

BUSINESS SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES IN THE FOOD AND BEVERAGE INDUSTRY IN SURAKARTA: A COMPARATIVE SWOT ANALYSIS OF YOUTH AND SILVER ENTREPRENEURS

Arlita Widya Kusumawardhani^{1*}, Hendrika Ayuliani Muntiyas², Danur Condro Guritno³, Maulida Sania Taufikkurrohmah⁴

¹²³⁴ Department of Economics, Universitas Sebelas Maret, Indonesia

* Email corresponding author: arlitawidyaa30@student.uns.ac.id

Article Information: Received --- June, 25 2026, Published --- August, 10 2026

Abstract

The food and beverage (F&B) industry plays a strategic role in supporting local economic development in Indonesia. However, increasing competition, rapid digital transformation, and shifting consumer preferences have posed significant challenges to business sustainability, particularly among micro and small enterprises. This study aims to map the challenges and business sustainability strategies employed by Youth Entrepreneurs and Silver Entrepreneurs in the F&B industry in Surakarta. A qualitative approach was adopted using thematic analysis supported by ATLAS.ti version 9. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with ten key informants, comprising five Youth Entrepreneurs and five Silver Entrepreneurs. The findings reveal that Youth Entrepreneurs possess strengths in digital adaptability, innovation, and digital marketing capabilities. At the same time, Silver Entrepreneurs benefit from extensive business experience, strong reputations, and well-established social networks. Despite these strengths, both groups face different challenges. Youth Entrepreneurs struggle with managerial limitations, capital dependency, and intense market competition, whereas Silver Entrepreneurs encounter technology gaps, resistance to change, and difficulties adapting to digital business environments. SWOT analysis indicates that cross-generational collaboration presents a strategic opportunity to combine digital competencies with accumulated business experience. The study contributes to understanding intergenerational entrepreneurship in Indonesian MSMEs and offers practical implications for digital literacy development, inclusive financing policies, and sustainable local economic development. Understanding intergenerational entrepreneurship in Indonesian MSMEs has practical implications for digital literacy development.

Keywords: Business Sustainability, SWOT Analysis, Youth Entrepreneur, Silver Entrepreneur, Digital Transformation, Food and Beverage Industry

INTRODUCTION

The Food & Beverage (F&B) sector is one of the main pillars of the Indonesian economy. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (2023), the number of F&B businesses in Indonesia reached 4.85 million in 2023, a 21.13% increase since 2016, with sales growing by 48.04% to Rp998.37 trillion. The food and beverage industry has also consistently been one of the manufacturing subsectors with the largest contribution to the national economy, both in terms of added value, employment, and growth in the processing industry (Tamin et al., 2024). The sector's performance has demonstrated a relatively high level of resilience amidst various economic uncertainties and the digital transformation that has taken place in recent years. This role makes the F&B sector not only a provider of employment but also a major driver of economic growth and

the development of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Indonesia (Matarazzo et al., 2021)

Similar dynamics are also seen at the regional level, particularly in Surakarta City. According to data from the Surakarta City Cooperatives and MSMEs Office (2024), the F&B sector has experienced an average annual growth rate of 12.5% since 2020, with micro and small businesses dominating 87% of the total registered business units. Data from the Surakarta Statistics Agency (BPS) (2024) shows that the number of F&B businesses increased from 7,137 units in 2021 to 10,907 units in 2023. This growth reflects the growing local entrepreneurial ecosystem, driven by growing public interest in culinary businesses and growing market opportunities. This increase in the number of businesses also results in increasingly fierce competition, requiring businesses to create competitive advantages and maintain long-term business sustainability (Nurliza & Oktoriana, 2021; YahiaMarzouk & Jin, 2022).

The rapid growth in the number of MSMEs is not always accompanied by the ability of these businesses to survive in the long term. Many businesses face the risk of failure due to limited resources, changes in the business environment, and increasing competitive pressures (Maleki et al., 2023; Orobia et al., 2020). These challenges are further exacerbated in the digital era, when competition comes not only from local businesses but also from digital platforms, cloud kitchens, marketplaces, and various new, evolving business models. Digital transformation requires businesses to be able to adopt technology, understand changing consumer behavior, and develop adaptive business strategies to remain competitive and sustainable (Matarazzo et al., 2021; YahiaMarzouk & Jin, 2022).

The need to adapt to changes in the business environment has led to the emergence of different strategies for each group of business actors. In the F&B MSME ecosystem in Surakarta City, there are two groups of business actors with different characteristics: youth entrepreneurs (aged under 30 years) and silver entrepreneurs (aged over 60 years). Youth entrepreneurs tend to be more adaptive to technological developments, actively utilize digital platforms such as GoFood, GrabFood, and social media as marketing tools, and have a higher orientation towards innovation and business growth (Maleki et al., 2023). Meanwhile, silver entrepreneurs rely more on long-term business experience, an established reputation, and a strong social network as the main capital in maintaining their business (Colurcio et al., 2022). These differences in characteristics allow for the emergence of different survival strategies in the face of constantly changing business dynamics.

The literature on MSME business sustainability has grown quite extensively, but most research still focuses on quantitative factors such as capital, access to financing, digital literacy, and business performance. Studies exploring the challenges and adaptation strategies used by business actors from different generations within the same sector and region are still relatively limited. In the F&B sector in Indonesia, research comparing the survival strategies of youth entrepreneurs and silver entrepreneurs through a qualitative approach is still rare (Nurliza & Oktoriana, 2021; Yeganegi et al., 2019). Limitations are also evident in studies that integrate thematic analysis based on business actors' experiences with the SWOT framework to map internal and external factors that influence business sustainability. This gap forms the basis for this study to map the challenges and strategies for business sustainability among F&B MSMEs across generations in Surakarta City.

This study aims to map the challenges and strategies used by youth entrepreneurs and silver entrepreneurs in maintaining F&B businesses in Surakarta City. A qualitative approach with thematic analysis assisted by ATLAS.ti software was used to explore the experiences, challenges, and adaptation strategies implemented by business actors in facing changes in the business environment. The research findings were then integrated into a SWOT framework to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that affect the business sustainability of each business actor group. The research results are expected to enrich the study of the sustainability of MSMEs across generations and provide input for the formulation of more adaptive and sustainable MSME empowerment policies in the digital economy era.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS FORMULATION

Business Continuity and the Resource-Based View

Business sustainability is defined as a business's ability to survive, adapt, and thrive in the long term amidst various changes in the business environment. Business sustainability is demonstrated not only through financial performance but also through the ability to retain customers, maintain competitiveness, and respond effectively to market changes (Lussier & Halabi, 2010). In the context of MSMEs, business sustainability is becoming increasingly important due to the dynamics of competition, changes in consumer preferences, and the rapid digital transformation (Matarazzo et al., 2021; Sipos et al., 2025).

The main theory underlying this research is the Resource-Based View (RBV) proposed by Barney, (1991). RBV explains that competitive advantage and business sustainability are determined by a company's ability to utilize valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable (VRIN) resources. In the context of F&B MSMEs, these resources can include business experience, business reputation, social networks, managerial skills, and digital competencies possessed by business actors. Effective resource utilization enables business actors to build competitive advantages that are difficult for competitors to imitate and support long-term business sustainability. Recent research shows that relational capital, the ability to utilize digital ecosystems, and business networks play a crucial role in strengthening business resilience in the digital economy era (YahiaMarzouk & Jin, 2022).

Recent research developments show that the Resource-Based View (RBV) no longer only emphasizes the importance of physical and financial assets, but also includes intangible resources such as digital competencies, innovation capabilities, relational capital, and access to digital ecosystems (Matarazzo et al., 2021; Ramon-Jeronimo et al., 2019; YahiaMarzouk & Jin, 2022). These resources have been proven to contribute to increasing the competitiveness and sustainability of MSMEs. The ability to integrate internal resources with external opportunities is also a crucial factor in building business resilience and creating sustainable competitive advantage in an increasingly dynamic business environment (Anatan & Nur, 2023; Sipos et al., 2025)

Characteristics of Youth and Silver Entrepreneurs

Entrepreneur characteristics can vary based on age, experience, and available resources. Young entrepreneurs generally exhibit higher levels of innovation, are quicker to adopt digital technology, and have a strong orientation toward business growth and exploring new opportunities (Maleki et al., 2023; Tunio et al., 2021). These capabilities provide advantages in exploiting market opportunities and developing business models that are more adaptive to changes in the business environment. However, this group often faces limitations in business experience, managerial capacity, and access to adequate financing (Maleki et al., 2023; Orobia et al., 2020).

Silver entrepreneurs exhibit distinct characteristics, generally possessing more mature business experience, a well-established reputation, and an extensive professional network. This experience enables them to build stronger customer relationships and maintain long-term business stability (Bağış et al., 2023). On the other hand, limited digital literacy and the ability to adapt to technological developments often present challenges for this group (Colurcio et al., 2022). These differences in characteristics indicate that youth entrepreneurs and silver entrepreneurs possess different resources and adaptive capacities, potentially leading to the development of distinct business sustainability strategies in the face of changing business environments.

Dynamic Capability in the Digital Era

Business sustainability is determined not only by resource ownership but also by the ability of business actors to adapt to changes in the business environment. The Dynamic Capability Theory, developed by Teece (2018) explains that organizations need the ability to identify opportunities, respond to change, and reconfigure their resources to remain competitive. This capability is

becoming increasingly important in the digital era, characterized by rapid technological developments, changing consumer behavior, and increasingly complex market dynamics (Deuten et al., 2020; Warner & Wäger, 2019).

The application of dynamic capability in the F&B sector can be reflected through the use of digital technology, product innovation, marketing strategy development, and the ability to understand changes in consumer preferences. Digital transformation not only functions as a marketing tool but also becomes a crucial factor in creating value and maintaining business competitiveness (Matarazzo et al., 2021). The ability to integrate technology, market information, and internal resources has also been proven to contribute to the resilience and sustainability of MSMEs amidst the ever-changing business environment (Anatan & Nur, 2023; YahiaMarzouk & Jin, 2022). Therefore, adaptability is one of the important factors determining the sustainability of MSME businesses in the digital economy era.

SWOT as a Strategy Mapping Instrument

SWOT analysis is a strategic analysis tool used to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that affect a business's performance and sustainability (GÜREL, 2017). In the context of MSMEs, SWOT analysis helps business actors understand the internal and external conditions that influence competitiveness, thus providing a basis for formulating more adaptive and sustainable strategies (Benzaghta et al., 2021).

The SWOT approach is widely used in entrepreneurship research because it can connect actual business conditions with relevant development strategies. The integration of thematic analysis and SWOT also allows for a deeper exploration of entrepreneurs' experiences and strategies in dealing with changes in the business environment. Recent research shows that the ability to accurately identify internal and external factors contributes to increased business resilience, especially for MSMEs operating in a dynamic and digitalized business environment (GÜREL, 2017; YahiaMarzouk & Jin, 2022). Therefore, SWOT is considered a relevant approach for mapping business sustainability challenges and strategies for youth and silver entrepreneurs in the F&B sector.

Conceptual Framework of the Research

The research conceptual framework is based on the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Dynamic Capability Theory, which explain that business sustainability is influenced by the ability of entrepreneurs to utilize their resources and adapt to changes in the business environment. According to RBV, business continuity is supported by the effective utilization of strategic resources such as entrepreneurial experience, business reputation, social networks, managerial capabilities, and digital competencies. These resources can create competitive advantages that are difficult for competitors to imitate and therefore contribute to long-term business sustainability.

Dynamic Capability Theory complements this perspective by emphasizing the importance of sensing opportunities, responding to environmental changes, and reconfiguring available resources to maintain competitiveness. In the context of the rapidly evolving digital economy, the ability to adapt to technological developments, changing consumer preferences, and market dynamics has become increasingly important for MSMEs, particularly in the Food and Beverage (F&B) sector.

Differences in characteristics between youth entrepreneurs and silver entrepreneurs result in variations in resources, experience, and adaptive capacity that have the potential to influence business sustainability strategies. Youth entrepreneurs tend to rely more on innovation and digital technology adoption, while silver entrepreneurs often leverage accumulated business experience, established customer relationships, and broader professional networks. These differences may lead to distinct approaches in responding to business challenges and opportunities.

To understand these conditions, this study uses SWOT analysis as a tool to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats faced by both groups of entrepreneurs. The

integration of SWOT with RBV and Dynamic Capability Theory enables a more comprehensive understanding of how internal resources and external environmental factors shape business sustainability strategies among F&B MSMEs in Surakarta. The research conceptual framework is presented in Figure 1.

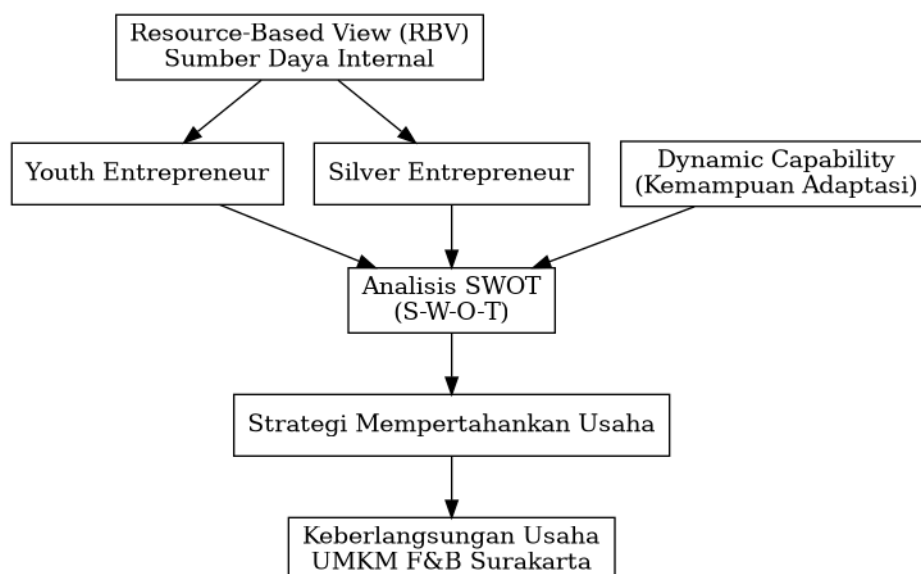


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework of the Research

RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative approach through thematic analysis with the help of ATLAS.ti software version 9. The qualitative approach was chosen because it can provide a deeper understanding of the experiences, perceptions, and adaptation strategies of business actors in facing various business challenges (Akramul Kabir, 2024; Taherdoost, 2022). The use of ATLAS.ti software also helps researchers organize, code, and interpret data systematically, resulting in a more structured analysis (Deuten et al., 2020).

Data were collected through in-depth interviews with 10 key informants, consisting of 5 youth entrepreneurs and 5 silver entrepreneurs operating in the F&B sector in Surakarta City. Informants were selected purposively based on several criteria: F&B business actors actively operating in Surakarta City, willing to participate in in-depth interviews, having experience facing significant business challenges, and representing a variety of business conditions, both those still operating and those that have experienced business closures (Campbell et al., 2020; Taherdoost, 2022).

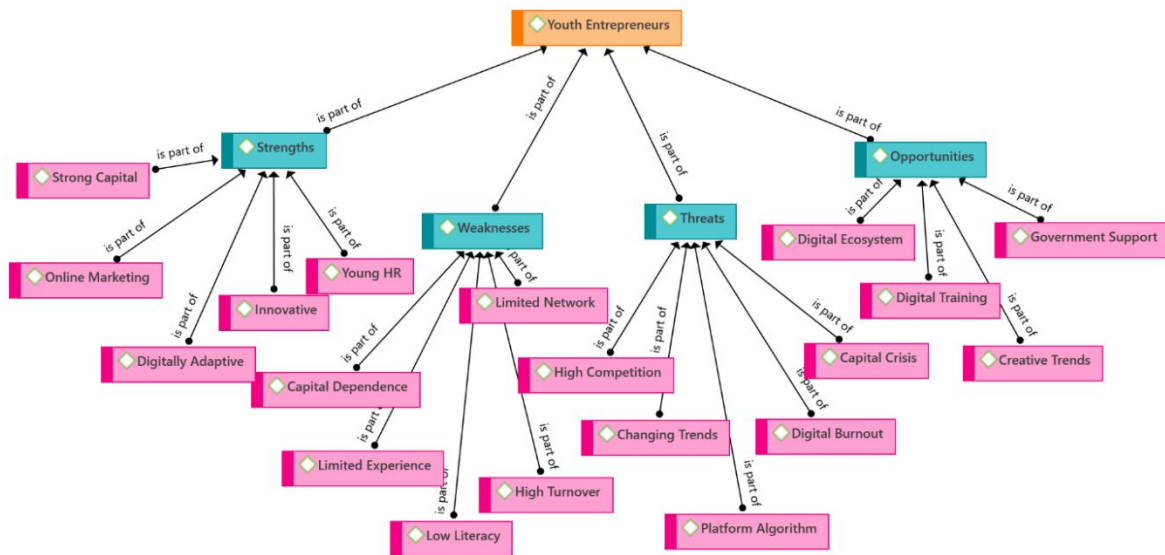
Data analysis was conducted through open coding, axial coding, and selective coding to identify key themes emerging from the interviews (Williams & Moser, 2019). The resulting themes were then integrated into a SWOT framework to map the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that impact business continuity in each business group (GÜREL, 2017).

Data validity was maintained through source triangulation, combining interview data, field observations, and business documentation. Member checking was also conducted to ensure the researcher's interpretations aligned with the informants' experiences and perspectives, thereby enhancing the credibility of the research results (Taherdoost, 2022; Braun & Clarke, 2021).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

SWOT Mapping of Youth Entrepreneurs

SWOT analysis mapping was conducted to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats that affect business sustainability based on the characteristics of the micro and small business generation (Mafruhah et al., 2021). This analysis aims to understand the differences in adaptation strategies and entrepreneurial capacity between the Youth Entrepreneurs and Silver Entrepreneurs groups in facing the dynamics of the digital economy. The mapping of Youth Entrepreneurs can be seen in Figure 2 below.



Source: Atlas.TI data processing results, 2025

Figure 2. SWOT analysis mapping of Youth Entrepreneurs

Table 1. SWOT Mapping of Youth Entrepreneurs in the Surakarta F&B Industry

Strengths	WEAKNESSES
• High adaptability to digital technology • Dynamic product creativity and innovation • Mastery of digital marketing platforms (TikTok, Instagram, GoFood) • Ability to build personal branding on social media • Extensive youth community network • Relatively low initial operating costs through cloud kitchens	• High dependence on external capital • Lack of managerial and financial experience • High employee turnover rate • Managerial and accounting literacy is still low • Inconsistency of product quality is not yet stable • Vulnerable to rapidly changing trends and digital burnout
Opportunities	Threats
• Support for government programs (UMKM Go Digital, KUR) • A continuously growing digital ecosystem • Creative culinary trends and digital lifestyles of young consumers • Ease of access to e-commerce and delivery platforms • Potential for cross-generational collaboration with senior actors	• High competition with fellow youth entrepreneurs and restaurant chains • Unpredictable changes in digital platform algorithms • Fluctuating raw material prices • Customers who easily switch to the latest trending products • Reputational risk on social media (negative viral)

Source: ATLAS.ti Data Processing Results, 2025

The Power of Youth Entrepreneurs

Thematic analysis results indicate that the primary strength of *young F&B entrepreneurs* in Surakarta lies in their strong ability to adapt to digital technology. Nearly all young informants revealed that they utilize at least two to three digital platforms simultaneously for marketing, ranging from Instagram and TikTok to app-based *food delivery services*. This finding aligns with a study by Nurliza & Oktoriana (2021), which found that Indonesian F&B MSMEs that actively utilize social media exhibit better competitive behavior than those that do not. Creativity in product innovation is also a strong characteristic of this group; they are able to respond quickly to market trends, from *cloud kitchens* and seasonal menus to collaborations with local influencers.

Characteristic as a change agent *aligns* with the concept of *Entrepreneurial Orientation* proposed by Lumpkin & Dess (1996), which encompasses the dimensions of innovation, proactivity, and risk-taking. In the digital economy era, a strong entrepreneurial orientation has been shown to positively impact business performance and sustainability (Anatan & Nur, 2024).

Weaknesses of Youth Entrepreneurs

Despite the digital strengths, significant structural weaknesses exist among young entrepreneurs. Dependence on external capital is the most prominent barrier; most informants reported difficulty obtaining formal financing due to a lack of business track record and adequate collateral. This finding is consistent with Eddleston et al. (2016), who showed that *young entrepreneurs* face significant obstacles in accessing financing due to the lack of a strong *track record*.

Low managerial literacy is also a problem. Several informants admitted that they lack a structured financial recording system, making it difficult to accurately measure profitability and make informed business decisions. High employee *turnover rates* also weaken operational stability, especially in businesses without a systematic HR management system. This situation reflects the importance of investing in *human capital*, as emphasized by Becker (1964), namely that the quality of human resources determines a business's productive capacity and competitiveness.

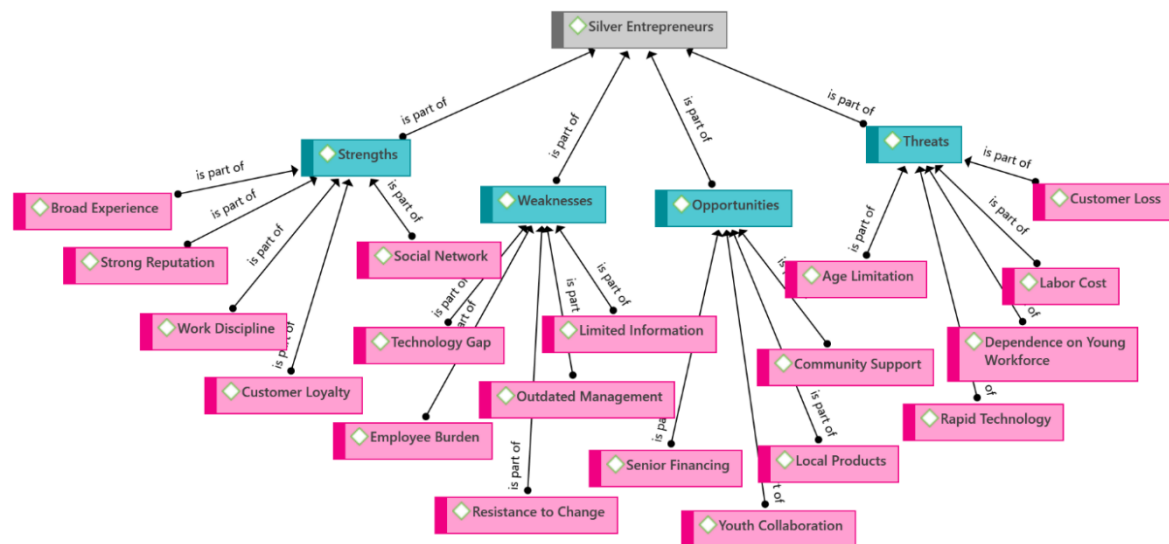
Opportunities and Threats for Youth Entrepreneurs

In terms of opportunities, Indonesia's ever-expanding digital ecosystem offers a vast opportunity for young entrepreneurs. Government programs such as the MSME Go Digital program and the People's Business Credit (KUR) program provide significant support, while creative culinary trends driven by the lifestyles of young consumers continue to create new market niches. A study by Afifah et al. (2022) examining MSMEs in the creative sector in Indonesia and Malaysia found that digital marketing adoption is positively correlated with business success, strengthening the argument that optimally utilizing digital opportunities is key to business sustainability for the younger generation.

However, the threats are no less real. Increasingly fierce competition comes not only from fellow young entrepreneurs but also from large restaurant chains that are starting to adopt similar digital strategies. Changes in digital platform algorithms which can suddenly reduce an account's *organic reach* present a difficult threat to control. Furthermore, young consumer behavior, heavily influenced by trends, tends to lead to low customer loyalty, requiring businesses to continuously innovate to maintain their relevance in the market.

Silver Entrepreneur SWOT Mapping

In contrast to the younger group, the SWOT mapping of *silver entrepreneurs* revealed a strategic profile more rooted in experience and social relationships. Table 2 presents the SWOT mapping results for this group.



Source: Atlas.TI data processing results, 2025

Figure 3. SWOT analysis mapping of Silver Entrepreneurs

Table 2. SWOT Mapping of Silver Entrepreneurs in the Surakarta F&B Industry

Strengths	WEAKNESSES
• Extensive and proven business experience • Strong reputation and customer trust • Established social networks and business relationships • High work discipline and mental resilience • Long-term customer loyalty • In-depth understanding of the local market	• Significant technology gap • Resistance to change and new innovations • Conventional management patterns that are less flexible • Limited digital literacy in social media management • Reliance on young workforce for digital operations • Limited access to current market information
Opportunities	Threats
• Access to financing from formal institutions (KUR, BPUM) • Opportunities for cross-generational collaboration with youth entrepreneurs • Strong support from the local business community • Loyal customer segment that still has potential • Digital training programs from government and NGOs	• Accelerated technological innovation that is difficult to keep up with • Increase in labor and raw material costs • Potential loss of customers to digital-based businesses • Entry of new players with more adaptive business models • Shift in consumer preferences to digital services

Source: ATLAS.ti Data Processing Results, 2025

The Power of Silver Entrepreneurs

The primary strength of *silver entrepreneurs* rests on three fundamental pillars: extensive business experience, a strong reputation, and a long-established social network. All senior informants in this study have run F&B businesses for at least 15 years, with a loyal customer base, some of which have followed them for generations. This finding aligns with Azoulay et al. (2020), who found that entrepreneurs with longer experience are twice as likely to create successful

businesses. Strong social capital provides a competitive advantage that is difficult for new competitors to replicate. Several informants revealed that the trust placed in them by suppliers and business partners, in the form of easy credit for goods and customer referrals, is an invaluable asset acquired through years of building mutually beneficial relationships. Within Barney's (1991) RBV framework, this type of social capital meets the criteria of a rare *and* inimitable *resource*, thus becoming the foundation of sustainable competitive advantage.

Weaknesses of Silver Entrepreneurs

The technology gap *was* the most consistent weakness emerging from the narratives of senior informants. Most admitted to being unfamiliar with modern social media platforms and feeling overwhelmed by the demands for consistent content imposed by digital platform algorithms. Even among those who already use app-based *food delivery services*, most delegate management to younger family members or millennial employees. This creates a dependency that could potentially become a weakness if these personnel are replaced.

Resistance to change is also a significant obstacle. Several informants expressed reluctance to alter recipes or menus that have become their business's signature, even though the market shows shifting tastes. This condition reflects what Matarazzo et al. (2021) call *organizational inertia*, the tendency of organizations to maintain existing patterns despite environmental changes. Without adequate transformation capabilities, even experience-based advantages can become irrelevant in the face of more adaptive competitors.

Opportunities and Threats for Silver Entrepreneurs

In terms of opportunities, access to formal financing is a significant catalyst for growth for this group. Several senior informants who already have business legality (NIB, SIUP, halal certification) reported being able to access credit from BRI, BNI, and Bank Jateng with subsidized interest rates through the KUR program. This convenience provides greater liquidity for business development compared to young entrepreneurs who are still constrained by administrative requirements. The opportunity for cross-generational collaboration also emerged as a compelling theme in the interviews; several senior informants reported successful partnerships with young family members or millennial employees to manage the digital aspects of their marketing.

On the threat side, the acceleration of technological innovation is the biggest threat that is difficult to respond to. The emergence of *cloud kitchen business models*, delivery platforms, and constantly changing social media-based culinary trends are creating competitive pressure that some senior informants feel is quite intense. The shift in consumer preferences, particularly among younger generations, towards "Instagrammable" dining experiences that can be shared on social media also threatens the relevance of conventional F&B businesses that have not yet undertaken digital rebranding.

Comparative Analysis: Cross-Generational Adaptation Strategies

The SWOT findings from both groups demonstrate complementary patterns, while also confirming that F&B business sustainability in the digital era cannot be achieved through a single approach. *Youth entrepreneurs* excel in their speed of adaptation and digital innovation, while *silver entrepreneurs* excel in their depth of experience and relationship strength. Table 3 presents a comparison of the key adaptation strategies identified by both groups.

Table 3. Comparison of Youth vs Silver Entrepreneur Adaptation Strategies

Strategy Dimensions	Youth Entrepreneur	Silver Entrepreneur
Marketing	Massive digital marketing (TikTok, Instagram, GoFood), creative content, influencer marketing	Word-of-mouth marketing, existing customer loyalty, start adopting delivery platforms
Capital Management	Own capital, family loans, online loans (P2P lending), crowdfunding	Formal credit (KUR, bank), personal savings, capital from business profits
Product Innovation	Trend-based menu innovation, fusion food, seasonal products, content creator collaboration	Maintaining the authentic recipe as a characteristic, packaging innovation without changing the formula
HR	Small multifunctional team, content outsourcing, collaboration with youth communities	Relying on the owner's experience, partnering with young people for the digital aspect
Digital Adaptation	Fast and independent, become an early adopter of new platforms	Gradually with the help of family members/young employees, focus on the most relevant platforms.
Building Loyalty	Social media engagement, discount programs, online customer reviews	Long term personal relationships, consistent quality, affordable prices

Source: Interview Data Processing Results and ATLAS.ti, 2025

These comparative findings provide richer insights than quantitative data alone. Digital marketing has proven to be a significant determinant of business sustainability in both groups, albeit at different intensities and in different ways. For young entrepreneurs, digital marketing is a key strategy and competitive advantage; for older entrepreneurs, digital marketing adoption, though slower, has provided a significant boost in market reach. These results are consistent with the findings of Nurliza & Oktoriana (2021), which show that the perceived benefits of social media positively influence the competitive behavior of F&B MSMEs in Indonesia.

Interestingly, *the silver entrepreneurs* who survive are not the most digitally strong, but rather the most astute in combining their traditional strengths with selective digital adoption. Several senior informants expressed a " *hybrid* " strategy, maintaining personalized, face-to-face service while gradually integrating digital platforms to expand reach. This approach aligns with the concept of *ambidextrous innovation*, which emphasizes the importance of exploiting existing strengths (*exploitation*) while simultaneously exploring new possibilities (*exploration*) (Bojanić et al., 2024).

The complementary patterns between these two generations open up a very interesting strategic opportunity: cross-generational collaboration. In several cases identified during the research, young and senior entrepreneurs partnered through either family ties or formal business partnerships, creating a more robust combination: the digital agility of the young combined with the depth of experience and networks of the senior. This collaboration model aligns with the policy recommendations of Kautonen et al. (2017), which emphasize the importance of *intergenerational knowledge transfer* in a healthy entrepreneurial ecosystem.

CONCLUSION

This study successfully mapped the challenges and strategies for sustaining businesses in the F&B industry in Surakarta City from a comparative perspective of youth entrepreneurs and silver entrepreneurs. Through thematic analysis using ATLAS.ti and SWOT mapping, it was found that both groups have distinct yet complementary strategic profiles.

Youth entrepreneurs rely on their speed of digital adaptation, creative product innovation, and mastery of modern marketing platforms as their key strengths. Their challenges center on weak financial management, high dependence on capital, and immature managerial capacity. Meanwhile, silver entrepreneurs rely on proven business experience, long-standing reputations, and strong social networks. Their challenges primarily stem from technological gaps and resistance to digital transformation.

The practical implications of this research include three main recommendations. First, MSME empowerment programs need to be specifically designed based on generational characteristics, including managerial literacy training for young entrepreneurs and digital literacy training that is user-friendly for senior entrepreneurs. Second, inclusive financing policies need to be strengthened, particularly to address barriers to capital access for young entrepreneurs who lack a sufficient credit track record. Third, facilitating cross-generational collaboration deserves greater attention from policymakers, given the enormous potential synergy between the digital power of the younger generation and the depth of experience of the senior generation.

This study has several limitations. The relatively small number of informants (10) limits the generalizability of the findings, although the qualitative data obtained is quite rich. Future research is recommended to expand the geographic scope to other cities in Central Java, increase the number of informants, and integrate the perspectives of policymakers and consumers to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bağış, M., Kryeziu, L., Kurutkan, M. N., Krasniqi, B. A., Hernik, J., Karagüzel, E. S., Karaca, V., & Ateş, Ç. (2023). Youth entrepreneurial intentions: A cross-cultural comparison. *Journal of Enterprising Communities*, 17(4), 769–792. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JEC-01-2022-0005>
- Barney, J. B. (1991). Firm Resources and Sustained Competitive Advantage. *Journal of Management*, 17(1), 99–120. <https://doi.org/10.1177/014920639101700108>
- Benzaghta, M. A., Elwalda, A., Mousa, M., Erkan, I., & Rahman, M. (2021). SWOT Analysis Applications: An Integrative Literature Review. *Journal of Global Business Insights*, 6(1), 55–73. <https://doi.org/10.5038/2640-6489.6.1.1148>
- Campbell, S., Greenwood, M., Prior, S., Shearer, T., Walkem, K., Young, S., Bywaters, D., & Walker, K. (2020). Purposive Sampling: Complex or Simple? Research Case Examples. *Journal of Research in Nursing*, 25(8), 652–661. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1744987120927206>
- Central Statistics Agency. (2023). Food and Beverage Supply Statistics.
- Central Statistics Agency. (2024). Number of Business Actors by Age Group in Surakarta City 2021–2023.
- Colurcio, M., Vigolo, V., & Edvardsson, B. (2022). Fifty Years of Research on Silver Economy: A Bibliometric Analysis. *Sinergie Italian Journal of Management*, 40(3), 149–171. <https://doi.org/10.7433/s119.2022.07>

- Gürel, E., & Tat, M. (2017). SWOT Analysis: A Theoretical Review. *Journal of International Social Research*, 10(51), 994–1006. <https://doi.org/10.17719/jisr.2017.1832>
- Kabir, S. M. A. (2024). Thematic Analysis: A Practical Guide. *Pasaa Paritat Journal*, 39, 142–145. <https://doi.org/10.58837/CHULA.PPJ.39.8>
- Mafruhah, I., Istiqomah, N., Dewa, A. L., Prawithosuci, W., & Akbar, L. (2021). Aplikasi Alat Analisis Kontemporer Berbasis Kuantitatif dan Kualitatif. *Jejak Pustaka*.
- Maleki, A., Moghaddam, K., Cloninger, P., & Cullen, J. (2023). A Cross-National Study of Youth Entrepreneurship: The Effect of Family Support. *International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Innovation*, 24(1), 44–57. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14657503211054284>
- Matarazzo, M., Penco, L., Profumo, G., & Quaglia, R. (2021). Digital Transformation and Customer Value Creation in Made in Italy SMEs: A Dynamic Capabilities Perspective. *Journal of Business Research*, 123, 642–656. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2020.10.033>
- Nurliza, N., & Oktoriana, S. (2021). Perceived Benefits of Social Media Networks Impact on Competitive Behavior of Indonesia SMEs: Food and Beverage Sector. *Economics and Sociology*, 14(3), 146–162. <https://doi.org/10.14254/2071-789X.2021/14-3/8>
- Orobia, L. A., Tusiime, I., Mwesigwa, R., & Ssekiziyivu, B. (2020). Entrepreneurial Framework Conditions and Business Sustainability among the Youth and Women Entrepreneurs. *Asia Pacific Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, 14(1), 60–75. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJIE-07-2019-0059>
- Ramon-Jeronimo, J. M., Florez-Lopez, R., & Araujo-Pinzon, P. (2019). Resource-Based View and SMEs Performance Exporting through Foreign Intermediaries: The Mediating Effect of Management Controls. *Sustainability*, 11(12), 3241. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su11123241>
- Sipos, N., Rideg, A., Al Najjar, A. S., & Lukovszki, L. (2025). Resource-Based View of Marketing Innovation in SMEs: A Multi-Country Empirical Analysis Based on the Global Competitiveness Project. *Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, 14(1), 94. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s13731-025-00573-x>
- Taherdoost, H. (2022). What Are Different Research Approaches? Comprehensive Review of Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Method Research, Their Applications, Types, and Limitations. *Journal of Management Science and Engineering Research*, 5(1), 53–63. <https://doi.org/10.30564/jmser.v5i1.4538>
- Tamin, J., Robiani, B., Teguh, M., & Mukhlis, M. (2024). Food and Beverage Industry Sector Linkages in Indonesia. *Equity: Jurnal Ekonomi*, 12(1), 83–94. <https://doi.org/10.33019/equity.v12i1.284>
- Teece, D. J. (2018). Business Models and Dynamic Capabilities. *Long Range Planning*, 51(1), 40–49. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2017.06.007>
- Tunio, M. N., Chaudhry, I. S., Shaikh, S., Jariko, M. A., & Brahmi, M. (2021). Determinants of the Sustainable Entrepreneurial Engagement of Youth in Developing Country: An Empirical Evidence from Pakistan. *Sustainability*, 13(14), 7764. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13147764>

- Warner, K. S. R., & Wäger, M. (2019). Building Dynamic Capabilities for Digital Transformation: An Ongoing Process of Strategic Renewal. *Long Range Planning*, 52(3), 326–349. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lrp.2018.12.001>
- Yahia-Marzouk, Y., & Jin, J. (2022). Does Relational Capital Matter to Food and Beverage SMEs' Resilience? The Mediating Role of Environmental Scanning. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, 1033837. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1033837>
- Yeganegi, S., Laplume, A. O., Dass, P., & Greidanus, N. S. (2019). Individual-Level Ambidexterity and Entrepreneurial Entry. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 57(4), 1444–1463. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jsbm.12405>