

THE ROLE OF MARKETING STRATEGIES IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CREATIVE ECONOMY IN THE CULINARY SUB-SECTOR: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW

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Abstract

This study aims to systematically map research on MSME-based culinary businesses with a focus on marketing and innovation through a Systematic Literature Review approach. The findings indicate that digital marketing and product innovation are dominant themes that significantly contribute to competitiveness, business performance, and sustainability in the culinary sector. This study produces an integrated conceptual map linking culinary business, marketing, innovation, and small enterprises. The results are expected to serve as both theoretical and practical references for the development of adaptive and sustainable culinary MSME strategies in response to market and technological dynamics..

Keywords: Culinary Business, Marketing, Innovation, Small Businesses, Food Industry

1. Introduction

The culinary business sector has shown significant growth as part of the creative industry and MSME-based economy, particularly in developing countries. Numerous studies confirm that culinary enterprises are among the main contributors to local economic growth, job creation, and community economic resilience in post-crisis periods, including recovery after the pandemic (Aulia et al., 2021; Masitha, 2025). Trends in marketing digitalization, changes in consumer behavior, and increasing competition among business actors have encouraged this sector to continuously adapt through marketing strategies and product innovation (Winarsih & Martono, 2023a; Yuliady & Madja, 2023). These conditions position the culinary business as a relevant and strategic empirical context for both academic research and business practice, particularly in understanding the relationship between marketing, innovation, and the sustainability of small enterprises in the food industry.

In the analyzed literature, culinary business is understood as entrepreneurial activities based on the processing and serving of food and beverages, managed by small and medium enterprises with orientations toward both local and digital markets (Aulia et al., 2021; Masitha, 2025). Marketing in this context refers to the application of the marketing mix, digital marketing, and brand communication strategies to enhance

competitiveness and sales performance (Yuliady & Madja, 2023). Innovation is positioned as the development of products, processes, and business models rooted in creativity and technological utilization (Winarsih & Martono, 2023). The scope of this study covers small-scale culinary enterprises within the food industry, focusing on marketing strategies, innovation, and the dynamics of creative economy development as reflected in the analyzed publications.

The literature in the culinary sector shows a dominance of conceptual frameworks focusing on MSME strategic marketing, creative economy, and value-added innovation. The marketing mix and digital marketing emerge as primary models explaining improvements in business performance through product, price, promotion, and distribution adjustments (Yuliady & Madja, 2023). In addition, the creative economy approach places innovation as a key driver of competitiveness for culinary enterprises based on local potential and entrepreneurial creativity (Aulia et al., 2021; Masitha, 2025). Other driving factors consistently highlighted in the literature include institutional support, business literacy, and collaboration between business actors and stakeholders in the food industry (Meliza, 2024; Winarsih & Martono, 2023a).

Although the literature emphasizes the importance of marketing and innovation for the success of culinary businesses, several studies also reveal paradoxes in their implementation. On the one hand, digital marketing and innovation are recognized as capable of improving MSME performance; on the other hand, many business actors still face limitations in understanding, technological access, and managerial capabilities (Aulia et al., 2021; Meliza, 2024). This contradiction is reflected in findings showing that the adoption of modern marketing strategies has not been fully followed by equitable improvements in competitiveness across the culinary sector (Yuliady & Madja, 2023). These conditions indicate a gap between concepts widely discussed in the literature and the realities of small business practices in the food industry.

Previous studies have largely focused on MSME marketing, creative economy development, the utilization of digital marketing, and product innovation based on local potential in the culinary sector (Masitha, 2025; Winarsih & Martono, 2023). Most research is contextual and case-based, concentrating on specific regions or communities (Aulia et al., 2021; Meliza, 2024). Existing literature tends to provide partial discussions—for example, emphasizing marketing or innovation separately—so comprehensive conceptual mapping of the interrelationships among culinary business, marketing, innovation, and small enterprises remains limited (Yuliady & Madja, 2023).

This study aims to systematically map research concepts and themes related to culinary business, marketing, innovation, small enterprises, and the food industry through a Systematic Literature Review approach. Specifically, this study seeks to identify research patterns, relationships among concepts, and research gaps emerging in the culinary sector literature. In addition, this research explores future research opportunities relevant to the development of MSME-based culinary businesses and the food industry.

This study is expected to contribute theoretically by developing an integrated conceptual map of marketing and innovation in culinary businesses based on literature synthesis. From a practical perspective, the findings can serve as a reference for business actors, MSME facilitators, and policymakers in understanding key focus areas and directions for developing sustainable culinary business strategies (Aulia et al., 2021; Winarsih & Martono, 2023). This contribution is relevant for strengthening the development of the creative economy and small enterprise-based food industries as reflected in the analyzed literature.

2. Method

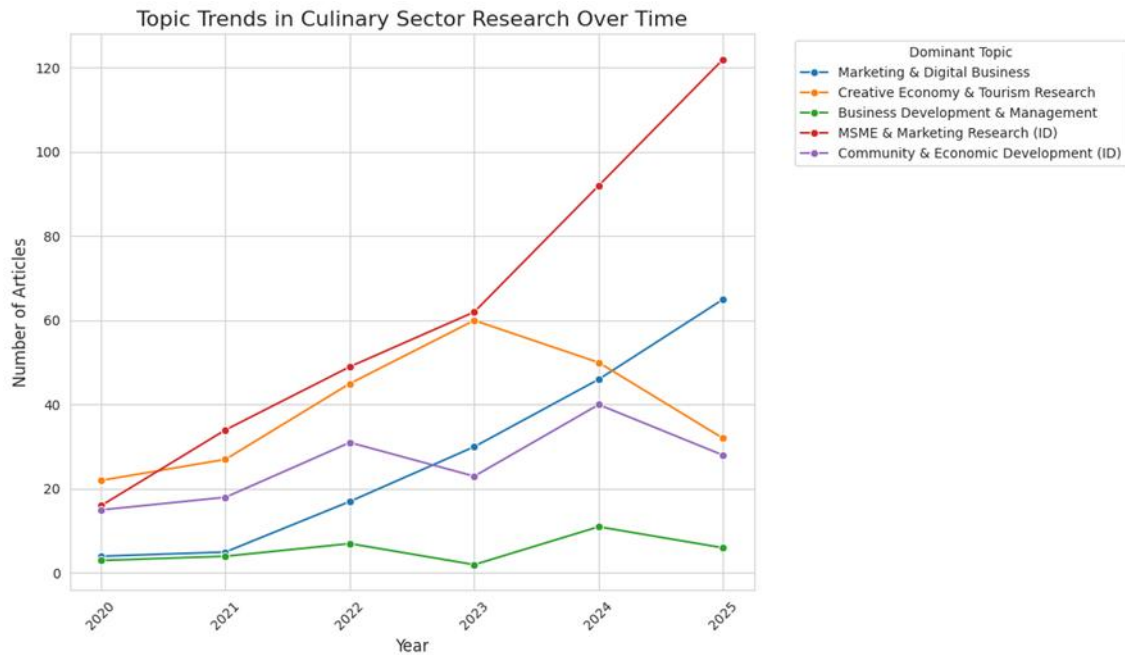
Based on the analyzed sources, research methodologies in the culinary and creative economy sectors generally follow a systematic flow beginning with the identification of contextual problems, such as low MSME understanding of banking systems or post-COVID-19 pandemic challenges (Winarsih & Martono, 2023).

The initial stage typically involves data collection through qualitative descriptive approaches, including in-depth interviews, participatory observation, and documentation studies to capture phenomena holistically (Abdi & Febriyanti, 2020; Ananta et al., 2024; Asrofi & Syaichoni, 2022; Kasypul & Irhamni, 2020). Several studies employ mixed methods to strengthen qualitative findings with quantitative questionnaires, enabling broader validation (Napitulu et al., 2022; Winarsih & Martono, 2023).

The next stage involves data analysis using established strategic management tools. SWOT analysis (IFE, EFE, and Grand Strategy Matrix) is the most dominant technique used to map internal strengths and external threats (Ananta et al., 2024; Mutmainnah & Zaki, 2024; Priyambodo & Samanhudi, 2021). In addition, the Marketing Mix (4P/7P) is widely applied to examine product, price, place, and promotion strategies (Dwitama & Siswahyudianto, 2022; Riptono & Jandra, 2025). In the context of regional economics, analytical tools such as Location Quotient (LQ) and Shift Share are used to identify leading sectors (Effendi et al., 2022; Jamaluddin & Anwar, 2024).

Methodological novelty emerges through the integration of new perspectives, such as the use of Maqashid Sharia as a welfare evaluation framework (Masruroh & Suprianik, 2023) or the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) method to transform community mindsets through local asset utilization (Putri & Atasa, 2023). This process concludes with the formulation of aggressive or progressive strategies aimed at enhancing competitiveness, sales volume, and business sustainability in the digital economy era (Sekarningrum et al., 2025).

3. Results and Discussion

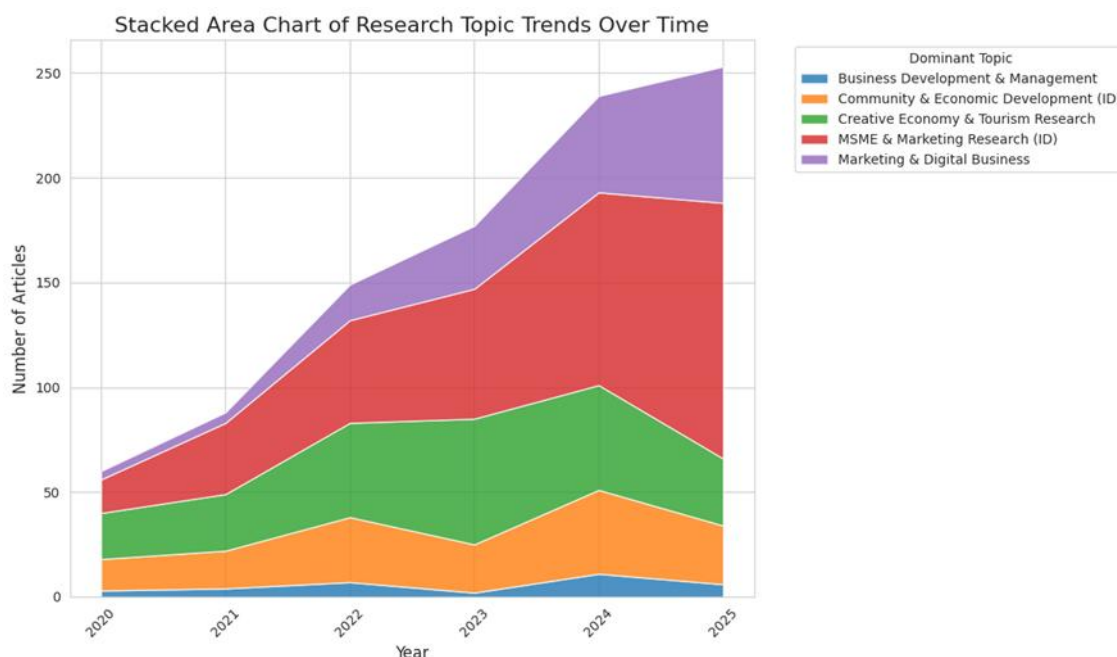


Data Processed Using Python

The graph titled “Topic Trends in Culinary Sector Research Over Time” illustrates the development of the number of culinary sector research articles based on dominant topics during the 2020–2025 period. Overall, there is a clear upward trend in research interest, particularly in the topic of MSME & Marketing Research (ID), which shows the most significant and consistent growth year by year. This indicates a strengthening academic focus on the role of MSMEs and marketing strategies in the development of the culinary sector.

The topic of Marketing & Digital Business also demonstrates steady growth, especially after 2022, reflecting the increasing relevance of digitalization and technology-based marketing in the culinary industry. Meanwhile, Creative Economy & Tourism Research peaked around 2023 before declining, indicating a shift in research focus toward more applied and business-oriented themes. Topics such as Business Development & Management and Community & Economic Development (ID) show relatively fluctuating trends with fewer publications but continue to contribute important perspectives related to management and local economic empowerment.

Overall, the graph confirms a shift in culinary research toward digital marketing, MSMEs, and creative economy themes that are responsive to market and technological dynamics.



Data Processed Using Python

The *Topic Trends in Culinary Sector Research Over Time* graph illustrates the development of the number of research publications in the culinary sector based on dominant topics from 2020 to 2025. Overall, the graph shows a significant upward trend in the number of articles published each year, indicating increasing academic attention toward the culinary sector. *MSME & Marketing Research (ID)* and *Marketing & Digital Business* emerge as the most dominant contributors, particularly after 2022, reflecting a strong focus on marketing strategies, digitalization, and the strengthening of culinary MSMEs. Meanwhile, *Creative Economy & Tourism Research* demonstrates steady growth until reaching its peak around 2023–2024 before experiencing a slight decline, suggesting a phase of research consolidation. The topic of *Community & Economic Development (ID)* also exhibits fluctuations but remains relevant as a supporting dimension of culinary-based development. In contrast, *Business Development & Management* accounts for the smallest proportion of publications, although it remains consistently present each year. Overall, the graph confirms a shift in culinary research toward digital marketing, MSMEs, and the creative economy, which are increasingly responsive to market dynamics and technological developments.

4. Conclusion and Suggestions

This study concludes that the culinary business sector, particularly MSME-based enterprises, is increasingly positioned as a strategic element in creative economy development through the central role of marketing strategies and innovation. The results of the Systematic Literature Review indicate that digital marketing and product innovation are dominant themes consistently associated with enhanced competitiveness,

business performance, and sustainability in the culinary sector. The impact of this research is reflected in its theoretical contribution through the development of an integrated conceptual mapping of culinary business, marketing, innovation, and small enterprises, as well as its practical relevance as a reference for business actors and policymakers in formulating adaptive culinary MSME development strategies in response to market and technological dynamics. However, this study is limited by its reliance on literature sources from a specific period and the absence of empirical investigation into real-world strategy implementation, meaning that variations in local context and socio-cultural factors have not been fully accommodated.

Based on these limitations, future research is recommended to combine Systematic Literature Review approaches with empirical studies, both quantitative and qualitative, to directly examine the effectiveness of marketing and innovation strategies among culinary MSMEs across different regional contexts. In addition, future studies should expand data coverage and time horizons and incorporate supporting variables such as digital literacy, policy support, and stakeholder collaboration to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the determinants of sustainability and competitiveness in the culinary business sector.

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