor financial condition, and sustain business continuity.

The second strategy is applying simple financial recording. The finding regarding simple recording of daily revenue and spending is also supported by research on bookkeeping among Indonesian MSMEs, which shows that simple financial recording helps improve the effectiveness of MSME financial management and makes it easier for owners to make financial decisions, a pattern also observed among MSMEs still transitioning away from informal record-keeping toward more standardized reporting (Amanda & Rialdy, 2024). Even where recording remains manual rather than software-based, evidence from Indonesian MSMEs shows that a functioning accounting information system, however simple, is positively associated with financial performance (Lopung & Rulindo, 2023), and that consistent recording habits support MSME performance broadly during periods of external disruption (Apriyanti & Yuvitasari, 2021).

The third strategy is allocating profit to add business capital. The finding that profit is reinvested to purchase merchandise stock and maintain working capital is supported by research on MSME cash flow management. Sound cash flow management can strengthen financial stability and support business continuity. This is supported by Hasan et al. (2022), who state that sound financial technology adoption and cash flow management can strengthen a business's financial stability and accountability.

The fourth strategy is providing savings funds and business development funds. The finding regarding setting aside profit for savings and business development aligns with Lontchi et al. (2022), who show that sound financial behavior, including the habit of setting aside reserve funds, contributes to improved MSME performance. A reserve fund functions as a buffer when a business faces an unexpected condition, such as a sudden rise in staple goods prices or a decline in daily revenue, so that store operations are not immediately disrupted even when market conditions are unstable.

The fifth strategy is limiting informal credit and preserving capital. The strategy of limiting kasbon can be linked to cash flow and working capital management as explained by Yoon and Lee (2021), who found that controlling business receivables plays an important role in maintaining MSME liquidity. Limiting receivables helps ensure capital remains available for daily operational needs, although in practice this policy also carries a social consequence, namely the potential to generate dissatisfaction among customers accustomed to buying on credit. The owner therefore needs to balance maintaining business liquidity with preserving a good relationship with regular customers.

These five strategies are essentially interrelated rather than standing alone. Separating personal and business finances becomes the foundation that allows daily revenue recording to proceed more accurately, since the owner no longer needs to sort personal funds from business funds each time a record is made. The result of that daily revenue recording then becomes the reference the owner uses to determine the portion of profit allocated to savings versus additional stock, as found in section 4.2, where that allocation is adaptive to the size of daily revenue. In other words, these five strategies form a mutually reinforcing budget management cycle, in which financial separation eases recording, recording underlies profit allocation decisions, and appropriate profit allocation in turn maintains capital availability, which is further supported by the credit limitation policy.

This pattern of interconnection shows that the success of the neighborhood grocery store in maintaining business stability arises not merely from applying a single strategy but from the combination of practices consistently carried out together. This finding reinforces the view that budget management in micro-enterprise should be understood as an integrated system rather than a set of separate steps. Although the owner does not explicitly use the term budget management system in practice, the working pattern formed from ten years of experience essentially already reflects the basic principle of small-business financial management, namely the linkage among recording, cash flow control, and fund allocation decision-making.

4.5 The Relationship Between Budget Management and Business Stability

Based on the findings, budget management plays an important role in maintaining the stability of the neighborhood grocery store amid staple goods price fluctuation. The management practice carried out by the owner, such as separating personal and business finances, helps make capital management more directed. Through this separation, the owner can understand the business's financial condition more clearly, so that the use of funds for operational needs can be well controlled. This finding aligns with Otoo (2024), who states that sound financial management can support micro-enterprise continuity.

In addition, routine recording of income and spending provides benefit in monitoring the business's financial condition. Although still done simply, this recording helps the owner know the amount of funds available and the stock purchasing requirement for the following period. Information obtained from financial recording also becomes a basis for decision-making when staple goods prices change. This result aligns with Athia et al. (2023), who explain that simple cash flow recording can help business owners manage finances in a more planned way.

Profit management is also one factor supporting business stability. Based on the interview results, a portion of business profit is reused to add merchandise stock so that stock availability remains intact. This step allows the store to keep meeting customer needs despite a rise in staple goods prices. Beyond adding stock, a portion of profit is also set aside as business savings that can be used when additional capital is needed.

Another effort undertaken by the owner is limiting the extension of kasbon to customers. This policy aims to maintain the smooth flow of cash so that business capital is not held up too much in the form of receivables. With capital remaining available, the owner can purchase merchandise on time and sustain business operational continuity. This condition is consistent with Anthanasius Fomum and Opperman (2023), who state that disciplined financial management plays an important role in maintaining business stability and reducing the risk of financial disruption.

Overall, the findings show that budget management carried out simply yet consistently is able to help the neighborhood grocery store withstand staple goods price change. This management supports smooth cash flow, maintains merchandise stock availability, and helps the owner control business cost. This finding is supported by Hasan et al. (2022), who explain that sound cash flow management can strengthen financial stability and support business continuity over the long term.

Viewed from the timeliness of recording, the practice of recording revenue in the evening as the store is about to close also provides a distinct benefit for business stability, even in its simple form. By knowing the total revenue at the end of each day, the owner can promptly assess whether that day produced a surplus or instead brought financial pressure, so that decisions on stock purchases for the following day can be made more responsively to prevailing market price conditions. This kind of daily recording pattern, although not yet covering detail per transaction, still provides sufficient financial signal for the owner to make short-term adjustments, particularly when facing commodities with fluctuating prices such as cooking oil and eggs.

In addition, customer acceptance of the credit limitation policy is a supporting factor for business stability that cannot be overlooked. Had this policy been rejected or generated conflict with customers, the owner would likely have faced social pressure that could weaken the overall consistency of budget management strategy implementation. The favorable reception of this policy by customers shows that success in budget management among micro-enterprises is determined not only by the accuracy of the financial strategy itself but also by the owner's capacity to maintain good relationships and communication with customers when applying a policy that carries the potential to be less well received, a dynamic that echoes broader findings on how micro-traders balance liquidity discipline against customer relationships in constrained cash environments (Ramli & Yekini, 2022).

It should be noted that the success of the neighborhood grocery store examined in this study is also shaped by ten years of business experience. That experience has allowed the owner to gradually develop business intuition and financial management habits, even without formal training. This finding indicates that budget management in micro-enterprise is often shaped through a process of experiential learning in the field rather than solely from formal financial literacy knowledge. The implication is that mentoring programs for micro-enterprise owners should not focus solely on theoretical education but should also strengthen practices already proven to work naturally in the field, a point reinforced by evidence that small-scale business profitability in resource-constrained settings depends heavily on the consistency of practical, everyday financial habits rather than on formal training alone (Eton, 2022).

5. Conclusions

5.1 Conclusion

This study concludes that budget management plays an important role in maintaining the stability of the neighborhood grocery store amid staple goods price fluctuation. Budget management carried out through financial planning, spending control, cash flow arrangement, and merchandise stock management is able to help the business owner adapt to price changes occurring in the market. Through sound management, the store owner can maintain operational smoothness and preserve a more stable financial condition.

The findings also show that simple financial management practices, such as separating personal and business finances, routinely recording daily revenue, managing profit wisely, and controlling the extension of informal credit to customers, contribute to sustaining business continuity. The capacity to manage a budget is therefore an important factor supporting the resilience of the neighborhood grocery store in facing economic uncertainty caused by staple goods price change.

In more detail, this study finds that the five budget management strategies identified do not stand alone but instead form a single, mutually reinforcing set of practices. Consistent daily revenue recording, even in the form of a simple total sales recapitulation, becomes the basis for the owner's decisions on profit allocation and stock purchase for the following day. Meanwhile, the credit limitation policy proves capable of operating effectively without generating friction with customers, so long as it is applied consistently and communicated well. This finding indicates that the stability of a neighborhood grocery store is determined not only by the availability of capital but also by the consistency of financial management practice applied over time, even when carried out simply and not yet fully systematic.

The practical implication of these findings is that a micro-enterprise such as a neighborhood grocery store does not require a complex accounting system to maintain business stability. Basic habits, such as separating business money from personal money, routinely recording daily revenue even in simple form, and setting a clear limit on informal credit, prove sufficient to help a business withstand the pressure of staple goods price fluctuation, particularly for a small-scale business with limited resources and financial literacy.

5.2 Research Limitations

This study still carries several limitations that need to be taken into account. First, the number of informants involved in the study is relatively small, so the research findings cannot yet represent the condition of all neighborhood grocery stores in Makassar City. Second, this study applies a descriptive qualitative approach focused on an in-depth understanding of the informant's experience, so the research results cannot be broadly generalized.

In addition, the research focuses solely on the aspect of budget management in facing staple goods price fluctuation and has not examined other factors that may also affect business stability, such as the level of competition, marketing strategy, or the use of technology in business management. Time constraints during the research also meant that observation of long-term business development could not be carried out optimally. The study also cannot rule out the broader risk of business discontinuation that micro-enterprises generally face, a risk that has been documented even among more formally organized small businesses operating in volatile economic conditions.

5.3 Suggestions and Directions for Future Study

Based on the findings obtained, several suggestions can be offered. For neighborhood grocery store owners, it is recommended that financial management be applied in a more orderly manner through transaction recording, separation of personal and business finances, and the preparation of a simple budget to ease financial control. More specifically, the recording currently limited to a total daily revenue recapitulation could be improved gradually by beginning to record spending by product category, such as staple goods, household necessities, and packaged food and beverages. This categorical separation would help the owner identify which commodities are most affected by price fluctuation, so that decisions on price adjustment or stock arrangement can be made in a more targeted way without drastically changing the recording habit already in place.

For government and related institutions, it is hoped that training and mentoring programs on micro-enterprise financial management can be expanded so that business owners possess greater capacity to face changing economic conditions. Such mentoring programs should not focus solely on theoretical financial literacy education but should also introduce simple recording tools, whether in the form of a structured cash ledger or an easy-to-use digital financial recording application suited to micro-enterprise owners with varied educational backgrounds, given that the budget management practice observed among the informant in this study was formed naturally through experience rather than through formal training, consistent with evidence that entrepreneurial motivation and competency built through lived business experience meaningfully support micro-enterprise sustainability performance.

For future researchers, it is recommended that a larger number of informants and a broader research area be involved so that the results can provide a more comprehensive picture of neighborhood grocery store budget management practice in Makassar City generally, rather than being confined to a single business. Future research could also add other variables related to business stability, such as financial literacy, the use of digital technology, marketing strategy, and business competitiveness, and could further explore how the social relationship between a business owner and customers, as reflected in the acceptance of the credit limitation policy in this study, also influences the effectiveness of budget management strategy implementation among similar micro-enterprises.

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Author Contributions
RCD contributed to conceptualization, data collection, fieldwork, formal analysis, and writing of the original draft. WOR contributed to methodology supervision, validation, review, and editing.

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