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## Enhancing MSME Competitiveness In The Creative Industry Through Human Resources Development In South Tangerang

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to determine the strategy to increase the competitiveness of creative industry MSMEs in the digital era through human resource development in the creative industry, especially the Wood Processing Industry in South Tangerang. Findings reveal that HR development especially in digital skills training such as product design, online marketing, and online store management combined with the integration of technology into production processes, significantly improves efficiency, productivity, and market reach. Social media platforms, particularly WhatsApp, Instagram, and TikTok, are essential tools for marketing and customer engagement. The study contributes to the literature by providing an applied framework for enhancing MSME competitiveness through targeted HR capacity building and digital adaptation strategies. This study concludes that although there have been efforts to take advantage of digital opportunities, there is still room for further development in the use of technology and more effective online marketing strategies.

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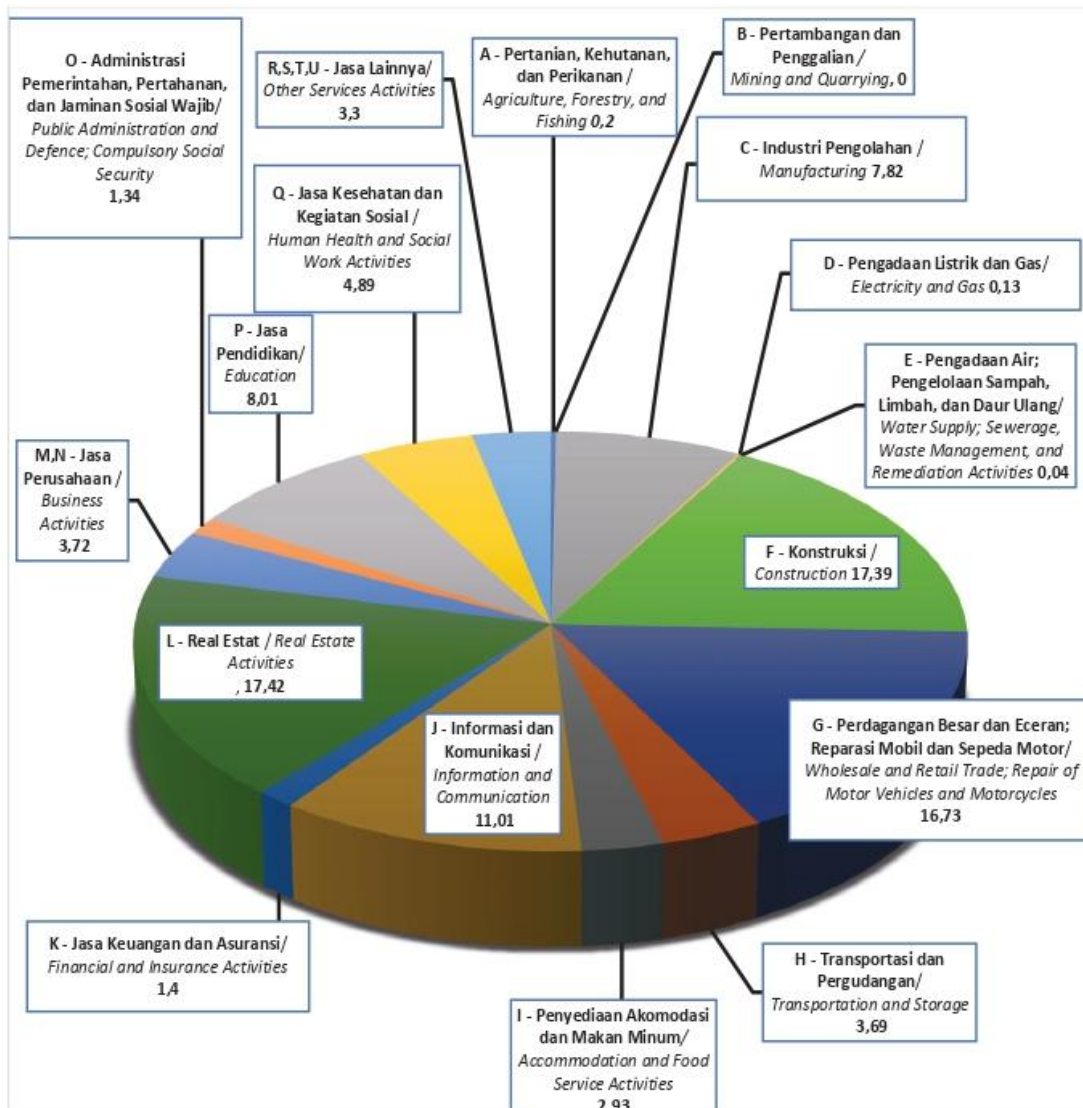


## INTRODUCTION

In the midst of increasingly tight competition, business actors are required to continue to present creative, innovative, and unique strategies in order to survive and develop sustainably. This is very important, especially for MSMEs that play a significant role in local economic growth and must be able to adapt to market dynamics and technological advances that continue to change. [1]

This urgency is increasingly felt when looking at data from the Central Statistics Agency

(BPS) of South Tangerang City. Based on the 2023 sectoral GRDP, the Real Estate sector was recorded as the largest contributor to the GRDP of South Tangerang City, which was 17.42%. Followed by the construction sector in second place with a contribution of 17.39%, then the Motor Vehicle Trade and Repair sector at 16.73%. In addition, there are also contributions from other industrial sectors, as illustrated in the distribution of the percentage of GRDP by business field in 2023 below in [figure 1](#). [2]



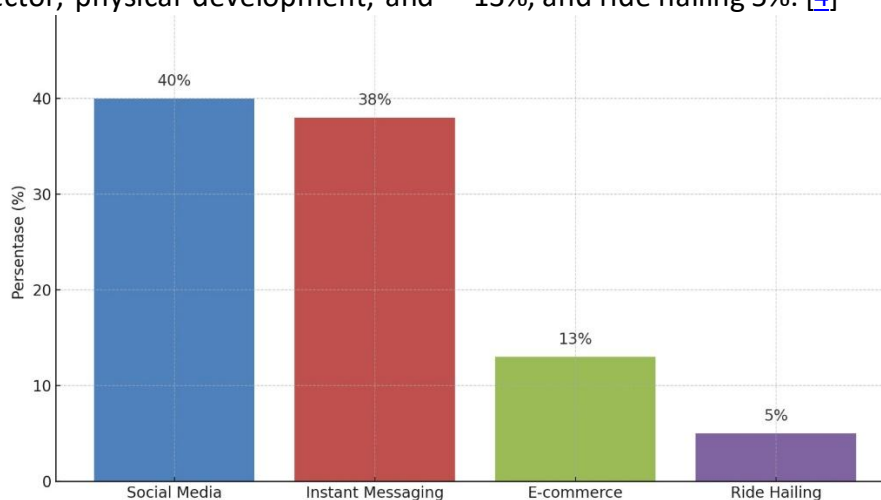
**Figure 1.** Distribution of Percentage of Gross Regional Domestic Product Based on Current Prices by Business Sector in South Tangerang City, 2023

Source: BPS (Central Statistics Agency) South Tangerang 2025 [2]

According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS), the economic composition in South Tangerang City in 2023 is still dominated by several main sectors. The Real Estate sector is the largest contributor to the Gross Regional Domestic Product (GRDP) with a percentage of 17.42%, followed by the Construction sector at 17.39% and the Motor Vehicle and Motorcycle Repair sector at 16.73%, but the processing industry, including the wood processing industry at 7.82%. This fact indicates that economic growth in the region is still focused on the property sector, physical development, and

vehicle repair services, while other business sectors including the wood processing industry have not shown even development. [3]

The phenomenon that occurs in the business industry is that the use of digitalization by business industry players is still limited, where only a portion of MSMEs (Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises) truly maximize the various available digital platforms, namely "As many as 40% of MSMEs use social media, 38% use instant messaging, use e-commerce 13%, and ride hailing 5%. [4]



**Figure 2.** Use of digital platforms by MSMEs [5], [6]

The data shows in [figure 2](#) that most MSMEs in Indonesia prefer to use social media (40%) such as Instagram and Facebook to promote their products because they are easy to use and reach many people. In addition, 38% of MSMEs use instant messaging applications such as WhatsApp to communicate directly with customers, receive orders, or provide product information. [7]

Meanwhile, only 13% of MSMEs use e-commerce platforms such as Shopee or Tokopedia, which despite having large market potential, are still considered complicated by some business actors. Finally, 5% of MSMEs utilize ride hailing services such as GoFood or GrabFood, usually from the

culinary sector, to facilitate product delivery to customers. [8]

As this is reinforced in research by Budiyanto & Effendy (2020) [9], among the obstacles to the development of MSMEs are "Limited business facilities and infrastructure are mainly related to technological tools. Most MSMEs use technology that is still simple so it is difficult to compete in terms of quality and quantity." Whereas "Promotion is very effective through online media, especially more effective promotion through social media compared to promotion through electronic media and print media. [9]

As a step to overcome this problem, a study is needed regarding "Strategy to Increase the

Competitiveness of Creative Industry MSMEs in the Digital Era through Human Resource Development in the Creative Industry in South Tangerang". Despite previous research addressing MSME digital adoption, there is limited empirical evidence focusing on the intersection between HR development and competitiveness in the creative industry, particularly within the wood processing sector in South Tangerang. This gap underscores the need for a study that not only identifies strategies but also links them to concrete HR capacity-building initiatives tailored to the challenges of the digital era.[10]

Competitiveness Theory in Mashuri and Nurjannah (2020) is "The core of a company's success or failure. Competition determines the accuracy of a company's activities that can support its performance, such as innovation or good implementation." According to Wibowo et.al (2015) [11] There are several advantages that can be used by companies in competition, namely price, market share, brand, product quality, consumer satisfaction and distribution channels.

The creative sector is defined as The invention, production, and distribution of products and services that emphasize the use of creative ideas and intellectual resources. This definition encompasses all aspects of the creative industry. After that, goods and services are placed through a knowledge-based process, resulting in the production of artistically created and economically useful products and services that are well received by customers.[12]

The digital era is A time when most people in that era use digital systems in their daily lives." Meanwhile, according to Maryati and Masriani (2019) that "The digital era has had an impact on the development of life, including the life of the business world

(business). Without large capital and place, people can run a business by utilizing technology through social media. [13]

The digital era according to Andhika Putra, et al., (2022) [14] is A period marked by the dominance of digital technology in various aspects of human life, including communication, business, education, and entertainment. Technologies such as the internet, computing devices, artificial intelligence (AI), big data, cloud computing, and the Internet of Things (IoT) have brought significant changes to the way individuals and organizations interact and carry out daily activities.

Human Resources (HR) Theory is the most important asset in an organization, which includes all individuals who contribute to achieving the goals of the company or institution. HR does not only refer to workers or employees, but also includes the skills, knowledge, abilities, and potential they have. HR management is a strategic process for managing people in an organization, which involves recruiting, training, developing, and providing incentives to improve employee productivity and well-being. [15]

## RESEARCH METHODS

In this study, the research approach used is using a qualitative method. According to Effendy, AA (2018) [9], "Qualitative research is intended to gain a deep understanding of the situation at hand.

### Method of collecting data

According to Sugiyono, (2013) [16] Data collection techniques are the most important step in research, because the main objective of research is to obtain data, without knowing data collection techniques, researchers will not obtain data that meets the established data standards.

The study involved 14 MSME actors from seven districts in South Tangerang, selected through purposive sampling to ensure diverse representation in business scale, operational experience, and level of digital adoption. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis, following three stages: (1) coding interview transcripts, (2) grouping codes into themes, and (3) interpreting themes in relation to the theoretical framework. Data triangulation was applied through cross-verification between interviews, observations, and documentation to ensure credibility. [17]

In another sense, Data collection according to Effendy, AA (2019) [18], namely "Collecting data at the research location by conducting observations, interviews, and documentation by determining the data collection strategy that is considered appropriate and to determine the focus and depth of data in the next data collection process." The data collection techniques include [16]:

1. **Observation**, namely As a data collection technique, it has specific characteristics when compared with other techniques, namely interviews and questionnaires.

2. **Documentation**, According to Arikunto (2010) Documentation is searching for and collecting data regarding things or variables in the form of notes, transcripts, books, magazines, agendas, meeting minutes, and so on.

3. **Interview**, namely used as a data collection technique when researchers want to conduct preliminary studies to find problems that must be researched, and also when researchers want to know things from respondents in more depth and the number of respondents is small or few.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on Results of Interviews with Creative Industry MSMEs Actors, namely the Wood Processing Industry in South Tangerang City regarding Strategy to Increase the Competitiveness of Creative Industry MSMEs in the Digital Era through Human Resource Development, namely for MSME actors from various sub-districts, including from The following are the districts of Pamulang, Pondok Aren, Ciputat, East Ciputat, North Serpong, Setu and Serpong. The transcript of the interview results is as shown in the [table 1](#) below.

**Table 1.** Transcript of Interview Results of Creative Industry MSMEs Actors (Wood Processing Industry) in South Tangerang City

| Informant of South Tangerang MSME Actors | What is the strategy of creative industry MSMEs in developing human resources to face challenges in the current digital era                                                                                                   | What digital promotional media are used and what strategies are used to increase competitiveness in the digital era                                                   |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pamulang District                        | In the wood industry, we are very aware of the importance of digital skills to face the challenges of the times. Therefore, we regularly hold training and also introduce online marketing in order to reach a wider market." | Instagram and TikTok and actively share content regularly via Instagram and TikTok Live, while continuing to focus on improving the quality of the products we offer. |

| <b>Informant of South Tangerang MSME Actors</b> | <b>What is the strategy of creative industry MSMEs in developing human resources to face challenges in the current digital era</b>                                                                                 | <b>What digital promotional media are used and what strategies are used to increase competitiveness in the digital era</b>                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Pondok Aren District                            | Our team strives to master social media as a tool to sell our wood products. In addition, we provide training in managing online stores and product photos so that the product display can be more attractive.     | Yes, just WhatsApp, because we focus more on maintaining the quality of the wood and the final product. Competition with online stores does not have much impact, because many customers come back to us after being disappointed with online products that do not meet expectations.                      |
| Ciputat District                                | We believe that human resource development is the main key. Therefore, we often hold training, starting from product design training to training in marketing communication through social media and Market Place. | Yes Market Place, Facebook and whats app, we need to adjust the price because many online competitors offer cheaper prices. We also routinely check Facebook and the marketplace so that we can respond quickly if there is an order, so that it can be processed immediately according to consumer demand |
| East Ciputat District                           | We in the wood industry are very aware of the importance of digital skills to face the challenges of the times. Therefore, we regularly hold training and also introduce online marketing to reach a wider market. | Yes, Facebook, Google Maps and others. We use wood from demolished houses because the price is cheaper, so the profit is bigger than buying wood from regular material stores, because others usually only buy it from material stores.                                                                    |
| North Serpong District                          | "To increase efficiency, we integrate technology into our wood production process. We also provide training to the production team on how to operate machines in the wood processing industry.                     | Yes, just use WhatsApp. The most important thing for us is to keep customers loyal, maintain product quality, and build good relationships with relations such as contractors and other partners.                                                                                                          |
| Setu District                                   | "We support HR development by encouraging employees to take training because in this digital era, business competition is very tight so they must be able to compete with other businesses.                        | For now, we are more focused on WhatsApp, the strategy is to always maintain quality and relationships. Quality remains the main thing, because if the product is made carelessly...Later, consumers will not want to buy our goods again if we make them carelessly.                                      |

| <b>Informant of South Tangerang MSME Actors</b> | <b>What is the strategy of creative industry MSMEs in developing human resources to face challenges in the current digital era</b>                                                                                               | <b>What digital promotional media are used and what strategies are used to increase competitiveness in the digital era</b>                                                                                                                                                                     |
|-------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Serpong District                                | "As part of the creative industry, we provide space for employees to develop their creativity through product design and innovation workshops as well as training on how to market products through social media and e-commerce. | Whats app, Facebook and have used e-commerce too, We focus on adding resellers to expand sales, because relationships are the main asset. Marketing through brochures is now less effective, so it is better to maintain quality and consumer satisfaction so that sales continue to increase. |

Based on interviews with creative industry MSME actors in South Tangerang in [table 1](#), it can be concluded that human resource (HR) development and the use of digital promotional media are two important elements that support the success of their businesses in facing the challenges of the current digital era.

First, MSMEs in various sub-districts realize that human resource development is the main key to increasing competitiveness. They actively provide training to their employees and teams to improve digital skills, such as product design training, online marketing, and online store management. For example, in Pamulang and Ciputat Timur sub-districts, MSMEs routinely provide training to prepare their teams to face the demands of an increasingly digital market. In Serpong sub-district, training is also directed at developing creativity through product design and innovation workshops.

In addition, MSMEs also focus on the use of technology for efficiency in the production process. In Serpong Utara District, the integration of production machines and training to operate the machines helped increase productivity. Other MSMEs, such as

those in Setu District, emphasized the importance of maintaining product quality in order to remain competitive, because poor quality will make consumers reluctant to buy the product.

These findings align with Wibowo et al. (2015), [\[11\]](#) which emphasize product quality and market responsiveness as key competitive advantages, and with Maryati & Masriani (2019) [\[19\]](#), highlighting the transformative potential of digital tools in business operations. The adoption of social media and e-commerce platforms by South Tangerang MSMEs demonstrates practical applications of digital era theory, while HR training initiatives reflect HRM principles of skill enhancement for competitive performance.

In terms of digital promotional media, almost all sub-districts use different platforms to market their products. Social media such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and Facebook are the main choices because of the ease of access and direct interaction with customers. In Pamulang Sub-district, for example, Instagram and TikTok are actively used to share content and promote products, while in Pondok Aren and Setu Sub-districts,

WhatsApp is more dominant because of the ease of direct communication with customers. This social media is also used to build closer relationships with customers and maintain their loyalty.

In addition, to expand market reach, MSMEs in Serpong District added resellers to expand sales, while in Ciputat and East Ciputat, they utilized marketplaces and Google Maps to increase the visibility of their products. The use of social media and marketplaces is an effective strategy in reaching a wider market, although MSMEs are also aware that cheaper prices in online markets can be a challenge to face. Overall, MSMEs players in South Tangerang show a strong understanding of

the importance of human resource development and technology adaptation to remain competitive in the digital era. They do not only rely on training and skills development, but also utilize social media and digital platforms to expand market reach and improve their business competitiveness.

One of the features of the NVivo software to display text visually is Word Frequency Query. This feature helps researchers display the frequency of interesting and informative words. Based on the search results with this feature, a collection of words that appear most frequently in the data displayed in the following image is obtained in [figure 3](#).

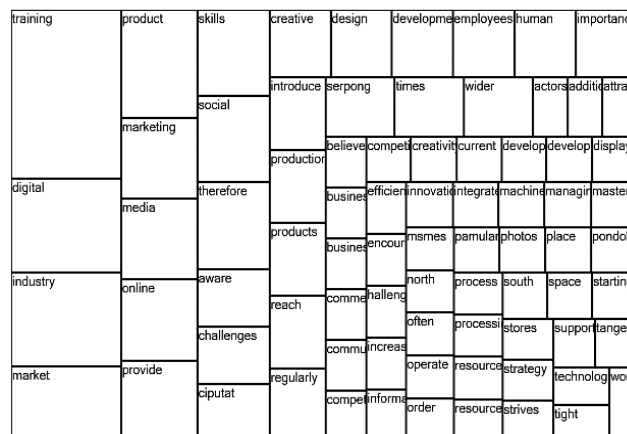


**Figure 3.** Human Resource Development Word Cloud

**Source:**Data Processed From Nvivo

From the image above in [figure 3](#), it can be seen that the word "training" dominates the participants' conversations from all the words. In addition to word clouds, tree map

can also display text about words that frequently appear regarding Empowerment as follows in [figure 4](#).



**Figure 4.** Human Resource Development Tree Map

**Source:**Data Processed From Nvivo

The following is a summary of the frequency percentages of the most frequently occurring words in the data processed by NVivo 15 software.

**Table 2.** Summary of the Percentage Frequency of the Words

| Word        | Length | Count | (%)  |
|-------------|--------|-------|------|
| training    | 8      | 9     | 5,45 |
| digital     | 7      | 5     | 3,03 |
| industry    | 8      | 5     | 3,03 |
| market      | 6      | 4     | 2,42 |
| product     | 7      | 4     | 2,42 |
| marketing   | 9      | 3     | 1,82 |
| media       | 5      | 3     | 1,82 |
| online      | 6      | 3     | 1,82 |
| provide     | 7      | 3     | 1,82 |
| skills      | 6      | 3     | 1,82 |
| social      | 6      | 3     | 1,82 |
| therefore   | 9      | 3     | 1,82 |
| aware       | 5      | 2     | 1,21 |
| challenges  | 10     | 2     | 1,21 |
| ciputat     | 7      | 2     | 1,21 |
| creative    | 8      | 2     | 1,21 |
| design      | 6      | 2     | 1,21 |
| development | 11     | 2     | 1,21 |
| employees   | 9      | 2     | 1,21 |
| human       | 5      | 2     | 1,21 |
| importance  | 10     | 2     | 1,21 |
| introduce   | 9      | 2     | 1,21 |
| production  | 10     | 2     | 1,21 |
| products    | 8      | 2     | 1,21 |
| reach       | 5      | 2     | 1,21 |
| regularly   | 9      | 2     | 1,21 |
| serpong     | 7      | 2     | 1,21 |
| times       | 5      | 2     | 1,21 |
| wider       | 5      | 2     | 1,21 |

Source: Data Processed From Nvivo

The author then continued the analysis from the coding results before creating the project map. The following is processed data

**Table 3.** Nodes Human Resource Development

| Codes                                             | Files | References |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------|------------|
| Human Resources Development                       | 1     | 7          |
| <b>Eksternal Training</b>                         | 1     | 1          |
| Encouragement for external training participation | 1     | 1          |
| <b>Training</b>                                   | 1     | 6          |
| Training in machine operation                     | 1     | 1          |
| Training in product design                        | 1     | 1          |

| Codes                                      | Files | References |
|--------------------------------------------|-------|------------|
| Training in social media management        | 1     | 3          |
| Training on digital skills                 | 1     | 2          |
| <b>Workshop</b>                            | 1     | 1          |
| Workshops on product design and innovation | 1     | 1          |

Source: Data Processed From Nvivo

Next, the researcher presents Human Resource Development in the Creative Industry through a project map that can be seen in [Figure 5](#). The Project Map is made based on coding themes that can be used to explore and present data relationships.

Based on the project map that was made, 3 (three) Human Resource Development in the creative industry MSMEs were obtained which were divided into three approaches, namely Internal Training, External Training and Workshops.

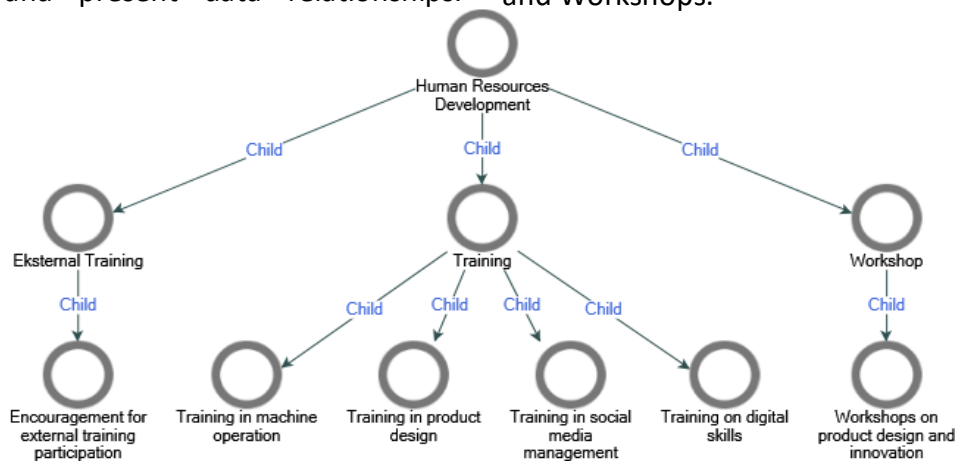
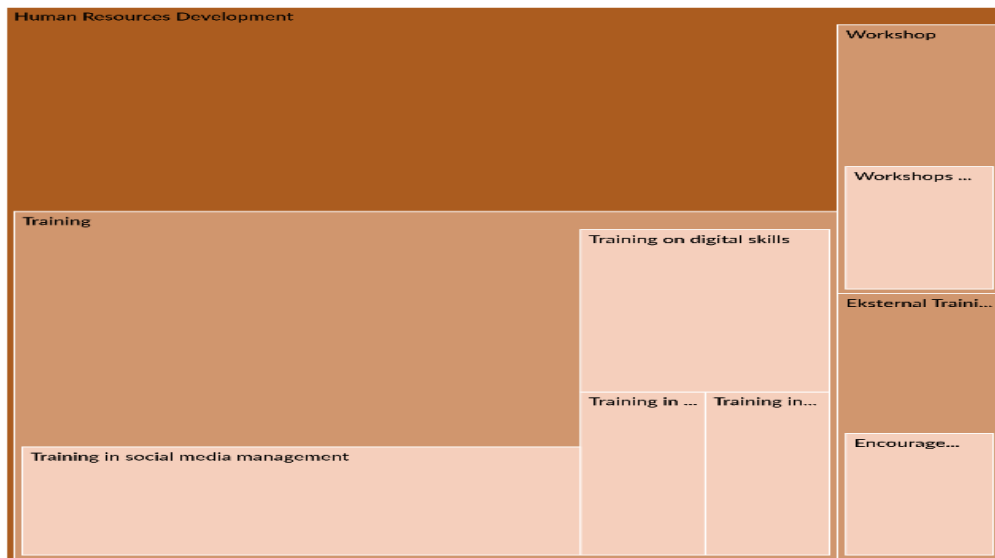


Figure 5. Human Resource Development Project Map

Source: Data Processed From Nvivo 15

The Human Resources Development project map can also be presented in the form of a hierarchy diagram, which is a visual representation showing a set of four tiered rectangles of various sizes that indicate the level or proportion of coding within each node. This diagram helps to easily identify the relative significance and emphasis of each indicator based on the amount of coding data. As illustrated in [Figure 6](#), the hierarchy diagram reveals that the Training indicator (Internal Training) holds the largest percentage of coding among all categories, indicating that it is the most dominant and frequently referenced aspect in the Human Resources Development project. This suggests that internal training plays a central role and receives the greatest attention in

the overall HRD strategy. Furthermore, the prominence of the Training indicator implies that continuous learning and competency development are key priorities in the Human Resources Development strategy. Other indicators—such as performance appraisal, career development, and employee engagement—although still significant, appear with smaller proportions, suggesting that while they contribute to HRD efforts, they may play a more supportive or complementary role compared to internal training. Overall, the hierarchy diagram effectively highlights the strategic focus areas of HRD initiatives and provides insights into where the organization invests most of its developmental resources.



**Figure 6.** Human Resource Development Hierarchy Diagram

Source: Data Processed From Nvivo 15

Overall, SMES (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) players in South Tangerang demonstrate a comprehensive and strategic understanding of the crucial role that human resource development (HRD) and technology adaptation play in maintaining and enhancing competitiveness in the rapidly evolving digital era. Their awareness reflects not only a recognition of the need to build internal capacity through structured training programs, continuous learning initiatives, and upskilling activities, but also an appreciation of the broader digital transformation landscape that shapes today's business environment.

These entrepreneurs do not merely depend on conventional training and technical skills enhancement; rather, they actively engage in leveraging social media networks, e-commerce platforms, and digital marketing tools as part of an integrated approach to business development. By doing so, they are able to broaden their market reach, strengthen customer relationships, and enhance brand visibility, enabling them to compete more effectively with larger enterprises.

Furthermore, the proactive utilization of digital platforms indicates that many MSMEs actors are beginning to adopt data-driven decision-making and embrace innovative business models, such as online marketplaces, digital payment systems, and customer analytics. This trend signifies a shift from traditional business practices toward more resilient, agile, and technology-oriented operations. It also highlights a growing awareness among MSMEs owners of the importance of aligning human resource competencies with the demands of digitalization to sustain long-term growth.

In summary, the findings underscore that MSMEs players in South Tangerang are not only adaptive but also progressive in integrating human resource development with digital transformation strategies. Their ability to combine skill enhancement with technological utilization positions them as dynamic contributors to local economic growth and as vital participants in Indonesia's broader digital economy ecosystem.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that human resource development (HRD) and utilization of digital promotional media are the main factors in the success of their businesses in the digital era. MSMEs actively conduct training to improve digital skills, such as product design, online marketing, and online store management. In addition, they also integrate technology into the production process to increase efficiency and productivity, while still focusing on product quality as a way to compete in the market. In addition to human resource development, the use of social media such as WhatsApp, Instagram, and TikTok has become an important tool in marketing products and building

relationships with customers. MSMEs also utilize marketplaces and other digital platforms to expand their market reach. Although the challenge of lower prices in the online market is a concern, adaptive digital marketing strategies and improving product quality continue to be their main focus in increasing competitiveness in an increasingly competitive market.

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## BIOGRAPHIES OF AUTHORS

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