

OPTIMIZING SOCIAL MEDIA-DRIVEN SUSTAINABLE MOBILE MARKETING TO BOOST SME RESILIENCE AND GROWTH

Junef Ismaliyanto^{1*}, Titis Tilam Sari², Oktovina Deci Rahakbauw³, Sony Wisnu Andoyo⁴, Desika Andriani⁵

¹ Economic Management, Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Bhakti Pembangunan, Jakarta

² Accounting, Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Bhakti Pembangunan, Jakarta

³⁻⁵ Economic Management, Sekolah Tinggi Ilmu Ekonomi Bhakti Pembangunan, Jakarta

Email Corresponding Author: ismailiya2021@gmail.com

Abstract

The rapid growth of mobile marketing (MM) has created significant opportunities for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to optimize sustainability practices. However, the integration of sustainability into MM strategies remains underexplored. This study aims to identify key factors influencing the adoption of sustainable MM practices and investigate how these practices contribute to the overall sustainability and resilience of SMEs. This research employs a systematic literature review, analyzing peer-reviewed articles, industry reports, and papers published over the past decade. The study synthesizes findings from various databases to assess the current state of sustainability optimization in MM for SMEs, focusing on the effectiveness of MM strategies such as SMM, eco-friendly messaging, and content marketing. The findings reveal that mobile-based social media engagement significantly strengthens SME resilience and fosters long-term growth. By leveraging affordability, accessibility, and real-time interaction, SMEs can maintain market visibility and customer loyalty, even during crises. Furthermore, the integration of gamification, short-form content, and conversational marketing improves customer participation and emotional connection, enhancing brand loyalty and retention. From a theoretical perspective, the study contributes to the conceptualization of sustainable MM as a multidimensional strategy. It highlights the need for a more integrated approach to digital marketing (DM) that considers both customer-centric innovation and sustainability goals. Practically, SMEs are encouraged to adopt a holistic marketing strategy that aligns with sustainability principles. Policymakers should support initiatives that enhance digital literacy and infrastructure for SMEs. Future research should focus on longitudinal studies, sector-specific frameworks, and the impact of emerging technologies on SME digital marketing strategies.

This article provides a novel synthesis of sustainable MM strategies and their implications for SME growth, emphasizing the need for proactive digital transformation. It contributes to both academic knowledge and practical strategies for SMEs navigating the post-pandemic digital landscape.

Keywords: Sustainable Mobile Marketing, Social Media Engagement, SME Resilience, Digital Transformation, Marketing Strategy.

INTRODUCTION

Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) form the foundation of many national economies, serving not only as job creators but also as catalysts of local innovation and community-based development. In Indonesia, SMEs account for 61.07% of the national GDP—equivalent to IDR 8,573.89 trillion—supported by over 64.2 million business units (Ministry of Finance, 2024). Globally, more than 400 million SMEs operate across countries, contributing substantially to employment and

GDP growth (Brinkerink & Bammens, 2024). These enterprises are essential not only for economic inclusiveness but also for strengthening national economic resilience.

However, SMEs are often disproportionately affected during global disruptions. The COVID-19 pandemic exposed the structural vulnerabilities within this sector, leading to massive revenue losses, downsizing, and even permanent closure for many SMEs (Kádár & Jáki, 2024; Castro & Moreira, 2024). Compared to large corporations, SMEs generally lack the financial buffers, digital infrastructure, and managerial capacity to withstand such crises. In addition, the role of SMEs in deeper economic transformation beyond early-stage innovation remains underexplored (Westman et al., 2023). While DM is increasingly essential, SMEs in emerging and post-transition economies are still underutilizing its potential (Emini & Merovci, 2021).

In recent years, the digitalization of business operations has become a critical response to shifting market dynamics. The pandemic accelerated the need for digital transformation, compelling SMEs to integrate mobile and SMM strategies to maintain customer relationships and operational continuity (Mishrif & Khan, 2023). Digital transformation and the resulting business model innovations have fundamentally reshaped consumer expectations and behaviors, pressuring traditional firms and disrupting markets. This shift requires firms to adopt specific organizational structures and rethink performance metrics to align with the demands of digital competition and evolving customer behaviors (Verhoef et al., 2021). These shifts offer a new competitive edge for SMEs, yet their ability to fully leverage such tools varies widely.

Despite the growing adoption of DM tools, several research gaps persist. First, while MM offers unmatched flexibility, there is a lack of an integrative model that combines demographic, social, and technological factors to guide its adoption among SMEs (Eze et al., 2022). Second, although social media enhances efficiency and market access, its success in SMEs remains shaped by cultural and organizational structures—yet this area remains understudied (Amoah & Jibril, 2021). Third, innovative marketing strategies in resource-constrained SMEs often arise through improvisation, but a structured understanding of frugal innovation remains limited (Sari et al., 2023). Fourth, the application of gamification in mobile social media campaigns has shown promise in enhancing customer engagement and brand loyalty (Gimenez-Fernandez et al., 2021; Malik et al., 2025), but little is known about its sector-specific effectiveness among SMEs (Punwatkar & Verghese, 2025). Fifth, short-form video content such as TikTok and Instagram Reels increases brand visibility and customer interaction (Wahid et al., 2023; Apasrawirote et al., 2022); yet few longitudinal studies have examined its impact on long-term trust and customer retention. Sixth, conversational marketing through instant messaging platforms builds personal relationships with customers (Kang & Park, 2018; Koponen & Rytsy, 2020), but its integration into customer relationship management systems is seldom addressed in the literature. Lastly, although sustainability is increasingly central to SME growth, existing models rarely combine digital readiness, institutional support, and community trust in a cohesive framework (Zaman et al., 2025; Martínez-Peláez et al., 2023).

The novelty of this article lies in its integrative and focused exploration of three key themes: the necessity of sustainability in modern business, the transformative power of mobile and social media in marketing, and the specific post-pandemic challenges and opportunities faced by SMEs. While existing studies have explored each element independently, this review aims to synthesize them under a unified lens of sustainable digital transformation. Furthermore, this article addresses the overlooked synergy between mobile-first strategies and sustainability efforts in navigating the post-COVID economic landscape—an area where research remains sparse (Ijomah et al., 2024; Singh, 2024; Haudi et al., 2022).

Therefore, the main objective of this study is to conduct a systematic and critical review of scholarly literature on the strategic optimization of sustainable MM, particularly through social media engagement, to enhance SME resilience and long-term growth. In this light, the study is guided by five core research questions: (1) How do mobile social media engagement strategies affect the resilience and sustainable growth of SMEs? (2) How does the integration of gamification in

mobile SMM impact customer engagement and the sustainable growth of SMEs? (3) How does conversational MM through messaging platforms enhance customer engagement and resilience for SMEs? (4) How do short video content in mobile SMM affect the visibility and sustainable growth of SMEs? and (5) How do SMEs face the challenges of technology inclusion moving forward?

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the evolving landscape of global business, sustainability has become a core principle in digital and MM strategies. Far beyond environmental stewardship, sustainability in marketing today embodies economic viability, social equity, environmental consciousness, and governance integrity. This holistic view is especially crucial for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), whose agility allows them to adopt strategic practices that resonate with ethically driven and environmentally aware consumers. (Martínez-Peláez et al., 2023) suggest that adopting sustainable digital transformation can reduce costs, improve trust, and enhance competitiveness. In line with this, the Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) framework emphasizes the need for multi-stakeholder engagement, public education, and eco-labeling strategies to foster responsible consumption (Zhan et al., 2025). Such an orientation not only appeals to modern consumer values but also enables SMEs to build long-term resilience and purpose-driven growth.

Digital transformation offers unprecedented opportunities for SMEs to innovate and scale their marketing strategies. Philip Kotler, often referred to as the father of modern marketing, highlights that marketing in the digital age is no longer about selling, but about engaging customers through value co-creation and meaningful conversations (Kotler et al., 2016). In their work, *Marketing 4.0* and *Marketing 5.0*: Kotler P, Kartajaya H, and Setiawan I; emphasize that DM must evolve beyond technology, focusing on human-centricity, empathy, and authenticity. Social media platforms exemplify this evolution—empowering SMEs to build brand communities, foster loyalty, and gain real-time customer insights. Through personalized campaigns, influencer collaborations, and targeted ads, SMEs can significantly amplify their visibility and deepen customer connections (Ijomah et al., 2024).

Gamification has become a dynamic tool in digital engagement, offering game-like elements such as badges, levels, and rewards to incentivize user behavior. Mobility in gamification is perceived to have a significant impact on both utilitarian and hedonic features. These two features, in turn, influence the overall user experience, which subsequently affects perceived benefits, the type of perceived value, and brand equity (Hsu & Chen, 2018). Kotler et al. (2021) underscore this shift as a move toward "engagement marketing", where customer participation becomes a central asset in value creation. Punwatkar & Verghese (2025) further argue that gamification contributes to deeper brand loyalty and purchase intention. For SMEs with limited budgets, gamification presents a cost-effective strategy to improve user retention, create brand excitement, and foster emotional attachment to products or services.

Short-form video content, particularly on platforms like TikTok, Instagram Reels, and YouTube Shorts, represents a fast-growing format for storytelling and digital influence. These videos are brief, visually captivating, and easily shareable—allowing SMEs to communicate brand messages quickly and effectively. Research by Apasrawirote et al., (2022) shows that when combined with strong marketing capabilities and influencer collaboration, short videos can significantly boost brand performance and perception. This aligns with Kotler et al., (2021) call for "adaptive marketing," where brands must be agile in using new formats to align with how digital-native consumers consume and engage with content.

Conversational MM—enabled through instant messaging apps like WhatsApp, Telegram, and LINE—allows SMEs to build personal, trust-based relationships with their customers. Real-time two-way communication creates a sense of closeness, reliability, and responsiveness. Kang & Park, (2018) and Koponen & Rytsy, (2020) both affirm that such approaches increase customer satisfaction

and foster long-term loyalty. According to Kotler; the future of marketing lies in humanity, where technology serves to bring brands closer to people—not the other way around. In this light, conversational platforms are not merely tools but extensions of a brand's relational identity (Kotler et al., 2021). When thoughtfully implemented, they can strengthen governance principles through transparency and reinforce social sustainability through inclusive engagement.

Sustainability in economic development, particularly in marketing, has become increasingly critical in aligning business practices with the broader goals of environmental preservation, social equity, and long-term economic viability. As global concerns over climate change, inequality, and resource depletion intensify, marketing is being redefined—not merely as a tool for promoting consumption, but as a strategic platform for encouraging responsible behavior among producers and consumers alike. Sustainable marketing places emphasis on transparency, long-term stakeholder relationships, and ecological consciousness, thereby contributing to the achievement of SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production (Peattie et al., 2025).

Furthermore, sustainable marketing strategies enable businesses—especially SMEs—to create shared value by integrating social and environmental concerns into their branding, customer communication, and product development. This approach fosters trust, customer loyalty, and reputational resilience, which are essential in today's competitive and ethically driven markets. As Kotler argue, sustainability must be embedded into the core of marketing strategy, not treated as a peripheral activity (Kotler et al., 2016). When aligned with the SDGs, marketing becomes a bridge between business performance and societal well-being, promoting inclusive economic growth and environmental stewardship on a global scale.

RESEARCH METHODS

1. SLR

This research using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) methodology, with the analytical approach of Type, Focus, Consideration, Method and Contribution as the five fundamental elements (Kraus et al., 2022). A SLR can help address and assist several aspects of the research process including: establishing the context and limiting the research problem; seeking theoretical support; rationalizing the problem and new lines of inquiry; distinguishing what has been done from what needs to be done; identifying key findings (and methodologies used in previous research); and avoiding wasted research (Linnenluecke et al., 2020). This SLR uses the PRISMA 2020 protocol to ensure its methodology is transparent with the stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. PRISMA 2020 Statement including checklist, explanation and elaboration, and flow diagram. It can be used for original systematic reviews, updated systematic reviews, or continuously updated ("living") systematic reviews (Page et al., 2021). Then the stages are detailed with steps including: formulating research questions (by the PICOS framework), developing and validating protocols, searching for highly reputable publications as comprehensive data sources, selecting results with filters according to needs (with inclusion and exclusion criteria), assessing the quality of study results with the PRISMA Flow Diagram scheme, data extraction with the help of Mendeley, and synthesizing findings.

2. Identification Strategy

This study adopts a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) approach to synthesize existing academic research on sustainable MM and its impact on the resilience and growth of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The identification process involved comprehensive searches across reputable academic databases, including Scopus, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, Emerald Insight, Taylor & Francis, Willey Online Library, dan Sage Journals. Search strings were designed using Boolean operators such as: Sustainable OR ("digital marketing" OR "social media marketing") AND SMEs; and relevant keywords such as: Digital Marketing, Social Media Marketing, Sustainable, SMEs, Resilience, Social Media; Gamification, Short Video Content, and Message Marketing. The identification and screening

process followed the PRISMA 2020 protocol (Page et al., 2021), which ensures transparency, replicability, and rigor in reporting systematic reviews. The approach was designed to capture high-quality peer-reviewed literature directly aligned with the study's research focus.

3. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

To maintain methodological rigor, inclusion and exclusion criteria were developed using updated guidance on structured review frameworks, drawing from more recent models such as SPICE and PRISMA-ScR. The inclusion criteria targeted studies involving SMEs as the primary population, with interventions centered on digital or MM tools including social media, gamification, and short video platforms. Studies needed to report measurable outcomes related to business growth, customer engagement, or sustainability. Only peer-reviewed articles published between 2017 and 2024, in English, and employing empirical or theoretical methodologies were included. Articles were excluded if they were conceptual only, opinion pieces, non-peer-reviewed, or focused exclusively on large enterprises. This process aligns with updated recommendations for evidence-based synthesis in management and marketing research (Tricco et al., 2018).

4. Extraction Article

Once the eligible studies were selected, a structured data extraction process was implemented using a predefined spreadsheet template. Extracted data included: author(s), year of publication, research objectives, context (industry and region), methodological design, key findings, and relevance to the main themes of this review. Two independent reviewers conducted the extraction process to ensure objectivity and reduce bias. Discrepancies were resolved through discussion and re-evaluation. This phase was essential for identifying core insights and thematic linkages across the selected studies (Kraus et al., 2022), ensuring consistency in how data was processed and interpreted for further analysis.

5. Analysis

The extracted data were analyzed thematically based on predefined domains: MM, digital transformation, social media engagement, gamification, short-form video, conversational marketing, and sustainability outcomes in SMEs. A qualitative synthesis approach was used to identify patterns, convergences, and theoretical implications. Studies were reviewed to assess how digital and MM strategies contributed to economic, social, environmental, and governance aspects of SME sustainability. The integration of findings aimed to generate conceptual clarity and offer a structured understanding of how SMEs can optimize mobile-first strategies to navigate the post-pandemic economy (Kraus et al., 2022; Snyder, 2019).

A total of 21,554 documents were initially identified based on the Boolean operators and keywords applied across seven scholarly databases. The detailed selection process is illustrated in the PRISMA flow diagram (Figure 1). We then performed an initial screening using the filtering tools embedded in each database, setting criteria to include only documents published within the last ten years (from 2015 to May 8, 2025), in English, open access, and limited to research articles within relevant subject areas. This filtering process excluded $n = 19,262$ documents, along with $n = 96$ identified as duplicates, resulting in a total of $n = 19,358$ documents being removed. A remaining $n = 2,196$ documents proceeded to the next screening phase.

In this phase, we screened titles and abstracts to assess relevance to the research theme. A total of $n = 1,926$ articles were excluded for lacking thematic alignment. This left $n = 270$ articles for full-text assessment. However, $n = 127$ articles were subsequently excluded because full-text versions were inaccessible or unavailable for download. Thus, $n = 143$ articles were retained for an in-depth eligibility review based on inclusion criteria. Following a more detailed analysis, $n = 40$ articles were excluded due to thematic misalignment, weak theoretical foundation, inadequate methodology, or insufficient results. Finally, $n = 103$ articles were deemed eligible and included in the systematic review. The entire screening and selection process is clearly outlined in the PRISMA diagram (Figure 1).

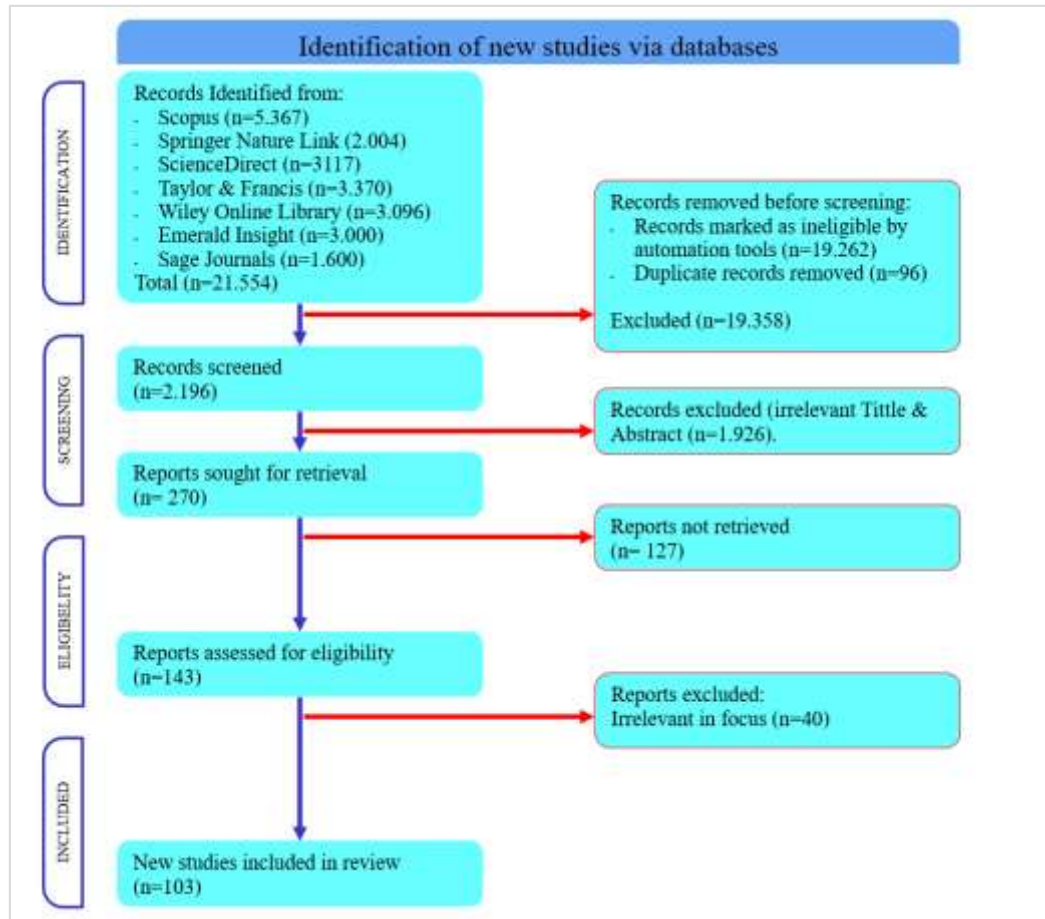


Figure 1. PRISMA Framework, PRISMA 2020 (Page et al., 2021)

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Publication Overview

A total of 103 articles included in this systematic review were sourced from seven major academic databases: Scopus, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, Emerald Insight, Taylor & Francis, Wiley Online Library, and SAGE Journals. These articles were published across 57 different journals. Of these, 10 journals published more than two articles, with Cogent Business & Management (indexed in Scopus) publishing the highest number at 26 articles (Figure 2). The remaining 47 journals each contributed one article. To ensure the relevance and timeliness of the research, only publications from the last ten years (2015–2025) were included. The distribution of articles by year demonstrates a clear upward trend in scholarly interest in this topic. Along 2025, Until May 8, there have already been 17 relevant articles published (Figure 3).

2. Territorial Analysis

Figure 4. presents the geographical distribution of the reviewed articles based on the affiliations of the authors. The dataset spans 34 countries, with Indonesia contributing the most publications (14 articles), followed by the United Kingdom, India, Malaysia, Pakistan, China, Spain, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria, Italy, Ghana, Vietnam, Finland, Australia, USA, Thailand, Tanzania, Jordan, Hungary, Greece, Germany, Egypt, Czech Republic, and Austria. 10 other countries each contributed one article to the dataset. This diverse authorship base highlights the global relevance and interest in the topic under investigation.

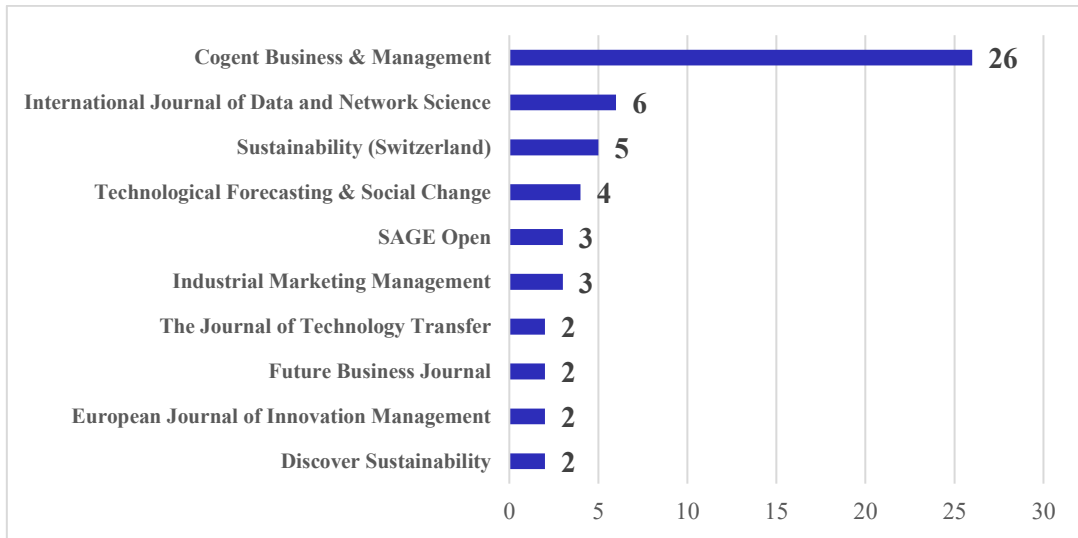


Figure 2: Document by Journal Publisher

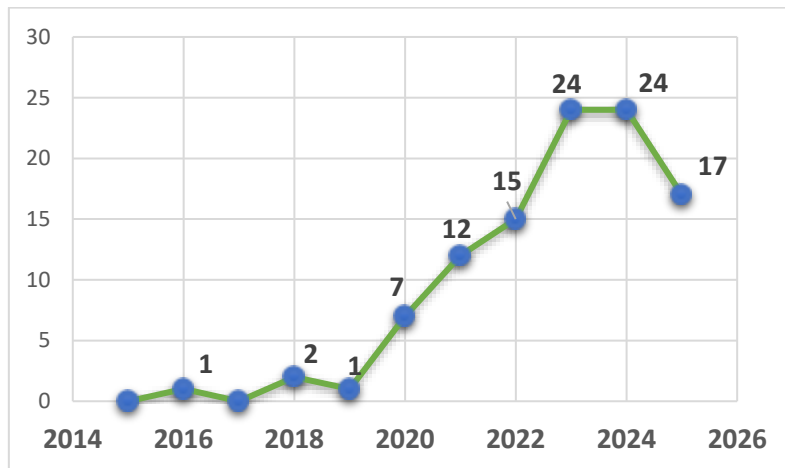


Figure 3: Document by Year (2015 – 2025),

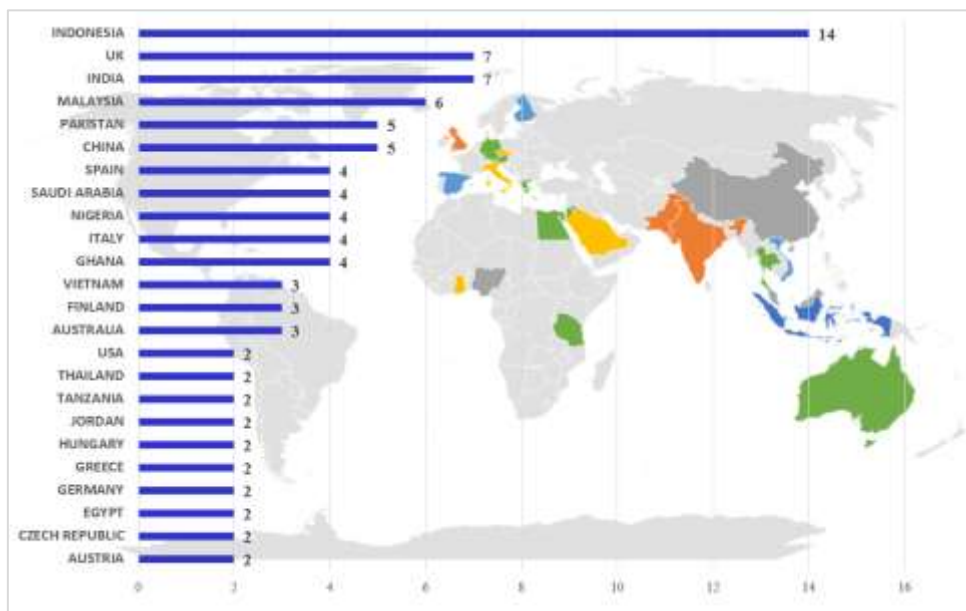


Figure 4: Document by Teritori

3. Findings of Research

Based on an in-depth synthesis of 103 articles using a systematic literature review approach, we categorized the findings into seven key thematic areas. Each theme represents an important research domain within the context of sustainable MM for SMEs. Alongside these thematic insights, we identify critical research gaps and propose future research directions to advance the understanding and practical application of DM in SME contexts.

a. MM and SME

MM plays a vital role in enabling SMEs to reach broader markets with greater flexibility, cost-efficiency, improve customer satisfaction and sustain investment (Sharabati et al., 2024). However, adoption is often influenced by demographic factors such as age, user experience, and socio-economic context (Eze et al., 2022; Eze et al., 2021). Despite its growing significance, there remains an absence of an integrative framework that combines socio-demographic and technological dimensions in explaining MM adoption in developing countries. Future research could explore the development of a "Socio-Demographic-Tech Fit" model that quantifies the drivers and outcomes of MM adoption in the SME sector. Meanwhile, marketing performance can be seen from the dimensions of product market level, marketing effectiveness, customers, financial performance, marketing efficiency, and adaptability (Lestari et al., 2024).

b. Digitalization and Social Media in SMEs

Digital transformation has been shown to enhance SME resilience during times of crisis, while improving operational efficiency, innovation capability, and global competitiveness (Guo et al., 2020); (Sagala & Óri, 2024); (Van Hoang et al., 2025); (Arifin et al., 2023); (Ali Abbasi et al., 2022); (Patma et al., 2021); (Deku et al., 2024); (Meier & Peters, 2023); (Mohamad, 2022); (John, 2023); (Nasution et al., 2023). SMEs need to adopt and use online social networks as a digital strategy, invest in adopting various channels, using online meetings, and controlling the sharing of competitive SME knowledge (Bosua & Evans, 2024). Nevertheless, digital transformation, besides being positive (Zahara et al., 2023); but has its negative effects (Feliciano-Cestero et al., 2023). There is a lack of sector-specific longitudinal studies that track adaptive digitalization stages. A proposed direction is the creation of a "Phased Digital Maturity Model" tailored for SMEs, which dynamically measures their efficiency, responsiveness, and adaptability over time. On the other hand, SMM has been empirically linked to improved financial performance, promotional efficiency, customer retention, and market access (Amoah & and Jibril, 2021); (Basri & Siam, 2019); (Bruce et al., 2023); (Ibrahim Nnindini et al., 2025); (Kazakov et al., 2020), (Ahmed et al., 2025). (Amoah et al., 2023). However, little is known about how organizational structure and cultural dimensions influence the success of social media strategies in SMEs. A cross-cultural comparative study is therefore recommended to assess the moderating roles of leadership style and cultural alignment on SMM effectiveness.

c. Innovation and SMM in SMEs

DM capabilities and innovation readiness have been essential in accelerating SME business growth—especially during disruptive periods like the COVID-19 pandemic (Zahara et al., 2023); (Sari et al., 2023); (Scuotto et al., 2017), (Olaleye et al., 2021). SMM has a positive impact on brand trust, equity, and loyalty, and these three variables positively affect the performance of SMEs (Haudi et al., 2022); (Adam et al., 2024); (Yigit & Kanbach, 2023). Then significantly boosts the sustainable growth of SMEs (Chatterjee et al., 2021). Yet, current literature provides limited insight into how SMEs with constrained resources can continuously create and maintain marketing innovation. There are still many home industries that have not yet engaged in online marketing and trade (Reuschke & Mason, 2022). To address this, future studies should examine a "Frugal Marketing Innovation" model that explores the role of collaboration, digital literacy, and adaptive technology in facilitating low-cost yet impactful marketing innovation (Sari et al., 2023). Furthermore, SMM strategies driven by electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM), multimedia content, and engagement metrics have been proven effective in boosting customer loyalty and

conversions (Drossos et al., 2024); (Alanazi, 2023); (Armawan et al., 2023); (Rakshit et al., 2022). However, sector-specific analyses on content-consumer behavior fit remain underexplored. Experimental research using a “Content-Behavior Fit Matrix” is suggested to assess the effects of content types (e.g., visual, audio, user-generated content) on trust and purchase behavior within different SME industries. Although in practice, the adoption of social media marketing by SMEs is influenced by internal challenges and the importance of external support from stakeholders (Nazir et al., 2024). SMEs that adopt an entrepreneurial marketing approach (such as SMM) and entrepreneurial values will tend to outperform their competitors in the market, because these two variables make SMEs more open, agile, responsive to the market, brave with risks, consistent with creativity and innovation (Alshagawi & Mabkhot, 2024).

d. Gamification

Gamification has become a practical solution for increasing customer engagement and internal adaptability in SMEs. Integrating game elements such as leaderboards, points, and reward systems into marketing campaigns has shown to enhance customer interaction and reduce resistance to digital adoption (Gimenez-Fernandez et al., 2021); (Chooset and Sukhabot, 2025). Despite this potential, empirical studies—especially experimental or sector-specific trials—remain scarce. Future work could explore randomized controlled trials (RCTs) to evaluate gamification effectiveness in various SME sectors, measuring outcomes such as engagement rate, customer acquisition, and behavioral loyalty (Qian et al., 2023); (Huang et al., 2024); (Gimenez-Fernandez et al., 2021).

e. Short-Form Video Content in Mobile SMM

Short-form video content has emerged as a highly effective tool in reaching younger demographics, a crucial element in the effectiveness of marketing strategies, opportunities for brand marketing, enhancing brand visibility, and fostering consumer loyalty (Wahid et al., 2023); (Tulipa et al., 2024); (Vinkóczy et al., 2024); (Yang & Dongqi, 2025). Its visual appeal, brevity, and virality offer SMEs a competitive edge in crowded digital spaces. However, the long-term impact of such content on brand trust and customer retention remains underexplored. Future research should include longitudinal field studies—such as a “Short vs Long Video Impact Study”—to investigate the differential effects of content format on brand engagement, retention rates, and customer lifetime value (Wahid et al., 2023).

f. Conversational MM via Messaging Platforms

Instant messaging platforms such as WhatsApp and Telegram provide SMEs with direct, two-way communication channels that enhance customer satisfaction, personalization, and loyalty (Kang & Park, 2018); (Koponen & Rytsy, 2020). While widely adopted in practice, limited scholarly attention has been paid to the integration of these tools with CRM systems or AI-based personalization engines within SME contexts. A future research avenue includes designing a “Conversational CRM Architecture” that fuses WhatsApp Business API with adaptive personalization algorithms to optimize customer relationship management in SMEs (Koponen & Rytsy, 2020).

g. SME Sustainability, Resilience, and Growth

SME sustainability is influenced not only by technology adoption and digital literacy but also by communication strategies aligned with environmental and social responsibility (Zaman et al., 2025); (Corvello et al., 2023); (Kalogiannidis et al., 2025); (Oduro, 2024). Despite substantial advancements, there is still a lack of integrative models that unite digital resilience, institutional backing, and community trust into a comprehensive framework for understanding SME sustainability. As a response, this study proposes the development of an “Integrated SME Sustainability Index (ISSI)” —a model that combines digital capabilities, policy support, and stakeholder trust as core components of long-term SME resilience and sustainable growth (Zaman et al., 2025). a decline in public sentiment toward the use of AI in marketing, driven by

concerns over human job displacement, and recommends that companies adopt AI responsibly and ethically (Ngo, 2024); (Fu et al., 2024).

Below is the list of references for this research according to the theme:

Theme	Reference
MM and SMEs	Eze et al., (2021); Eze et al., (2022); Sagala & Óri, (2024); Sharabati et al., (2024), Lestari et al., (2024)
Digitalization and Social Media	Nayak et al., (2025); Guo et al., (2020); Arifin et al., (2023); Kessler et al., (2025); Kurniawan et al., (2023); Oldemeyer et al., (2024); Van Hoang et al., (2025); Kazakov et al., (2020); Marinelli et al., (2023); Haque et al., (2024); Saura et al., (2023); Oliveira et al., (2025), Amoah et al., (2023), Ali Abbasi et al., (2022), Patma et al., (2021), Deku et al., (2024), Meier & Peters, (2023), Mohamad, (2022), Zahara et al., (2023), Amoah & and Jibril, (2021); Basri & Siam, (2019); Bruce et al., (2023); Ibrahim Nnindini et al., (2025); Kazakov et al., (2020), Ahmed et al., (2025). Amoah et al., (2023), Feliciano-Cestero et al., (2023), John, (2023), Bosua & Evans, (2024), (Nasution et al., 2023)
Innovation and SMM	Amoah & Jibril, (2020); Amoah & Jibril, (2021); Amoah et al., (2021); Ibrahim Nnindini et al., (2025); Basri & Siam, (2019); Ahmed et al., (2025); Tian et al., (2024); Ghanem & Hamid, (2020); Junaedi et al., (2022); Tulipa et al., (2024); Maduku, (2024); Ahuja et al., (2024); Rifqy Roosdhani et al., (2023); Bartoloni & Ancillai, (2024); Sedalo et al., (2022); Malesev & Cherry, (2021); Wahid et al., (2023); Drossos et al., (2024); Bourguignon et al., (2025); Fraccastoro et al., (2021); Elnadi, (2022); Huy & Phuc, (2025); Scuotto et al., (2017); Sari et al., (2023); Chooset & Sukhabot, (2025); Valdez-Juárez et al., (2024); Levy et al., (2022); Chatterjee et al., (2021), Armawan et al., (2023), Haudi et al., (2022), Adam et al., (2024), Yigit & Kanbach, (2023)
Gamification in SMM	Gimenez-Fernandez et al., (2021); Huang et al., (2024); Qian et al., (2023); Chooset & Sukhabot, (2025)
Short video	Wahid et al., (2023); Tulipa et al., (2024); Vinkóczi et al., (2024); Yang & Dongqi, (2025)
Conversational MM	Koponen & Rytsy, (2020); Islam et al., (2025); Kang & Park, (2018); Elnadi, (2022)
Sustainability, UKM Resilience and Growth	Munawar et al., (2024); Oduro, (2024); Chatterjee et al., (2021); Ismail, (2022); Hernández et al., (2024); Kalogiannidis et al., (2025); Zaman et al., (2025); Sheikh et al., (2018); Srisathan et al., (2020); Tariq et al., (2024); Kumar et al., (2025); Anchan et al., (2024); Corvello et al., (2023); Mushi, (2024); Rizvanović et al., (2023); Lu & Shaharudin, (2024); El-Shihy & Hassan, (2025); Da Rocha et al., (2024); Amin et al., (2025); Tiwasing, (2021); Ngo, (2024), Fu et al., (2024)

Optimizing mobile social media platforms is crucial for SMEs to maintain growth and competitiveness in today's and future digital economy. Mobile-based SMM increases customer engagement, strengthens brand communities, and opens up low-cost promotional channels (Ijomah et al., 2024); (Bruce et al., 2023), helping SMEs overcome scale and geographic barriers. However, issues of compatibility, technological literacy, cost, and policy remain (Ullah et al., 2023), while digitalization challenges such as data privacy, marketing creativity, and technology utilization are areas of concern that need to be optimized.

Recent literature also underscores the growing role of gamification as a driver of sustained customer engagement in SME marketing ecosystems. Tailored game-based incentives—such as points, leaderboards, and achievement badges—have been shown to significantly improve customer loyalty and retention, especially when integrated into mobile platforms (Halim et al., 2024). These

findings align with broader research on agile transformation and process maturity models in SMEs, which emphasize the need for adaptive and participatory business models to remain competitive (Al-Ashmori et al., 2021); (Nwaiwu et al., 2020). Gamification not only enhances the user experience but also fosters deeper brand interaction and emotional commitment, thereby contributing to long-term organizational agility. Nonetheless, the integration of gamification must be context-sensitive—particularly in resource-constrained environments—where its success is highly dependent on digital infrastructure and human capital readiness.

This review also reveals an emergent convergence between technological capability, innovation adoption, and sustainability orientation in SMEs. Digital tools such as cloud computing, financial technologies, and Industry 4.0 systems are increasingly leveraged to improve not only economic performance but also environmental responsibility (Kannan & Gambetta, 2025); (Awad & Martín-Rojas, 2024). Contrary to expectations, recent findings suggest that over-reliance on singular data sources can actually limit digitalization awareness, underscoring the need for more integrative approaches (Pedota, 2023). The reviewed evidence suggests a novel insight: while individual tools (e.g., social media, gamification) offer clear benefits, their synergistic and strategic orchestration—tailored to SME needs—creates a more powerful mechanism for fostering resilience and sustainable growth. Therefore, this study contributes to the field by conceptualizing sustainable MM not as a discrete tactic, but as a composite framework that integrates digital capability, customer engagement, and sustainability alignment in a mutually reinforcing system.

CONCLUSION

This study has systematically reviewed the intersection of sustainable MM strategies and their implications for the resilience and growth of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in the post-pandemic digital economy. By analyzing 103 peer-reviewed articles using the PRISMA 2020 protocol and the PICOS framework, we identified seven thematic domains including MM, digital transformation, social media strategy, gamification, short-form content, conversational platforms, and sustainability integration. Each theme revealed distinct research gaps, which collectively highlight the need for a more holistic and context-sensitive approach to DM for SMEs.

In response to the first research question, the review confirms that mobile-based social media engagement strategies significantly enhance SME resilience and long-term growth. Through their accessibility, affordability, and capacity for real-time interaction, mobile platforms empower SMEs to maintain market visibility and customer engagement even during public crises (Eze et al., 2022); (Guo et al., 2020). Secondly, the integration of gamification elements into SMM boosts customer participation and loyalty by creating interactive and rewarding experiences (Gimenez-Fernandez et al., 2021); (Halim et al., 2024), thus strengthening the emotional ties between consumers and SMEs. Third, conversational MM via instant messaging platforms fosters trust-based relationships and personalized communication. These interactions—particularly when enhanced with CRM systems—offer SMEs a cost-efficient way to build customer intimacy and improve retention (Kang & Park, 2018); (Koponen & Rytsy, 2020). Regarding the fourth question, the review identifies short-form video content as a dynamic tool for improving brand awareness, particularly among younger demographics. However, long-term effects on brand loyalty and retention remain underexplored, suggesting a need for longitudinal studies (Wahid et al., 2023); (Tulipa et al., 2024). Finally, in addressing the fifth research question, the findings suggest that digital literacy, financial capability, and social network integration are critical enablers of technological inclusion in SMEs (Frimpong et al., 2022); (Tiwasing, 2021); (Hernández et al., 2024). Strategic investments in digital infrastructure, data governance, and managerial commitment are essential to overcome digitalization barriers (Bartoloni & Ancillai, 2024).

This study contributes by developing an Integrated SME Resilience and Growth Framework that systematically connects sustainable mobile marketing, digital transformation, and innovation

pathways to strengthen SME resilience and growth. Unlike previous studies that primarily conceptualized sustainable mobile marketing, this research translates these insights into a practical, implementable framework that SMEs can adopt to navigate uncertainty while advancing meaningful digital sustainability.

Specifically, this study proposes a Phased Digital Maturity Model, a Frugal Marketing Innovation Model, a Content-Behavior Fit Matrix, a Conversational CRM Architecture, a Socio-Demographic-Tech Fit Model, and an Integrated SME Sustainability Index (ISSI). Together, these models enable SMEs to shift from reactive digital adoption toward structured and sustainable digital transformation. They enhance market adaptability, foster customer-centered innovation, and align digital transformation efforts with broader sustainable development goals, equipping SMEs with the strategic tools necessary to thrive in an increasingly dynamic business environment.

This study has several limitations. As it is based on a systematic synthesis of existing literature, the proposed framework has not yet been empirically tested within specific SME sectors. Additionally, variations in organizational culture and sectoral characteristics have not been deeply explored. For future research, it is recommended to conduct empirical and longitudinal studies to validate this framework across diverse SME sectors. Further research could also focus on developing measurable indicators for the Integrated SME Sustainability Index (ISSI) to enable SMEs to systematically track their resilience and sustainability progress.

In conclusion, this review highlights the imperative for SMEs to treat mobile and SMM not as isolated tools, but as interconnected levers of resilience, innovation, and sustainability. As digital ecosystems continue to evolve, SMEs that embrace strategic, human-centered, and sustainability-oriented approaches will be best positioned to thrive in increasingly complex and dynamic markets.

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