**West Science Social and Humanities Studies**
Vol. 4, No. 10, October 2026: pp. 1225-1241

# Trademark and Copyright Registration Assistance to Strengthen Legal Protection for Culinary MSMEs

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**Article Info**

***Article history:***

Received Oct, 2026
Revised Oct, 2026
Accepted Oct, 2026

***Keywords:***

Legal Assistance
Trademarks
Copyright
Culinary MSMEs
Intellectual Property

**ABSTRACT**

Culinary micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) possess economic and creative assets that require legal protection through intellectual property rights, particularly trademarks and copyrights. This community engagement program aims to strengthen MSME actors' legal literacy and practical capacity in identifying, preparing, and registering intellectual property through the Directorate General of Intellectual Property's online system. The activity employed a participatory legal assistance approach involving initial surveys, in-depth interviews, questionnaires, legal education, focus group discussions, document preparation, technical assistance, and post-activity evaluation. The results indicate that MSME actors generally understand the importance of business identity but have limited understanding of the legal distinction between trademark protection and copyright protection. Practical difficulties were also identified in determining protectable intellectual property objects, preparing administrative documents, selecting trademark classes, and navigating the online registration process. Direct assistance helps bridge the gap between normative legal protection and the practical capacity of MSME actors to access intellectual property services. The program therefore demonstrates that practice-based and continuous legal assistance is more effective for strengthening MSME intellectual property protection than information-based socialization alone.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) are a crucial component of the economic structure, not only playing a role in production and employment, but also producing various identities, innovations, and creative works of economic value. In the culinary sector, this value can be reflected through the business name, brand, logo, packaging design, product photography, and various promotional content used to build product identity and competitiveness. In this context, Intellectual Property (IP) should not be viewed solely as an administrative matter, but also as a legal protection instrument and a strategic asset for business sustainability. Literature on MSMEs indicates that IP management is related to strategic business interests, including innovation and competitiveness, so that intellectual asset

protection needs to be part of business management [1].

IP protection is increasingly relevant in a digitalized business environment, as business identities and works are increasingly easily distributed, replicated, and used by others. In the Indonesian legal system, protection of the identities and creative works of MSMEs has a normative basis. Trademarks are protected through Law Number 20 of 2016 concerning Trademarks and Geographical Indications, while copyright is regulated through Law Number 28 of 2014 concerning Copyright. Conceptually, trademark registration plays a crucial role because the Indonesian trademark protection system uses a constitutive principle, so trademark protection is fundamentally linked to registration. Studies on intellectual property and small and medium enterprises also demonstrate the importance of IP protection in supporting business sustainability and development [2]. Thus, MSMEs who have used their business name in trading activities but have not yet obtained protection through the appropriate legal mechanism still face risks if another party has already obtained protection for the same or essentially similar brand.

This issue is becoming increasingly important because business development is not always accompanied by an increased understanding of IP protection. Research on MSMEs shows that intangible assets are relevant to business development, but their utilization still faces various limitations at the business actor level [3]. A similar situation is also evident in the protection of creative works. Research on MSMEs shows that understanding of intellectual property protection in marketing and innovation activities still needs to be strengthened [3]. These findings demonstrate that the issue of IP protection lies not solely in the existence of regulations, but also in the ability of business actors to understand and implement these legal instruments in their business activities.

This situation is relevant to the situation of culinary MSMEs in Sukabumi Regency. Based on the activity proposal, the number of MSMEs in Sukabumi Regency will increase from 36,317 units in 2022 to 38,564 units in 2023 and 40,950 units in 2024. This growth demonstrates the region's significant economic potential, particularly in the business sector producing local products and culinary products. However, the increase in the number of business actors does not automatically indicate increased protection for their IP assets. Initial mapping results from the activity indicate that some culinary MSMEs have used business names, logos, packaging designs, and promotional materials, but do not adequately understand the IP objects that can be protected and the mechanisms for obtaining such protection. This condition indicates a gap between the growth of business activity and legal readiness to secure the identity and creative assets of businesses.

This gap became increasingly apparent from initial interviews with MSMEs. Businesses generally understood that business names and identities were important for marketing, but not all understood the difference between brand use and legal protection through registration. Some also did not understand that logos, packaging designs, product photography, and certain creative content could be related to copyright protection. Administratively, obstacles were encountered in determining IP objects, preparing documents, determining the class of goods or services, and understanding the application stages through the Directorate General of Intellectual Property (DJKI) online system. Thus, the problem faced was not simply a lack of knowledge about the importance of IP, but rather an implementation gap, namely the gap between the availability of legal protection instruments and the ability of MSMEs to actually use those instruments.

These findings align with previous research showing that legal education and mentoring play a crucial role in improving MSMEs' ability to access IP protection. Research on optimizing trademark registration policies for MSMEs demonstrates the importance of outreach, streamlined procedures, and mentoring to ensure more effective utilization of protection mechanisms

[4]. Similarly, legal education activities regarding trademark registration show that increasing legal awareness among MSMEs needs to be directed at the ability to understand and carry out the registration process [5]. These findings show that interventions that simply convey legal norms are not necessarily sufficient to produce changes in administrative behavior.

*State of the art*This study demonstrates that intellectual property protection for MSMEs is no longer merely understood as a matter of compliance with legal norms, but also relates to the ability of business actors to access and utilize such protection mechanisms. Previous research has shown that complex registration bureaucracy, administrative costs, and low literacy are several obstacles to obtaining IP protection.[6]On a broader level, research on the IP legal culture of creative economy actors in Indonesia shows that there are institutional issues, IP education, and legal culture that still need to be strengthened [7]. Meanwhile, research on digital training and mentoring for MSMEs shows that hands-on practice through the DJKI system can improve brand literacy among business actors [8].

Thus, previous research has provided important insights into the urgency of registration, inhibiting factors, and the effectiveness of education and mentoring. However, there is still room for development in integrating all these stages into a single mentoring model, starting with IP asset identification, mapping needs and obstacles, document readiness checks, online submission practices, and evaluating business actors' capabilities after mentoring. This study focuses on linking legal knowledge with direct administrative actions, so that mentoring does not stop at raising awareness but is directed toward developing the practical capabilities of MSMEs to access intellectual property protection.

*Research gap*The key to this activity lies in the suboptimal approach that bridges legal norms with the practical capabilities of MSMEs to realize IP protection. This issue is crucial because the availability of regulations and digital service systems does not automatically guarantee IP registration or recording. The ability of business actors to utilize digital technology and services is also a crucial part of the business transformation process [9]. Therefore, the needs of MSMEs do not stop at information about the benefits of brands and copyrights, but include assistance in translating this knowledge into concrete actions [10].

Based on this research gap, the originality of this activity lies in the implementation of direct practice-based legal assistance that integrates IP asset mapping, interviews and needs identification, legal education, document readiness checks, assistance with the application process through the DJKI system, and participant competency evaluation. This approach shifts the orientation of the activity from mere legal awareness to legal action, namely helping MSMEs move from a state of understanding the importance of IP to the ability to prepare and access IP protection in a concrete manner. This approach also positions assistance as a process that does not stop at providing information, but is directed towards developing practical skills that can be used by business actors.

Thus, this activity aims to provide technical assistance to culinary MSMEs in preparing documents and implementing the online trademark and copyright registration process, while also identifying the obstacles they face and formulating practical solutions to address them. Ultimately, this activity is expected to not only improve legal literacy but also strengthen the capacity of MSMEs to transform the intellectual property currently used in business activities into assets that receive legal protection and have stronger economic value.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### *2.1 Intellectual Property as an Instrument for Stremgthening MSMEs*

Intellectual property plays a crucial role in supporting the development of micro, small, and medium enterprises

(MSMEs), not only as a legal protection instrument but also as an asset that can foster innovation and increase business competitiveness. For MSMEs, intellectual property can be embedded in various business elements, such as branding, design, visual identity, packaging, promotional work, and other forms of creativity that differentiate them from other businesses. Therefore, understanding intellectual property is crucial for building business sustainability, particularly in the MSME sector, which relies on creativity and product differentiation.

Research shows that intellectual property has a significant relationship with the development of the MSME ecosystem in Indonesia. Research on 110 MSMEs indicates a positive relationship between awareness and utilization of intellectual property and protection, innovation, and business competitiveness. These findings demonstrate that intellectual property not only serves to protect creative output but can also be part of a business development strategy. Improving MSMEs' understanding of intellectual property and simplifying the registration process are necessary aspects to increase the use of intellectual property in business activities [11].

From an innovation perspective, Hidayat and Pok explain that intangible factors also contribute to the innovation process of MSMEs. Research conducted on MSMEs in Indonesia shows that intangible factors contribute to business stages related to innovation efforts, output, and productivity. This demonstrates that resources that are not always physical, including intellectual assets and knowledge possessed by business actors, can be part of an MSME's ability to generate innovation and improve business performance [12].

The relationship between intellectual property protection and innovation is also evident in research by Song et al., who found a nonlinear relationship between intellectual property protection and a company's innovation performance. The study showed that intellectual property protection is related to innovation performance through several mechanisms, including research and development intensity and the quality of information disclosure. These findings suggest that legal protection of intellectual property needs to be positioned as part of the innovation ecosystem, not merely as an administrative measure after a product or work is produced [13].

Furthermore, Zhao et al. found that strengthening intellectual property protection can improve the quality of corporate innovation. This protection is related to research and development collaboration and the company's capacity to absorb knowledge. Thus, intellectual property protection can be seen as an instrument that provides certainty for businesses to develop and utilize their creative output more securely [14].

Based on these studies, it is clear that strengthening intellectual property protection

for MSMEs extends beyond registration, but also to increasing legal awareness, intellectual asset utilization, innovation, and business competitiveness. In the context of culinary MSMEs, this need becomes even more relevant because business identity can be expressed through trade names, logos, packaging designs, promotional materials, product photos, and various other creative works. Therefore, assistance with intellectual property registration is necessary to help MSMEs transform their understanding of intellectual property into concrete legal protection measures.

### 2.2 *Trademark Protection and Registration for MSMEs*

A trademark is a form of intellectual property that plays a crucial role in the sustainability of business activities, as it serves as an identity that distinguishes one business's products or services from those of others. For culinary MSMEs, a trademark is not only associated with the business name but also forms part of the product's identity, recognized by consumers. Therefore, the existence of a legally protected trademark can provide a stronger foundation for businesses to maintain their identity and reputation.

Morales et al. demonstrated that brands are linked to innovation activity in MSMEs. Research on MSMEs in the Netherlands suggests that brand use can help capture innovation activity that is not always reflected in patents. In fact, the combination of brand and patent data can provide a broader picture of innovation undertaken by MSMEs. These findings demonstrate that brands serve not only as a commercial identity but can also be an important indicator of a company's innovation activity [15].

These findings are reinforced by Flikkema, Castaldi, and de Man, who, through a retrospective review of research on brands and innovation, explained that the relationship between trademark registration and innovation has developed into a separate field of research. Brands can be part of a company's strategy to introduce new products, build market identity, and differentiate innovations from competitors' products. Thus, brand protection has strategic relevance for MSMEs developing products and differentiating themselves in the market [16].

However, the problem faced by MSMEs is not only the importance of brands, but also low legal awareness and understanding of registration procedures. Rahmawati found that MSMEs still tend to ignore the importance of brand protection. In the Indonesian context, the study emphasized the importance of brand registration to provide legal protection and prevent the use or registration of similar brands by other parties. The study also positioned legal counseling as one strategy to increase MSME awareness of the importance of brand registration [17]

Rahmawati raised a similar issue, identifying low legal literacy and the complexity of the registration process as barriers for MSMEs in obtaining trademark protection. This

situation becomes even more critical in a registration system that prioritizes the first-to-file principle, as unregistered trademarks run the risk of facing problems if another party registers the trademark used in business activities. Therefore, increasing legal literacy and supporting the registration process are crucial in strengthening MSME trademark protection.

Based on this research, trademark registration for culinary MSMEs cannot be viewed solely as an administrative obligation. It is part of a strategy to protect business identity and to provide legal certainty regarding the use of product names and identities. In practice, there remains a gap between MSMEs' understanding of the benefits of trademarks and their ability to register independently. This situation highlights the importance of mentoring activities that not only provide information but also help business owners understand the stages and prepare for trademark registration requirements.

### *2.3 Copyright Protection and the Importance of Legal Assistance for Culinary MSMEs*

Beyond branding, copyright plays a significant role in culinary MSMEs, as business development involves more than just physical products, but also a variety of creative works used to support marketing activities. Logos, packaging designs, product photos, promotional materials, digital content, and other visual works can all be part of an MSME's identity and marketing strategy. With the development of digital commerce, these works are becoming increasingly disseminated, while also becoming increasingly vulnerable to unauthorized use or imitation by others.

Rahmah, Aisyah, and Ulfah found that MSMEs' legal understanding of copyright protection is still relatively low, particularly regarding the economic benefits and legal protection procedures. The study was conducted on MSMEs in the food and beverage sector and showed that limited knowledge, economic constraints, perceptions of complicated procedures, and minimal outreach are factors influencing low copyright understanding. The study also confirmed that copyright protection plays a role in preventing imitation of creative products and can support increased MSME competitiveness [17].

The issue of legal protection for MSMEs is also related to the ability of business actors to understand the forms of protection available. Nainggolan pointed out that MSMEs still face various obstacles in protecting intellectual property, particularly related to legal understanding, registration costs, the complexity of administrative procedures, and a lack of outreach. The study recommends simplifying procedures, providing financial support, improving legal education, and strengthening synergies between the government, academics, and MSMEs [18].

These findings indicate that the issue of copyright and trademark protection in MSMEs

is not solely caused by the lack of legal instruments, but also by the gap between the availability of legal protection and the ability of business actors to access and utilize it. In the context of culinary MSMEs, this gap is evident when business actors already have a business name, logo, packaging design, and various promotional materials, but do not yet understand how to legally protect these works and identities.

Thus, legal assistance is a crucial part of the process of protecting MSMEs' intellectual property. Assistance can be directed at improving understanding of the objects that can be protected, the benefits of protection, the registration stages, the required documents, and the potential risks if intellectual property is not promptly protected. This approach allows for assistance activities to go beyond delivering material and also result in increasing the legal capacity of MSMEs to protect their intellectual assets [19].

In the context of community service activities, a mentoring approach becomes increasingly relevant due to the practical nature of the problems faced by MSMEs. Businesses not only require information about trademarks and copyrights, but also assistance in identifying protectable works and understanding the registration process. Therefore, mentoring for trademark and copyright registration can be positioned as an intervention to narrow the gap between legal knowledge and the application of legal protection in culinary MSME business activities.

## 3. METHODS

This activity uses a descriptive-participatory approach aimed at mapping the conditions, needs, and obstacles faced by culinary MSMEs in obtaining Intellectual Property (IP) protection, particularly trademarks and copyrights, while also providing direct legal assistance. This approach was chosen because the challenges faced relate not only to understanding legal norms but also to the practical abilities of business actors in preparing documents and accessing online IP services. The activity was carried out for three months in Sukabumi Regency, targeting culinary MSMEs.

The subjects of this activity were culinary MSMEs that use business identities, logos, packaging designs, product photography, and/or creative promotional materials in their business activities. Informants were selected purposively based on the business's relevance to the need for brand and/or copyright protection. The selection of informants took into account active involvement in business activities and the need for intellectual property protection.

Data collection was conducted using several techniques. First, surveys and field observations were conducted to obtain an overview of business conditions, brand usage, creative work utilization, and IP protection needs. Second, in-depth interviews were conducted with several MSME owners to identify their level of understanding, experience, needs, and obstacles in IP protection. Third, questionnaires were used to obtain data on legal knowledge, registration experience, and administrative and financial barriers. Fourth, documentation was used to record business documents, the mentoring process, and the progress of IP applications.

The activity instruments included interview guidelines, questionnaires, observation sheets, IP document checklists, and evaluation sheets. Following the initial mapping, the activity continued with legal outreach, focus group discussions (FGDs), assistance in identifying IP objects, document preparation, and practical application procedures through the Directorate General

of Intellectual Property (DJKI) online system. The mentoring process was documented to track the progress of each participant.

Data were analyzed descriptively and qualitatively through data reduction, grouping information based on problem themes, presenting data, and drawing conclusions. The results of interviews, observations, questionnaires, and documentation were compared to obtain a comprehensive picture of the gap between normative IP protection and the practical capabilities of MSMEs. Data validity was strengthened through technical triangulation by comparing information obtained through interviews, observations, questionnaires, and documentation. The success of the activity was evaluated through changes in participants' understanding, their ability to prepare documents, their ability to follow the application stages, and the progress of IP applications after the mentoring.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Trademark and Copyright Registration Assistance Procedures for Culinary MSMEs

The results of the activity indicate that assistance with trademark and copyright registration for culinary MSMEs needs to be carried out through sequential stages, starting from identifying Intellectual Property (IP) assets, mapping legal understanding, checking document readiness, technical assistance for submissions, and evaluation. These findings were obtained through surveys, observations, interviews, questionnaires, and documentation during the implementation of the activity. This series shows that the IP protection process for MSMEs is not sufficient through providing information regarding legal provisions, but requires assistance that connects legal knowledge with direct administrative actions.

In the initial stages, observations and interviews showed that culinary MSMEs had used various elements related to their business identity and creativity. These elements included business names, logos, packaging designs, product photos, and promotional materials used in marketing activities. However, some actors were unable to accurately identify the position of each of these elements as objects potentially eligible for IP protection. Names and logos were generally understood as part of a marketing strategy, while packaging designs, product photos, and promotional materials were viewed more as commercial necessities than as assets with legal dimensions.

These findings indicate a discrepancy between actual ownership of IP assets and awareness of the need to provide legal protection for those assets. Business actors have essentially produced and used various forms of wealth with economic value, but not all of them view these assets as assets that need to be legally secured. This condition is in line with Jaman, which shows that awareness and utilization of IP are related to innovation and the competitiveness of MSMEs. Thus, IP is not merely viewed as an instrument of legal protection, but also as part of a strategic asset that can support business development [1]. These findings are also in line with Hidayat and Pok, who show that intangible factors contribute to the innovation capabilities of MSMEs, making intangible asset management an important part of developing business capacity [11].

The next step involved education and legal understanding mapping. Interviews revealed that some stakeholders were familiar with the term trademark and understood its importance for business identity, but did not fully grasp the legal consequences of failing to register. Some also failed to differentiate between trademark protection mechanisms and copyright. After explanations using examples from their respective products and business activities, stakeholders began to identify the differences between names or marks used to distinguish products and creative works manifested in specific forms.

These findings demonstrate that IP literacy issues among MSMEs are not solely related to the presence or absence of knowledge, but also to the depth of that knowledge and the ability to apply it to their own business context. This finding is relevant to research by Siagian et al., which shows that

MSMEs' awareness of trademark protection and registration still needs to be strengthened. Trademark registration is seen as crucial for ensuring the protection of business identity, while legal counseling is one way to improve MSMEs' understanding. [20] Rahmawati also pointed out that low legal literacy and the complexity of the registration process remain obstacles to protecting MSME brands [17].

Thus, IP education in mentoring activities cannot simply be achieved by conveying general definitions and legal provisions. The material needs to be linked to the concrete situations faced by business actors. In this activity, the use of examples such as business names, logos, packaging designs, product photos, and promotional materials makes it easier for business actors to understand the relationship between their assets and available forms of legal protection. This approach demonstrates that legal education will be more effective if it focuses on the actors' ability to identify and manage IP assets that are actually used in business activities.

After asset mapping and legal understanding, assistance continued with document readiness checks. The results of this activity indicated that some actors lacked detailed knowledge of the data and documents required to prepare before accessing IP services. For trademark registration, assistance includes verifying the applicant's identity, brand identity, brand format, and determining the class of goods or services appropriate to the business activity. For copyright, assistance focuses on identifying the creation, creator, rights holder, and materials related to the creation to be registered.

Document review is crucial because errors in the initial stages can impact the application process in subsequent stages. The results of the activity indicate that mentoring helps actors better understand the relationship between their business documents and IP service requirements. These findings indicate that barriers to IP protection for MSMEs lie not only in legal awareness but also in the administrative capacity to meet registration requirements. This aligns with Rahmawati's identification of limited information, low legal awareness, and procedural constraints as issues still faced by MSMEs in trademark registration and protection [1]. In this context, assistance is needed to narrow the gap between the rights that are normatively available and the ability of business actors to access such protection.

The next stage is technical assistance for applications through the Directorate General of Intellectual Property's online service. At this stage, the applicant not only receives an explanation of the registration steps but also follows the process using their own business data and documents. Assistance includes data entry, determining the class of goods or services for the trademark, uploading documents, and understanding the steps required after submitting an application. For copyright, assistance focuses on completing the creator and rights holder's data and preparing materials related to the creation.

The implementation results show that the hands-on practice model provides opportunities for stakeholders to understand processes previously considered complex. They not only learned that registration can be done online, but also understood how these steps are implemented based on their own business circumstances. This finding demonstrates that the digitalization of IP services has not automatically eliminated barriers for MSMEs. Ease of technological access still requires the ability to understand procedures, prepare data, and use the system appropriately. This aligns with Khasna's findings, which indicate that digitalization of trademark registration can improve service effectiveness and efficiency, but barriers remain in the form of limited digital literacy, technological access, procedural complexity, and the need for technical assistance [2].

Based on this entire process, it was found that the gradual mentoring transformed the participants' understanding, from simply understanding the importance of IP to being able to connect business assets with relevant forms of protection. This change was evident in the participants' ability to identify IP objects, differentiate between

trademarks and copyrights, understand the required documents, and follow the online application process. These findings demonstrate that legal mentoring serves a broader function than simply providing information, as it serves as a mechanism for translating legal norms into practical actions.

Table 1. Findings of the Stages of Trademark and Copyright Registration Assistance

| Stages | Activity Findings | Analysis |
|---|---|---|
| Identification of IP assets | MSMEs use business names, logos, packaging designs, product photos, and promotional materials, but not all of them understand the IP protection aspects of these assets. | There is a gap between the factual ownership of IP assets and the awareness to provide legal protection. |
| Mapping legal understanding | Business owners have recognized the importance of business names and identities, but understanding the differences between brand protection and copyright is still limited. | IP literacy has not yet fully reached the level of being able to apply legal provisions to each individual's business assets. |
| Document inspection | Some actors do not yet know in detail the data and documents required for the KI registration or recording process. | Administrative barriers are part of the gap in the implementation of IP protection at the business actor level. |
| Technical assistance | The perpetrators follow the online application process with assistance, including filling in data, determining brand class, and uploading documents. | Hands-on practice helps transform normative knowledge into administrative and digital skills. |
| Evaluation | Actors demonstrated a better understanding of identifying IP objects, differentiating between trademarks and copyrights, and understanding the stages of IP services. | Practice-based mentoring provides more concrete capacity changes than one-way information delivery. |

When these findings are placed within the perspective of IP protection, the main issue that emerges lies not in the lack of legal instruments, but rather in the gap between the available legal instruments and the ability of MSMEs to utilize them. Trademark registration has a strategic function because it provides the basis for protecting the distinctive identity of goods or services. Lohrey's research shows that low awareness among MSMEs regarding the importance of trademark registration remains a problem, making legal education and awareness-raising a crucial part of a brand protection strategy [1]. This situation reinforces the activity's findings that mentoring is necessary so that MSMEs are not only aware of the existence of legal protection but also able to use it concretely.

On the other hand, the results of the activity also demonstrated the importance of viewing copyright more broadly in the context of culinary businesses. MSME creativity is not only found in the products sold, but also in various forms of expression that support marketing and the formation of business identity. Logos, specific designs, product photos, and promotional materials are part of the business creativity ecosystem that needs to be identified based on the characteristics of their respective IP protections. This perspective aligns with Hidayat and Pok, who position intangible factors as one element that can support MSME innovation capabilities [12]. Thus, identifying creative assets in mentoring activities is crucial so that business actors not only focus on protecting their names or brands but also understand the potential protection of creative works used in business activities.

Brand protection also has dimensions related to innovation and a company's market position. Morales et al. show that brands can help identify innovation activities that cannot always be captured by other innovation indicators. Using brand information in conjunction with patent information provides a broader picture of a company's innovation activities [2]. These findings demonstrate that brands for MSMEs serve not only as a

distinguishing mark but can also be part of a strategy to build identity and communicate innovation to consumers.

In line with this, Flikkema, Castaldi, and de Man explain that the relationship between brands and innovation shows that brands can be part of a company's strategy in introducing and differentiating products in the market.[16]In the context of culinary MSMEs, this can be seen in the use of business names, logos, packaging, and visual identities as a means of building product recognition. Therefore, brand registration assistance is relevant not only for legal protection but also for strengthening business identity and sustainability.

In addition to brand protection, IP protection is also related to the ability of MSMEs to generate and maintain innovation. Song et al. showed that IP protection is related to a company's innovation activities and is influenced by certain mechanisms, including the intensity of research and development and the quality of information disclosure. [13] Zhao et al. also showed that IP protection can be related to the improvement of the quality of corporate innovation [14]. Although the research context is broader than culinary MSMEs, the findings strengthen the argument that IP protection should be positioned as part of business asset management, not simply an administrative process.

Thus, the synthesis of activity results shows that an effective mentoring procedure does not stop at legal socialization, but rather integrates five main stages: IP asset identification, legal understanding mapping, document review, submission practices, and evaluation. These five stages form an interconnected series. Identification determines objects that need to be protected; understanding mapping determines educational needs; document review ensures administrative readiness; submission practices translate knowledge into action; and evaluation measures changes in business actors' capacity.

Therefore, the findings of this activity confirm that trademark and copyright registration assistance needs to be directed at developing practical skills, not just increasing knowledge. Shifting from an informative approach to a practice-based approach is crucial in narrowing the gap in IP protection implementation. This approach also underpins the understanding that the success of an activity is not solely measured by the number of participants attending the socialization, but rather by the ability of MSMEs to identify IP assets, determine the form of protection, prepare documents, and follow the application process correctly.

### 4.2 Obstacles and Solutions for Trademark and Copyright Registration Assistence for Culinary MSMEs

The results of interviews, observations, questionnaires, and documentation indicate that culinary MSMEs face several interrelated obstacles in obtaining Intellectual Property (IP) protection. These obstacles are not only related to legal understanding, but also include administrative capabilities, digital literacy, document readiness, perceptions of costs, and an understanding of the differences in the characteristics of trademark and copyright protection. These findings indicate that the low utilization of IP protection cannot be explained by a single factor, as the obstacles encountered occur at several stages simultaneously, from the identification of IP objects to the implementation of the registration or recording process. Thus, resolving IP issues in MSMEs requires a mentoring approach that is able to connect aspects of legal knowledge with administrative needs and business practices.

The first obstacle is limited legal understanding. Interviews indicate that some MSMEs understand the importance of business names for marketing, but do not yet understand that names and trademarks used in commerce require protection through appropriate legal mechanisms. Some also do not understand the difference between actual brand use and brand ownership through registration. Regarding copyright, understanding of the objects of protection is also uneven. Logos, packaging designs, product photos, and promotional materials

are still viewed more as marketing tools than as works with a legal dimension.

These findings indicate that the primary problem in the initial stages is not simply ignorance of IP, but rather a lack of ability to translate legal concepts into business practices. General legal awareness is insufficient without the ability to identify IP assets and determine appropriate forms of protection. This finding aligns with Rahayuningsih et al.'s findings that low awareness of trademark registration among MSMEs is one of the factors hindering legal protection for business identities. [21] Aulia Silvana et al. also positioned the legal awareness gap as a crucial issue in protecting MSME brands in Indonesia [22].

Thus, legal education in mentoring activities needs to be directed at the practical capabilities of business actors. It's not enough for entrepreneurs to know that trademarks and copyrights are legally protected; they also need to understand what assets they own, what type of protection is appropriate, and what actions must be taken to obtain that protection. This approach aligns with Jaman's findings that IP awareness and utilization are linked to the protection, innovation, and competitiveness of MSMEs [11]. Thus, increasing IP literacy can be positioned as part of strengthening business capacity, not merely as an effort to fulfill legal aspects.

The second obstacle relates to understanding administrative procedures. The mentoring results indicate that not all MSMEs understand the steps required before submitting an application. Difficulties are primarily encountered in preparing applicant data, determining the type of object to be protected, determining the class of goods or services for a trademark, and ensuring that uploaded documents align with service requirements. This situation leads some MSMEs to delay the process despite understanding that IP protection is crucial for business continuity.

Analytically, these administrative barriers demonstrate that the existence of online registration services does not automatically result in effective access for MSMEs. While digital systems shorten the distance between applicants and service providers, they also require users to understand the flow, enter data, prepare documents, and follow procedures independently. This finding aligns with Handayani et al.'s findings that understanding and readiness in the IP protection process remain crucial aspects that need to be addressed in empowering MSMEs [23].

Rahmawati also identified formal obstacles in the process of protecting and registering MSME brands, including limited information and procedural issues [17]. Therefore, the results of this activity demonstrate that document review before submission is a crucial part of the assistance process. This review not only ensures administrative completeness but also helps applicants understand the steps they must complete before submitting an application.

The third obstacle is limited digital literacy. Observations show that some MSMEs are not yet accustomed to using online IP administration services. Difficulties arise not only when accessing the system, but also when understanding the sequence of steps, entering data, preparing files in the appropriate format, and ensuring the application process has been carried out correctly. This indicates that the transformation of IP services to a digital system has not yet fully equated with ease of access at the user level.

This issue is crucial because digital capabilities are integral to business capacity in an increasingly digitalized economic environment. In the context of IP, MSMEs require not only digital literacy for marketing but also administrative digital literacy to access government services. Yufrizal et al. demonstrate the importance of digital capacity in supporting MSMEs' use of technology [24]. Meanwhile, Joice Soraya and Muhammad Ansy Althafzufar demonstrated that the ability to understand and use technology is one aspect that needs to be considered in the digital transformation process [25].

Therefore, IP mentoring needs to simultaneously integrate two types of

literacy: legal literacy and digital literacy. Business actors need to understand the basics of legal protection and be able to access digital systems used in the registration or recording process. A hands-on approach is relevant because it allows participants to gain experience using the system based on their own business data and documents.

The fourth obstacle relates to perceptions of costs. Interviews indicate that costs are still seen as a key consideration before registration, especially for businesses with limited resources. However, mentoring findings indicate that the cost issue is not isolated. When businesses don't yet understand the benefits of registration, costs tend to be perceived as an additional burden. Conversely, after receiving an explanation of the protection function and potential economic value of IP, costs begin to be understood within the framework of investment in business assets.

This finding is in line with Judijanto who places economic aspects as one of the considerations in IP management in MSMEs. [26] Rahmaidha et al. also identified budget limitations as one of the obstacles in protecting MSME brands.[8]However, the cost issue needs to be considered proportionally, as low IP registration rates are not solely due to financial capacity. Zakariya pointed out that optimizing MSME brand registration also requires increased awareness, outreach, simplified procedures, and mentoring [5].

Thus, solutions to cost issues should not be solely focused on reducing the financial burden; they also need to be accompanied by increased understanding of the benefits of IP protection. When business owners understand that brands and creative works are part of their business assets, protection costs can be understood not merely as expenses but as part of efforts to safeguard assets with economic value.

The fifth obstacle is the lack of a habit of protecting IP from the start of a business. The results of the activity indicate that some business owners only consider registration after their business has grown or when they begin to recognize the risk of counterfeiting. This pattern suggests that IP protection is still considered a post-development measure, rather than an integral part of the business plan from the outset. Yet, business identity and creative works have been in use since the business began.

This issue has legal and economic implications. The longer a business identity is used without adequate protection, the greater the potential for loss if another party uses a similar identity or if a dispute arises over ownership. From a business management perspective, IP should also not be treated as an additional aspect that stands outside of business activities. Lohrey and Willoughby point out that IP management in MSMEs is related to the strategic interests of the business, including innovation and competitive position [1].

These findings also reinforce the view that IP should be considered as part of business asset management. In the context of culinary MSMEs, these assets include not only equipment, raw materials, and products sold, but also the business name, logo, designs, product photos, and various creative works used in marketing activities. Therefore, IP protection should be considered from the early stages of business development.

Based on these various obstacles, the mentoring resulted in several solutions aimed directly at the root of the problem. The first solution was to provide legal education based on cases and participants' business assets. The material not only explained the meaning of trademarks and copyrights but also used business names, logos, packaging, photos, and promotional materials actually used by participants as examples. This approach helped actors understand the relationship between legal norms and their own business activities. This concrete needs-based approach aligns with Yuwono et al., who emphasized the importance of improving IP understanding for MSMEs through educational activities. [27] Firmansyah et al. also demonstrated the importance of understanding the legal aspects of trade and IP in providing protection to MSMEs [28].

The second solution is to use a step-by-step document review. Each participant is

assisted in identifying available data and documents, then determining which documents still need to be completed. This approach reduces the tendency for participants to delay the process due to not knowing where to start. Document review also allows the facilitator to identify errors early on before the participant reaches the application stage.

The third solution is hands-on practical assistance through the DJKI's online service. MSMEs are not only given written instructions but also guided through the application stages using their respective business data. The assistant provides corrections for errors, helps them understand the service stages, and explains the necessary steps after the application process. This model allows the entrepreneur to gain hands-on experience, gradually reducing their dependence on the assistant.

The fourth solution is to provide guidance that differentiates between trademark and copyright needs. Findings indicate that one source of participant confusion is the tendency to equate all forms of creative property with "brands." Therefore, the solution provided is not a single procedure applied to all participants, but rather a mapping based on IP objects. Names and distinctive marks are directed to be analyzed from a trademark perspective, while specific creative works are analyzed from a copyright perspective based on their characteristics and protection provisions.

This distinction is important because trademarks and copyrights have different protection characteristics. Being able to distinguish between these two forms of IP helps actors determine the protection mechanism that best suits the characteristics of their assets. In the context of culinary MSMEs, this approach also helps actors understand that protecting business identity is not always synonymous with protecting creative works used for marketing.

The fifth solution is evaluation and follow-up. After the mentoring process, participants are evaluated based on their ability to identify IP assets, understand the differences between trademarks and copyrights, understand the required documents, and understand the application stages. This evaluation is important because the success of the mentoring cannot be measured solely by participant attendance or the implementation of socialization. Changes in participant capacity are a more relevant indicator for assessing the effectiveness of the activity. This approach aligns with Utama et al., who emphasize the importance of strengthening MSME capacity through mentoring activities and increasing understanding [29].

Table 2. Obstacles and Solutions in Assisting with Intellectual Property Protection for MSMEs

| Obstacles Encountered | Field Findings | Mentoring Solutions | Identified Changes |
|---|---|---|---|
| Limited legal understanding | MSMEs know the importance of business names and identities, but do not yet adequately understand the differences between brands and copyrights and the legal consequences of not obtaining protection. | Legal education uses examples of assets and problems that are close to participants' business activities. | MSMEs are better able to identify assets that require protection and determine the form of protection. |
| Registration administration | MSME actors do not yet know in detail the data and documents that must be prepared in the registration process. | Document inspection and preparation is carried out in stages before the submission process. | Participants will have a better understanding of the administrative completeness and sequence of the registration process. |
| Digital literacy | The online intellectual property service process remains a challenge for participants who | Mentoring is carried out through direct practice on the DJKI | Participants better understand the digital |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | are not yet accustomed to using government digital services. | online registration system. | service flow and online application stages. |
| Perception of costs | Registration fees are seen as a burden before participants understand the benefits of protecting business assets. | The guidance explains the relationship between registration fees, legal protection, and the economic value of business assets. | The view of registration fees is shifting from being merely an expense to being part of efforts to protect business assets. |
| Identification of IP objects | Not all creative assets used in business activities have been mapped as intellectual property objects. | An inventory was conducted of the business name, logo, packaging design, product photos, and promotional materials. | Participants are better able to recognize and map the intellectual property assets they own. |
| Sustainability of protection | Intellectual property protection is not common practice from the early stages of business development and tends to be considered when the business has grown or faces the risk of imitation. | Further evaluation and consultation were conducted regarding the importance of protection from the start of business activities. | Participants gain an understanding that intellectual property protection needs to be placed as part of business management and development. |

Compared with previous research, the findings of this activity demonstrate that the obstacles to IP protection for MSMEs are multidimensional. Zakariya emphasized the low rate of trademark registration and the need for outreach and mentoring [5]. These findings lead to the conclusion that resolving MSME IP issues requires intervention that goes beyond regulation and involves supporting actors capable of translating regulations into the practical needs of business actors.

The findings of this activity also demonstrate that legal assistance serves as a bridge between the legal system and the capacity of business actors. If regulations are only available without the ability to access them, legal protection can potentially remain purely formal. Conversely, when actors gain understanding, administrative assistance, and direct practical experience, access to legal protection becomes more concrete. This aligns with Disemadi et al., who emphasize the important role of universities in protecting MSME IP through education, training, and community service activities [30].

From an economic perspective, resolving IP constraints also has broader consequences than dispute prevention. IP protection can strengthen the position of intangible assets in business development. Lohrey and Willoughby point out that IP management in MSMEs needs to be positioned as part of the business's strategic function because it is related to innovation, performance, and competitive position [1]. This reinforces the finding that trademark and copyright registration assistance should not be understood as a mere administrative activity, but rather as part of strengthening business capacity.

Thus, the synthesis of the results indicates that obstacles to IP protection in culinary MSMEs are formed by the interplay of low legal literacy, administrative limitations, limited digital literacy, perceived costs, and the lack of established IP protection habits from the start of the business. Because these obstacles are multifaceted, solutions cannot be single-minded. Effective assistance must combine legal education, IP asset mapping, document review, submission practices, and ongoing evaluation.

These findings also reinforce the novelty of this activity. The mentoring doesn't stop at increasing legal awareness, but is aimed at transforming that awareness into the ability to act. Thus, there is a shift from an informative approach to an implementative one, from simply understanding the

importance of IP protection to the ability to identify, prepare for, and access concrete IP protection mechanisms.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Assistance with trademark and copyright registration for culinary MSMEs demonstrates that intellectual property protection requires a process that connects legal understanding with the ability of business actors to access protection mechanisms effectively. A phased mentoring approach can build business actors' understanding of IP asset identification, the nature of trademark and copyright protection, and the administrative steps required to obtain protection. These findings confirm that practical legal assistance plays a strategic role in bridging the gap between the availability of legal instruments and the capacity of MSMEs to utilize them.

The challenges facing IP protection in culinary MSMEs are multidimensional, encompassing limited legal literacy, administrative skills, digital literacy, perceptions of costs, and the lack of established IP protection practices from the outset. These conditions demonstrate that strengthening IP protection is ineffective if it relies solely on the provision of regulations and digital services; it requires ongoing, needs-based support for businesses. Therefore, IP support needs to be developed as a model for strengthening MSME capacity that integrates legal education, IP asset mapping, document review, application practices, and evaluation, so that IP protection can be positioned as part of a sustainability strategy and strengthen business competitiveness.

## THANK-YOU NOTE

The author would like to thank Pamulang University for its support in implementing this community service activity. He also expresses his gratitude to all culinary MSMEs who actively participated in the trademark and copyright registration assistance program. The support, participation, and cooperation of various parties contributed to the successful implementation of this activity.

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