

Social Media Utilization and Business Sustainability Among Small-Food Enterprises

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ABSTRACT

This study determined the relationship between social media utilization and business sustainability among small-food enterprises. Specifically, it assessed the extent of social media utilization in terms of marketing and promotion, customer engagement, sales generation, and brand awareness; determined the level of business sustainability in terms of financial performance, customer retention, operational continuity, and business growth; and examined the relationship between social media utilization and business sustainability. A quantitative descriptive-correlational research design was employed involving 243 small-food enterprise owners/operators. Data were gathered using a validated and reliable researcher-made questionnaire and analyzed using frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation, and Spearman's rank-order correlation. Findings revealed that the overall social media utilization among small-food enterprises was high, with marketing and promotion obtaining the highest rating. The overall level of business sustainability was also high, with operational continuity obtaining the highest rating. A significant moderate positive relationship was found between social media utilization and business sustainability among small-food enterprises ($p = 0.495$, $p < .001$). The findings indicated that higher levels of social media utilization were associated with higher levels of business sustainability, particularly in relation to customer engagement, sales generation, brand awareness, and business operations. Based on the findings, recommendations were proposed for local government units, the Department of Trade and Industry, small-food enterprise owners, academic institutions and researchers, entrepreneurs and aspiring business owners, customers, and the community to strengthen social media utilization and support the sustainability and growth of small-food enterprises.

Keywords: social media utilization, marketing and promotion, customer engagement, sales generation, brand awareness, business sustainability, financial performance, customer retention, operational continuity, business growth

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary business landscape, enterprises need to adopt effective digital strategies to respond to changing consumer preferences, market competition, and evolving business environments. Social media has become an important business tool that enables enterprises to promote products, communicate with customers, expand market reach, and strengthen their market presence (Borah et al., 2022). The effective utilization of social media can contribute to business performance by providing enterprises with accessible platforms for marketing, customer interaction, information sharing, and product promotion. As competition continues to intensify, particularly among small enterprises with limited resources, the strategic use of social media has become increasingly important in reaching potential customers and maintaining competitiveness (Noviaristanti et al., 2023).

Furthermore, social media utilization refers to the use of digital platforms to support business activities such as marketing and promotion, customer engagement, sales generation, and brand awareness. Through platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, and YouTube, enterprises can provide product information, respond to customer inquiries, receive feedback, offer promotional activities, and create digital content that strengthens customer recognition of their businesses. Social media can also facilitate information sharing and interaction with customers and markets, which may support innovation, knowledge development, and business

performance (Ghazwani & Alzahrani, 2024). For small enterprises, these digital platforms provide relatively affordable and accessible opportunities to communicate with customers and promote products compared with some traditional marketing approaches.

In the context of small-food enterprises, effective social media utilization is particularly relevant because these businesses operate in competitive markets where customer awareness, repeat purchases, sales, and continuous market visibility are important to business survival and development. Business sustainability requires enterprises to maintain financial performance, retain customers, continue daily operations, and pursue business growth despite changing market conditions and competition. Previous studies have indicated that social media adoption can contribute to sustainable SME performance by strengthening customer relationships, supporting business activities, and developing innovation capabilities (Amoah et al., 2023; Borah et al., 2022). Similarly, digital marketing adoption has been associated with sustainable SME growth by improving market reach, competitiveness, and business performance (Bruce et al., 2023). These findings suggest that social media utilization may provide small-food enterprises with opportunities to strengthen financial performance, customer retention, operational continuity, and business growth.

Although numerous studies have examined social media utilization, digital marketing, SME performance, and business sustainability, only a limited number of studies have specifically concentrated on the relationship between social media utilization and business sustainability among small-food enterprises. Previous studies have generally examined SMEs across different industries or have focused on specific outcomes such as firm performance, profitability, innovation, and sustainable growth (Borah et al., 2022; Noviaristanti et al., 2023). Although studies have also examined social media marketing among food-and-beverage MSMEs, limited attention has been given to business sustainability as a multidimensional outcome encompassing financial performance, customer retention, operational continuity, and business growth (Aryani & Tuti, 2023). This research gap emphasized the importance of examining the relationship between social media utilization and business sustainability among small-food enterprises. Hence, this study was undertaken to determine the relationship between social media utilization and business sustainability among small-food enterprises, specifically focusing on marketing and promotion, customer engagement, sales generation, brand awareness, financial performance, customer retention, operational continuity, and business growth. The findings were intended to provide useful information that could assist small-food enterprise owners and relevant stakeholders in developing strategies to strengthen social media utilization and support sustainable business operations.

Research Objectives

This study determined the relationship between social media utilization and business sustainability among small-food enterprises. The results of this study served as a basis for providing recommendations to improve social media utilization and business sustainability. Specifically, it sought to: (1) describe the respondents according to age, sex, type of small-food enterprise, and social media platforms used; (2) determine the extent of social media utilization in terms of marketing and promotion, customer engagement, sales generation, and brand awareness; (3) determine the level of business sustainability in terms of financial performance, customer retention, operational continuity, and business growth; and (4) determine whether a significant relationship existed between social media utilization and business sustainability among small-food enterprises.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Respondents

A quantitative descriptive-correlational research design was employed. The descriptive component was used to determine the extent of social media utilization in terms of marketing and promotion, customer engagement, sales generation, and brand awareness, as well as the level of business sustainability in terms of financial performance, customer retention, operational continuity, and business growth. The total population consisted of 618 owners/operators of small-food enterprises in one of the cities in Negros Occidental. Using Slovin's formula at a 5% margin of error, a sample size of 243 respondents was determined. Purposive sampling was

then used to select qualified respondents who were owners/operators of small-food enterprises and used at least one social media platform for business-related activities.

Research Instrument

Data were collected using a researcher-made structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of items measuring social media utilization in terms of marketing and promotion, customer engagement, sales generation, and brand awareness, as well as business sustainability in terms of financial performance, customer retention, operational continuity, and business growth. The instrument underwent content validation by five validators with relevant expertise in business and research. The validators assessed the relevance and appropriateness of the questionnaire items, and the instrument was subjected to Content Validity Ratio (CVR) assessment to establish the content validity of the items.

Responses were measured using a four-point Likert scale. The mean scores were interpreted using the following ranges: 3.26–4.00, Very High; 2.51–3.25, High; 1.76–2.50, Low; and 1.00–1.75, Very Low. Frequency and percentage were used to describe the respondents' profile, while mean and standard deviation were used to determine the extent of social media utilization and the level of business sustainability. Spearman's rank-order correlation was used to determine the significant relationship between social media utilization and business sustainability at the 0.05 level of significance.

The instrument was pilot-tested among 32 owners/operators of small-food enterprises who were not included in the actual study. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency reliability of the questionnaire. The Social Media Utilization scale obtained a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.749, indicating acceptable internal consistency, while the Business Sustainability scale obtained a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.821, indicating good internal consistency. These results demonstrated that the questionnaire had acceptable to good reliability and was suitable for use in the actual study.

Data Gathering Instrument

The primary instrument that was used in this study was a researcher-made structured questionnaire designed to determine the extent of social media utilization and the level of business sustainability among small-food enterprises. The questionnaire was prepared in English and consisted of sixty-four (64) items structured to gather relevant information from owners/operators of small-food enterprises regarding their use of social media and the sustainability of their businesses.

The questionnaire was divided into three main parts. Part I consisted of the enterprise profile, which included variables such as age, sex, type of small-food enterprise, and social media platform used. Part II contained items that measured Social Media Utilization in terms of marketing and promotion, customer engagement, sales generation, and brand awareness. Part III contained items that measured Business Sustainability in terms of financial performance, customer retention, operational continuity, and business growth. The items in Parts II and III were designed to assess the respondents' perceptions and experiences regarding the use of social media and the sustainability of their enterprises.

The questionnaire used a four-point Likert scale to measure the extent of social media utilization and the level of business sustainability. Each response was assigned a corresponding numerical value, with higher scores indicating a higher extent of social media utilization or a higher level of business sustainability. Before the actual administration, the researcher-made questionnaire underwent content validation by five (5) validators with relevant expertise in research and business.

The validators evaluated the relevance, clarity, appropriateness, and alignment of the items with the objectives of the study. The instrument was also subjected to Content Validity Ratio (CVR) assessment to establish the content validity of the questionnaire. Items that required modification were revised based on the recommendations of the validators before the instrument was administered to the respondents.

Data Analyses

To determine the profile of the small-food enterprises in one of the cities in Negros Occidental in terms of the respondents' sex, age, type of small-food enterprise, and social media platform used, frequency and percentage distributions were utilized to describe the characteristics of the respondents. The formulas used are presented below:

$$\% = \frac{f}{N} \times 100$$

Where:

% = percent

F = frequency

N = number of respondents

To determine the extent of social media utilization among small-food enterprises in terms of marketing and promotion, customer engagement, sales generation, and brand awareness, the mean and standard deviation were employed to determine the respondents' level of agreement with each indicator. The mean was used to determine the extent of social media utilization, while the standard deviation was used to determine the consistency or variability of the respondents' responses. The formula used is presented below:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum fx}{n}$$

Where:

$\bar{x}$ = mean

$\sum fx$ = sum of the weighted scores

n = total number of respondents

$$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (x - \bar{x})^2}{n}}$$

Where:

SD = Standard Deviation

X = Individual respondent's score

$\bar{x}$ = Mean

n = Sample size

To interpret the mean the following scale was used:

Scale	Response	Mean Range	Interpretation	Description
4	Strongly Agree	3.26–4.00	Very High	Social media is very highly utilized for the business.
3	Agree	2.51–3.25	High	Social media is highly utilized for the business.

2	Disagree	1.76–2.50	Low	Social media is slightly utilized for the business.
1	Strongly Disagree	1.00–1.75	Very Low	Social media is not utilized for the business.

To determine the level of business sustainability among small-food enterprises in terms of financial performance, customer retention, operational continuity, and business growth, the mean and standard deviation were employed. The mean was used to determine the level of business sustainability based on the respondents' ratings for each indicator, while the standard deviation was used to determine the consistency or variability of their responses. The formula used is presented below:

$$\bar{x} = \frac{\sum fx}{n}$$

Where:

$\bar{x}$ = mean

$\sum fx$ = sum of the weighted scores

n = total number of respondents

$$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum (x - \bar{x})^2}{n}}$$

Where:

SD = Standard Deviation

X = Individual respondent's score

$\bar{x}$ = Mean

n = Sample size

To interpret the mean the following scale was used:

Scale	Description	Mean Range Score	Interpretation	Verbal Interpretation
4	Strongly Agree	3.26–4.00	Very High	The business performs very well and is highly sustainable.
3	Agree	2.51–3.25	High	The business performs well and is sustainable.
2	Disagree	1.76–2.50	Low	The business performs below expectation and is less sustainable.
1	Strongly Disagree	1.00–1.75	Very Low	The business performs poorly and is not sustainable.

To determine whether there is a significant relationship between social media utilization and business

sustainability among small-food enterprises, Spearman's rank-order correlation (Spearman's rho) was used. This statistical test was employed to determine the strength and direction of the relationship between the two variables based on the responses of the respondents.

$$r_s = 1 - \frac{6\sum d^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

Where:

r_s = Spearman's rank-order correlation coefficient (Spearman's rho)

$\sum d^2$ = Sum of the squared differences between the ranks of the paired observations

d = Difference between the ranks of each pair of observations

n = Number of paired observations (respondents)

RESULTS

Profile of the Respondents

Profile	Category	F	%
Age			
	18–25 years old	20	8.23
	26–35 years old	56	23.05
	36–45 years old	78	32.10
	46–55 years old	68	27.98
	56 years old and above	21	8.64
	Total	243	100
Sex			
	Male	94	38.68
	Female	149	61.32
	Total	243	100
Type of Small-food Enterprise			
	Carinderia	38	15.64
	Bakery	11	4.53
	Milk Tea Shop	28	11.52
	Snack House	11	4.53
	Fast Food Stall	46	18.93
	Food cart	101	41.56
	Others	8	3.29
	Total	243	100
Social Media Platform Used			
	Facebook	218	89.71
	Instagram	3	1.23

	TikTok	10	4.12
	Others	12	4.94
	Total	243	100

Two hundred forty-three (243) owners/operators of small-food enterprises in one of the cities in Negros Occidental participated in this study. The results showed that, in terms of age, 78 (32.10%) respondents were 36–45 years old, 68 (27.98%) were 46–55 years old, 56 (23.05%) were 26–35 years old, 20 (8.23%) were 18–25 years old, and 21 (8.64%) were 56 years old and above. These findings suggest that most respondents are middle-aged adults, indicating that individuals in their economically productive years are more actively engaged in operating small-food enterprises.

In terms of sex, 149 (61.32%) respondents were female, while 94 (38.68%) were male. This indicates that women play a dominant role in managing small-food enterprises. The result may imply that food entrepreneurship provides women with flexible income-generating opportunities that can be balanced with household and family responsibilities. Meanwhile, in terms of social media platform used, there were 218 (89.71%) were using Facebook, 10 (4.12%) TikTok, 12 (4.94%) other social media platform and 3 (1.23%) were using Instagram. The findings indicate that Facebook remains the primary digital marketing platform among small-food entrepreneurs, likely due to its wide user base, accessibility, and cost-effective features for promoting products and communicating with customers. Finally, in terms of type of small-food enterprise majority of the respondents are in food carts which had 101 (41.56%), followed by 46 (18.93%) fast-food stalls, 38 (15.64%) carinderia, 28 (11.52%) milk tea shops, 11 (4.53%) each from bakery and snack houses and 8 (3.29%) other food stalls. This distribution suggests that food cart businesses are the most common type of small-food enterprise, possibly because they require relatively lower capital investment, have lower operating costs, and are easier to establish compared to larger food businesses. Overall, the profile of the respondents indicates that middle-aged women primarily operate small-food enterprises, with Facebook serving as the main marketing platform and food carts emerging as the most common type of business.

Social Media Utilization

Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Marketing and promotion	3.27	0.42	Very High
Customer Engagement	3.22	0.38	High
Sales Generation	3.18	0.37	High
Brand Awareness	3.16	0.37	High

The respondents demonstrated a high level of social media utilization among small-food enterprises ($M = 3.21$, $SD = 0.31$). Marketing and Promotion obtained the highest mean ($M = 3.27$, $SD = 0.42$), interpreted as Very High, followed by Customer Engagement ($M = 3.22$, $SD = 0.38$), interpreted as High. Sales Generation obtained a mean of 3.18 ($SD = 0.37$), while Brand Awareness obtained a comparatively lower mean ($M = 3.16$, $SD = 0.37$), both interpreted as High. The findings indicated that small-food enterprises generally utilized social media to a high extent, with marketing and promotion demonstrating the strongest utilization, followed by customer engagement, sales generation, and brand awareness.

Business Sustainability

Dimension	Mean	SD	Interpretation
Financial Performance	3.25	0.40	High
Customer Retention	3.20	0.40	High

Operational Continuity	3.26	0.33	Very High
Business Growth	3.25	0.33	High

The respondents demonstrated a high level of business sustainability among small-food enterprises ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 0.29$). Operational Continuity obtained the highest mean ($M = 3.26$, $SD = 0.33$), interpreted as Very High, followed by Financial Performance ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 0.40$) and Business Growth ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 0.33$), both interpreted as High. Customer Retention obtained a comparatively lower mean ($M = 3.20$, $SD = 0.40$), which was interpreted as High. The findings indicated that the small-food enterprises generally demonstrated a high level of business sustainability, with operational continuity showing the strongest level, while customer retention demonstrated the comparatively lowest level among the four indicators.

Relationship between Social Media Utilization and Business Sustainability among Small-Food Enterprises

Variables	Spearman's rho (ρ)	p-value	Decision	Interpretation
Social Media Utilization vs Business Sustainability Among Small-Food Enterprises	0.495	<.001	Reject H_0	Significant

A significant relationship was found between social media utilization and business sustainability among small-food enterprises ($\rho = 0.495$, $p < .001$). This indicates that social media utilization was significantly associated with business sustainability among small-food enterprises. Specifically, the positive correlation suggests that higher levels of social media utilization were associated with higher levels of business sustainability. This implies that small-food enterprises that effectively utilized social media for marketing and promotion, customer engagement, sales generation, and brand awareness tended to demonstrate better business sustainability in terms of financial performance, customer retention, operational continuity, and business growth.

DISCUSSION

The findings presented a generally positive assessment of social media utilization and business sustainability among small-food enterprises. Social media utilization was generally rated High, while business sustainability was also rated High. Among the dimensions of social media utilization, Marketing and Promotion obtained the highest rating, followed by Customer Engagement, Sales Generation, and Brand Awareness. Among the dimensions of business sustainability, Operational Continuity obtained the highest rating, followed by Financial Performance, Business Growth, and Customer Retention. These findings suggested that respondents generally incorporated social media into their business activities, particularly for promotional, customer-related, sales, and brand-building purposes.

Marketing and Promotion obtained the highest rating among the dimensions of social media utilization. This finding suggested that small-food enterprises commonly used social media as a means of promoting their products and services. The relatively accessible nature of social media platforms may have made them practical promotional channels for small enterprises with limited marketing resources. Through social media, business owners could present product information, announce promotions, showcase food products, and increase their visibility among existing and potential customers.

This finding was consistent with Alhamami et al. (2024), who reported that external social media utilization was positively associated with SME business performance, including profitability, customer satisfaction, and market orientation. The finding was also consistent with the broader view that digital and social media tools can provide SMEs with accessible channels for reaching markets and strengthening their competitive position. The high rating for Marketing and Promotion therefore implied that small-food enterprise owners could benefit

from maintaining organized content planning, promotional campaigns, and regular product-related posts to strengthen their market visibility.

Customer Engagement was rated High, indicating that respondents generally used social media to interact with customers. This finding suggested that social media was not used solely for promotional purposes but also served as a communication channel through which businesses could respond to inquiries, receive feedback, address customer concerns, and maintain relationships with customers.

This finding was supported by Dwivedi et al. (2023), who emphasized the role of social media in influencing small-business performance through customer–firm relationships, customer orientation, and customer co-creation. Customer interaction through social media may therefore provide small-food enterprises with opportunities to understand customer preferences and respond to customer needs more efficiently. The finding implied that business owners could strengthen customer engagement by responding promptly to inquiries, acknowledging feedback, addressing concerns, and maintaining consistent communication with customers through social media platforms.

Sales Generation and Brand Awareness were both rated High. The findings indicated that respondents generally perceived social media as useful for supporting sales-related activities and increasing awareness of their businesses. Social media exposure may have allowed small-food enterprises to display products to a wider audience, communicate offers, encourage customer interest, and reinforce recognition of their products and business names.

This finding was supported by Ghazwani and Alzahrani (2024), who found that social media platforms could contribute to SME profitability and growth through competitive information, knowledge sharing, and innovation. Similarly, Noviaristanti et al. (2023) reported a positive and significant influence of social media usage on SME firm performance. These findings suggested that social media could serve as a useful channel for improving market visibility and supporting sales-related activities. Consequently, small-food enterprise owners could consider combining promotional content with product information, customer-oriented posts, and brand-building activities to strengthen both sales generation and brand awareness.

Financial Performance was rated High, indicating that respondents generally reported favorable financial conditions in their businesses. This finding suggested that the enterprises were generally able to sustain sales activities, meet operating expenses, and manage their routine financial requirements. However, the finding should be interpreted as an assessment of the respondents' reported level of financial performance rather than as evidence that social media directly improved financial outcomes.

The finding was supported by Hidayanti et al. (2023), who reported that social media use was associated with financial and non-financial performance among MSMEs. Their findings indicated that social media could support customer relationships and service-related activities that were relevant to business performance. In the context of the present study, the high rating for Financial Performance implied that small-food enterprise owners could continue using social media as one component of their broader business and marketing strategies while also maintaining appropriate financial management practices.

Customer Retention was rated High, indicating that respondents generally maintained relationships with existing customers and encouraged continued patronage. This finding suggested that social media provided opportunities for businesses to remain visible to customers after an initial purchase and to maintain communication through updates, promotions, product information, and customer interaction.

This finding was consistent with Alhamami et al. (2024), who reported a positive association between external social media utilization, customer satisfaction, and SME business performance. The finding was also consistent with Dvorský et al. (2023), who highlighted the relevance of social media engagement to SME sustainability. The result implied that small-food enterprises could strengthen customer retention by using social media not only to attract new customers but also to maintain relationships with existing customers through responsive communication, regular updates, and customer-focused promotional activities.

Operational Continuity obtained the highest rating among the dimensions of business sustainability and was interpreted as Very High. This finding indicated that respondents generally perceived their businesses as capable of maintaining their regular operations despite changes in customer needs and business conditions. The high rating may reflect the respondents' ability to adjust their activities, maintain customer access, and continue providing products and services.

This finding was supported by Mikalef et al. (2022), who found that social media usage could contribute to sustainable SME performance through innovation capabilities. Their findings suggested that digital and social media capabilities could support organizational adaptation and business performance. In the present study, the very high rating for Operational Continuity implied that small-food enterprise owners could continue developing flexible business practices, including the effective use of social media, to maintain communication with customers and support business operations during changing market conditions.

Business Growth was rated High, indicating that respondents generally experienced positive developments in areas such as customer base, sales activities, competitiveness, and business operations. This finding suggested that the enterprises were generally progressing in their business activities, although the descriptive result alone did not establish that social media utilization was responsible for such growth.

Ghazwani and Alzahrani (2024) reported that social media platforms could contribute to SME profitability and growth through innovation, while Noviaristanti et al. (2023) found a positive and significant relationship between social media usage and SME firm performance. These findings provided support for the relevance of social media to business development. The present finding implied that small-food enterprise owners could integrate social media into broader growth strategies by using it for market communication, customer engagement, product promotion, and business visibility.

A significant moderate positive relationship was found between social media utilization and business sustainability ($\rho = 0.495$, $p < .001$). This finding indicated that higher levels of social media utilization were associated with higher levels of business sustainability among the participating small-food enterprises. The moderate strength of the relationship suggested that social media utilization was meaningfully related to business sustainability, although it was not the only factor associated with the sustainability of the enterprises.

The finding was consistent with previous research reporting positive associations between social media use and SME performance and sustainability. For example, Amoah et al. (2023) reported that social media adoption supported sustainable SME performance through information sharing, sales activities, customer relationship management, and collaboration. Similarly, Alhamami et al. (2024) found that external social media utilization was positively associated with SME business performance, profitability, and customer satisfaction. These studies provided empirical support for the present finding that social media utilization was significantly related to favorable business outcomes.

The implication of this finding was that small-food enterprise owners could consider social media as an important component of their business strategies. Greater attention to marketing and promotion, customer engagement, sales generation, and brand awareness may help enterprises strengthen their overall business practices. However, because the present study employed a descriptive-correlational research design, the significant correlation did not establish a direct cause-and-effect relationship between social media utilization and business sustainability. Other factors, such as financial management, product quality, customer service, operational efficiency, competition, and market conditions, may also have contributed to business sustainability.

Taken together, the findings showed that social media utilization and business sustainability were both generally high among the participating small-food enterprises. Marketing and Promotion emerged as the strongest dimension of social media utilization, while Operational Continuity emerged as the strongest dimension of business sustainability. These findings suggested that respondents particularly valued social media for promotional visibility and customer-related business activities, while they generally demonstrated a strong capacity to maintain business operations.

The significant moderate positive relationship between social media utilization and business sustainability further suggested that the two variables were meaningfully associated. Thus, small-food enterprise owners could prioritize structured social media activities, including consistent promotional content, timely customer communication, sales-oriented campaigns, and brand-building efforts. Nevertheless, the findings should be interpreted as evidence of association rather than causation. The results provided support for the potential importance of social media utilization in small-food enterprise sustainability while recognizing that business sustainability was influenced by multiple internal and external factors.

CONCLUSION

The study included 243 owners/operators of small-food enterprises. The findings revealed that the overall social media utilization among small-food enterprises was High, with an overall mean of 3.21 and a standard deviation of 0.31. Marketing and Promotion obtained the highest mean ($M = 3.27$, $SD = 0.42$), interpreted as Very High, followed by Customer Engagement ($M = 3.22$, $SD = 0.38$), Sales Generation ($M = 3.18$, $SD = 0.37$), and Brand Awareness ($M = 3.16$, $SD = 0.37$), all interpreted as High. The findings also revealed that the overall level of business sustainability was High, with an overall mean of 3.24 and a standard deviation of 0.29. Operational Continuity obtained the highest mean ($M = 3.26$, $SD = 0.33$), interpreted as Very High, followed by Financial Performance ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 0.40$) and Business Growth ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 0.33$), both interpreted as High, while Customer Retention obtained the lowest mean ($M = 3.20$, $SD = 0.40$), interpreted as High. Furthermore, a significant moderate positive relationship was found between social media utilization and business sustainability ($p = 0.495$, $p < .001$), indicating that higher levels of social media utilization were associated with higher levels of business sustainability among small-food enterprises.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the findings, small-food enterprise owners/operators were encouraged to strengthen their use of social media for marketing, customer engagement, sales, and brand awareness. They should post regularly, respond to customers promptly, and use promotions to attract and retain customers. LGUs were encouraged to provide training and support on social media marketing and digital business strategies. The DTI was encouraged to continue providing programs and training on digital marketing, online selling, and business development. Academic institutions and researchers should provide opportunities for training and conduct studies on social media utilization and business sustainability. Customers and the community should support small-food enterprises by purchasing local products, providing feedback, and engaging with their social media pages. Finally, future researchers should conduct similar studies in other locations and include additional variables to further examine social media utilization and business sustainability among small-food enterprises.

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