The Influence of GrabFood on Micro Culinary Business Income Through

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Keywords: GrabFood; Micro Culinary; Business Income; Store Rating; **Article History:** Received : 02-04-2025 Revised : 29-04-2025 Accepted : 04-05-2025	This study aims to analyze the effect of GrabFood service usage on the income of culinary micro businesses in Cirebon City, with store ratings as an intervening variable. The method used is quantitative with a survey approach. Data collection was carried out by distributing questionnaires to 91 culinary micro business actors who use GrabFood. Data analysis was carried out using path analysis. The results showed that GrabFood usage has a positive and significant effect on store ratings, as well as business revenue. Store ratings were also shown to have a significant effect on business revenue, and partially mediate the relationship between GrabFood usage and micro business revenue. These findings indicate that optimizing services and utilizing digital platforms can improve the reputation and income of culinary micro businesses.

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INTRODUCTION

The development of the digital economy provides significant opportunities for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the culinary sector to improve operational efficiency, reach wider markets, and expand their marketing reach through online platforms. This development is driven by the rapid advancement of digital technology and changes in consumer behavior, with a growing tendency to shop online (Hartatik et al., 2023). In addition to facing increasingly intense market competition, businesses are also required to understand and meet the diverse and evolving needs and preferences of consumers. It is expected that businesses can build and maintain consumer loyalty toward their products and services as a strategy to create a competitive advantage and ensure long-term business sustainability (Bakhri, 2020)

The internet, social media, and e-commerce platforms have created a digital infrastructure that enables MSMEs to market their products online and conduct transactions without geographical limitations. People increasingly shop online, both for daily necessities and for finding unique and diverse products (Hadi & Zakiah, 2021). The Indonesian government, through various regulations and programs such as the *National Movement for Proudly Made in Indonesia (Gernas BBI)*, encourages MSME digitalization to enhance competitiveness in the era of Industry 4.0. This digitalization effort is realized through the integration of MSME actors into digital platforms such as e-commerce and online food delivery services.

According to data from the Ministry of Cooperatives and SMEs, in 2023 there were more than 65 million MSMEs in Indonesia, contributing approximately 61% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employing more than 97% of the national workforce. Among these, the culinary sector is the largest contributor compared to other MSME categories due to its wide market and relatively stable demand.The government continues to promote MSME digitalization through various programs and policies, including training, financing, and digital infrastructure support. Culinary MSMEs can take advantage of social media, e-commerce platforms, and online food delivery services to market their products more effectively. The use of QRIS, e-wallets, and other online payment systems simplifies transactions and enhances consumer trust.

Digital systems can help culinary MSMEs manage inventory, process orders, and handle financial management more efficiently. The utilization of the digital economy can help culinary MSMEs increase revenue through improved sales and broader market reach (Amarini, 2024). However, the adoption of digital applications does not always automatically correlate with increased income. Various factors influence the effectiveness of digital platform usage, including technical capabilities of MSME owners, promotional capital, and customer ratings or reviews. Store ratings play an important role as they can influence new customer trust, affect search rankings on platforms, and directly impact the number of incoming orders (Wibowo, 2022).

One of the most widely used platforms by culinary MSMEs is GrabFood, a feature of the Grab application. GrabFood provides various features such as online ordering, promotions, ratings and reviews, and transaction reports (Amarini, 2024). This platform serves as an essential medium for distributing food without relying solely on walk-in customers. In many cases, the use of the GrabFood application helps small business owners increase product exposure, expand their markets, and simplify payment systems (Salisa, 2025).

However, many studies show that the impact of GrabFood usage on the income growth of micro culinary businesses is not entirely consistent. Some business owners experience significant sales increases, while others face challenges such as high commissions, difficulty maintaining positive ratings, and competition with larger merchants (Umkm & Parepare, 2023). Therefore, it is important to further analyze how the use of the GrabFood application contributes to the income of micro culinary enterprises, as well as the role of variables such as store ratings in this process.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This study employs the grand theory of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), developed by Ajzen (1991), is a behavioral theory that explains that an individual's intention to perform a certain behavior is influenced by three main determinants: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control.

In the context of GrabFood adoption by micro culinary business owners, TPB is relevant for explaining the psychological and social factors behind MSME owners' decisions to integrate digital platforms into their operational activities. Attitude toward the behavior reflects the extent to which business owners believe that using GrabFood will bring benefits such as increased income, operational efficiency, and wider market access. Meanwhile, subjective norms relate to social pressure or influence from the surrounding environment, including colleagues, family, and business communities, which may either encourage or discourage the adoption behavior (Sandag, 2024).

Furthermore, perceived behavioral control refers to the business owner's perceived ability to use the GrabFood application effectively, encompassing aspects such as digital literacy, device availability, and technical experience. The greater the perceived control an entrepreneur has, the higher the likelihood they will implement GrabFood in their business operations.

As a bridge between behavioral theory and digital technology adoption, the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) developed by Davis (1989) explains that technology acceptance is determined by two key variables: perceived usefulness (PU) and perceived ease of use (PEOU). This model emphasizes that the greater an individual's perception of a technology's usefulness and ease of use, the higher their tendency to accept and utilize it in daily activities (Teknologi, 2007).

Within the framework of this research, TAM is used to enhance understanding of how the GrabFood application is accepted by culinary MSME owners in Cirebon City. Perceived usefulness reflects the belief that GrabFood can improve service efficiency, expand market reach, and increase business income. Meanwhile, perceived ease of use describes the extent to which business owners perceive GrabFood as easy to operate, manage, and integrate into their existing operational systems (Subowo, 2020).

The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) provides an important contribution in explaining the mechanism of technology adoption in a more technical and operational manner compared to the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), which is more conceptual and psychological in nature (Dong & Wang, 2022). Therefore, this model is relevant to be used as a middle-range theory in this study to explain the process of GrabFood application adoption as a digital tool by MSMEs and its relationship to business success in the digital era.

In the context of digital marketing, Electronic Word of Mouth (e-WOM) is an applied theory that explains the impact of communication among users in digital media, particularly in the form of reviews, comments, or ratings on online platforms. According to Suarsa (2020), e-WOM has a significant influence on consumers' perceptions of products or services and directly affects their purchasing decisions.

In this study, e-WOM is used to understand how GrabFood Store Ratings, which represent a tangible form of e-WOM, mediate the relationship between application usage and the increase in micro culinary business income. High ratings generally reflect good

service quality, customer satisfaction, and a positive business reputation in the eyes of potential consumers. Conversely, low ratings may negatively impact consumer interest and reduce order volumes (Akturk & Mallipeddi, 2022).

As an applied theory, e-WOM emphasizes the importance of consumer interaction and perception within an interconnected digital ecosystem. Thus, e-WOM functions as an intervening variable that strengthens—or even determines—the extent to which GrabFood usage impacts the success of culinary MSMEs in terms of income (Miawaty & Sunarsih, 2025).

A study by Sari, R., & Mustaqim, M. (2025) on platform usage found that online food delivery services significantly increase MSME income. Another study conducted by Putra, A. (2021) revealed that sales volume, selling price, and operating hours positively contribute to MSME income growth.Similarly, Muhar, A. (2025) reported that, on average, item sales increased by 12.83% and overall sales volume rose by 14.79% after partnering with GoFood or GrabFood.

Research by Wulandari and Setiawan (2019) also indicated that GrabFood enhances MSME competitiveness. Their findings showed that the use of digital technology can significantly improve the competitive advantage of MSMEs.Nugroho and Sari (2020) investigated factors influencing customer satisfaction with online transportation services. The results showed that customer satisfaction is affected by delivery speed, service quality, and application usability. The similarity between studies lies in measuring customer satisfaction, while the difference is the focus—specifically on factors influencing store ratings (customer reviews) among GrabFood users. User experience and service quality were found to have a positive impact on customer satisfaction, which in turn affects loyalty and store ratings.

Sari, D. N. (2025) examined variables such as online store ratings, customer reviews, and MSME income among 60 GrabFood partner MSMEs. The study found that store ratings and customer reviews act as intervening variables, mediating the effect of GrabFood usage on MSME income.

In addition, previous studies have highlighted the importance of digital marketing for culinary MSMEs in enhancing visibility, competitiveness, and revenue. (Setiawan et al., 2022) found that the use of digital marketing tools such as social media promotion, online catalogs, and food delivery platforms significantly increased the sales performance of culinary businesses by improving product exposure and customer engagement. Similarly, (Mukhlis, et all 2023) reported that culinary MSMEs that actively utilize digital marketing strategies experience higher customer retention and faster brand recognition compared to those relying solely on conventional marketing. Another study by Kurniawan et al (2025)) confirmed that digital marketing adoption enables culinary MSMEs to reach broader market segments, optimize promotional costs, and respond more effectively to consumer preferences through real-time feedback. These findings reinforce that digital marketing plays a crucial role in strengthening the sustainability and income generation of culinary MSMEs, especially in the era of digital transformation.

METHODS

This study employs a quantitative approach with a causal associative research design, which aims to examine cause-and-effect relationships between the variables studied in a systematic and measurable manner. The quantitative approach was chosen

because it allows for an objective depiction of social phenomena through the measurement of numerical data that can be statistically analyzed (Putu, 2024).

Through this approach, the study seeks to determine the extent to which the use of the GrabFood application (independent variable) influences the income of micro businesses in the culinary sector (dependent variable), both directly and indirectly through Store Ratings (*intervening variable*). This research not only aims to identify the relationships among variables but also to analyze the strength and direction of these relationships empirically based on data collected from the field.

This approach aligns with the analytical and inferential nature of the study's objectives, where the findings are expected to contribute to the development of knowledge, particularly in the field of micro business management, as well as provide practical recommendations for micro business owners in the culinary sector to utilize digital technology in enhancing their business income.

According to Suci Sukmawati et al. (2023), a sample is a portion of a population selected based on certain characteristics. To determine a representative sample size, this study uses the Lemeshow formula. This method is commonly applied when the exact population size is unknown or very large, and the researcher aims to ensure a specific confidence level with a predetermined margin of error. Based on these calculations, At a precision level of 10%, the minimum required sample size in this study is 96 respondents.

The sample size was determined using a non-probability sampling method. According to Makbul (2021), non-probability sampling is a type of purposive sampling, which is a sampling method based on specific criteria relevant to the study. Purposive sampling is considered an effective research technique because it requires selecting respondents who meet particular characteristics, allowing researchers to obtain relevant and detailed data from participants most aligned with the research objectives. Although this method has limitations in terms of generalizability, purposive sampling remains an appropriate choice for studies that prioritize the quality and depth of information.

The criteria used for sample selection are as follows:
a. Micro culinary business owners in Cirebon City who partner with the GrabFood platform.
b. Have made at least one transaction or order using the GrabFood application within the past three months.
c. Willing to participate as respondents in the study.

Table 1. Variabel Indicators

Variabel	Indicators
GrabFood Usage	Physical Evidence
	Reliability
	Responsiveness
	Assurance
	Empathy
Store Rating	Average Rating Score
	Number and Frequency of Reviews
	Consumer Trust
	Service Quality
	Promotion and Pricing
Micro Culinary Business Income	Sales Volume

Variabel	Indicators
	Income Stability
	Income Growth
	Cost and Time Efficiency
	Business Capita

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The findings on the characteristics of respondents are presented in this section. A total of 91 respondents were obtained.

1. Respondent Characteristics.

Table 2. Respondent Characteristics

Identity	Total	%
Gender		
Male	42	46.2%
Female	49	53.8%
Age Range		
20–30 years	39	42.9%
31–40 years	23	25.3%
>40 years	29	31.8%
Type of Micro Culinary Business Managed		
Home-based food stall	36	39.6%
Street vendor	16	17.6%
Café or restaurant	39	42.8%
Duration of Business Operation		
<1 year	16	17.6%
1–3 years	12	13.2%
>3 years	63	69.2%
Use of GrabFood		
Daily	51	56.0%
1–3 times a week	19	20.9%
Rarely	21	23.1%

On table shows that the surveyed respondents consisted of 42 males (46.2%) and 49 females (53.8%), indicating that the majority of micro culinary business owners in Cirebon City are women (50%). A total of 39 respondents (42.9%) were aged between 20–30 years, 23 respondents (25.3%) were aged between 31–40 years, and 29 respondents (31.9%) were over 40 years old. This indicates that the majority of micro culinary entrepreneurs in Cirebon City are between 20 and 30 years old. Furthermore, 36 respondents (39.6%) managed home-based food stalls, 16 respondents (17.6%) were street vendors, and 39 respondents (42.8%) managed cafés or restaurants, showing that

most respondents operated their own cafés or restaurants. Regarding business duration, 16 respondents (17.6%) had been operating for less than one year, 12 respondents (13.2%) had operated for one to three years, and 63 respondents (69.2%) had operated for more than three years. This indicates that most respondents had been running their businesses for over three years. In terms of GrabFood usage, 51 respondents (56%) used the service daily, 19 respondents (20.9%) used it one to three times a week, and 21 respondents (23.1%) rarely used it. This shows that the majority of respondents use GrabFood daily in running their culinary businesses.

2. **Path Analysis Test.**
Based on the path analysis test, the values of direct and indirect effects can be presented, which will serve as the basis for hypothesis decision-making.

Table 3. Results of Path Analysis Test

No	Path Tested	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect
1	Effect of GrabFood Usage on Store Rating	0.601	-
2	Effect of Store Rating on Micro Culinary Business Income	0.685	-
3	Effect of GrabFood Usage on Micro Culinary Business Income	0.262	-
4	Effect of GrabFood Usage on Micro Culinary Business Income Mediated by Store Rating	-	((0,601 x 0,685) = 0,411

Table 3 presents, among others, the direct effect of GrabFood usage on store rating at 0.601, followed by the direct effect of store rating on micro culinary business income at 0.685, the direct effect of GrabFood usage on micro culinary business income at 0.262, and the indirect effect of GrabFood usage on micro culinary business income through store rating at 0.411.

Discussion
1. **The Effect of GrabFood Usage on the Income of Micro Culinary Businesses in Cirebon City.**
The test results show that the use of GrabFood has a significant effect on the income of micro culinary businesses in Cirebon City, with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. This finding also supports the study by Vaniasari (2022), which indicates that the use of GrabFood and GoFood significantly helps increase sales, expand market share, and enhance the visibility of culinary MSMEs (Bambang Hudayana, et all, 2025).

2. **The Effect of GrabFood Usage on Store Ratings in Cirebon City.**
The test results show that GrabFood usage has a significant effect on store ratings in Cirebon City, with a significance value of $0.000 < 0.05$. This finding supports the study conducted by Kinarsih and Rizqullah (2023), which revealed that ease of use and service quality in the GrabFood application significantly enhance customer satisfaction. Satisfied customers tend to give higher ratings within the e-WOM (electronic word-of-mouth) system (Sari & Mustaqim, 2024).

3. **The Effect of Store Ratings on the Income of Micro Culinary Businesses in Cirebon City.**

     The test results show that store ratings have a significant effect on the income of micro culinary businesses in Cirebon City, with a significance value of 0.000 < 0.05. This finding also supports the study conducted by Lantang et al. (2023), which found that restaurant ratings and customer reviews positively and significantly influence consumers' purchase intentions on the GrabFood application, with a significant determination value of 55.9%. This indicates that good ratings encourage higher demand, which in turn impacts sales turnover (Almayani, et all, 2023).

4. **The Effect of GrabFood Usage on the Income of Micro Culinary Businesses through Store Ratings in Cirebon City.**

     The test results show that GrabFood usage has a direct effect of 0.262 and an indirect effect of 0.411 on the income of micro culinary businesses through store ratings in Cirebon City. These results indicate that the indirect effect is greater than the direct effect, suggesting that store ratings mediate the relationship between GrabFood usage and the income of micro culinary businesses in Cirebon City.This finding is consistent with the study conducted by Muhammad Agustian Fandriansyah (2022) on Food & Beverage MSMEs in Cirebon, which reported that the utilization of GrabFood and GoFood can increase sales turnover by up to 40%, especially when merchants maintain high ratings through consistent service and product quality. Based on this empirical evidence, it can be concluded that store ratings act as an intervening variable in the relationship between GrabFood usage and business income. Therefore, the positive effect of using this platform will be more optimal when accompanied by good customer ratings, which serve as indicators of consumer trust and service quality (Shakila Quintanti An Najwa & Fuadi, 2023).

CONCLUSION

     Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that the use of the GrabFood platform by micro culinary business owners has a positive impact on improving business performance, both directly and indirectly. Directly, operational convenience through the GrabMerchant application, timeliness of delivery, transaction security, and the responsiveness of GrabFood services contribute to increased efficiency and a higher number of sales transactions, which ultimately lead to higher business income (Harahap, et all, 2025). Indirectly, the quality of service perceived by consumers through their transaction experiences with businesses connected to GrabFood encourages customers to provide positive ratings and reviews for the store (Panggungrejo & Pringsewu, 2022). High store ratings reflect the quality of service and customer satisfaction, which in turn enhance trust, loyalty, and the likelihood of repeat purchases (Nainggolan, et all, 2024). Thus, store ratings function as an intervening variable that strengthens the influence of GrabFood usage on the income of micro culinary businesses, as positive ratings also increase business visibility and attractiveness in the eyes of both new and existing customers within the digital platform ecosystem.

     To maximize the benefits of GrabFood, micro culinary entrepreneurs should strengthen their digital marketing efforts by maintaining consistent service quality to secure high ratings and positive reviews. These ratings need to be monitored regularly to

build customer trust and increase store visibility. Entrepreneurs are also encouraged to utilize GrabMerchant promotional features and enhance their presence on social media to reach wider audiences. Using platform analytics will help tailor marketing strategies, while improving digital literacy will enable more effective management of online business operations and support income growth in the digital marketplace.
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