



Entrepreneurial leadership towards business sustainability of food establishments around Mariano Marcos State University – Batac Campus

Remalyn D. dela Rosa: MBA, Graduate School, Divine Word College of Vigan, Vigan City, Philippines.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received: September 20, 2025

Received in rev. form: October 25, 2025

Accepted: November 2025

Published: December 15, 2025

Keywords: *Entrepreneurial leadership, business sustainability, triple bottom line, SMEs, food establishment*

JEL Classification: M21

ABSTRACT

The study aimed to examine how entrepreneurial leadership influences business sustainability—specifically its economic, social, and environmental dimensions—among food establishments around Mariano Marcos State University–Batac Campus. Anchored on Elkington’s Triple Bottom Line (TBL) and Hambrick and Mason’s Upper Echelons Theory (UET), it explored how entrepreneurial leadership and practices contribute to business sustainability. A quantitative descriptive-correlational research design was employed, involving sixty-six (62) purposively selected owners and managers of food establishments. Data were collected through a structured and validated questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive and correlational statistical methods. Findings revealed that entrepreneurial leadership significantly influences the business sustainability performance of food businesses across the three dimensions. The study emphasized the important role of entrepreneurial leadership in promoting long-term business sustainability and offers insights for future research and policy formulation.

© 2025 by the authors. Licensee DWIJMH. This open-access article is distributed under the terms and conditions of the [Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/) (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>)

Introduction

Since the 1990s, sustainability has increasingly become a core focus of business strategy and scholarly research, driven by growing economic, societal, and environmental concerns. While large enterprises have made advancements in integrating sustainable practices, micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) continue to face problems due to resource constraints. Despite the growing recognition of sustainability, research indicates that its application among SMEs remains limited. Existing research often disregards the role of entrepreneurial leadership in fostering sustainable business practices within MSMEs. There has been a notable gap in research exploring how entrepreneurial leadership affects the outcomes of economic, social, and environmental dimensions of business sustainability. This study addressed that gap by focusing on the food establishments located around Mariano Marcos

* Corresponding author. ORCID ID: 0000-0001-6884-3504

State University – Batac Campus, investigating the relationship of entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability within local MSMEs. The purpose of this research was to provide empirical evidence on the extent to which entrepreneurial leadership supports sustainability among food establishments. The study intends to fill gaps in existing literature, generate insights for business practitioners, and offer recommendations for promoting the sustainability and resilience of SMEs in local communities.

Literature review

The literature review examines existing research on entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability – economic, social, and environmental dimensions.

Entrepreneurial leadership

Entrepreneurial leadership involves exceptional leaders who develop visions essential for guiding and mobilizing a dedicated group of followers to implement these visions to achieve strategic value creation (Nor-Aishah H., et al., 2020). The study by Nor-Aishah H., et al. (2020) found that entrepreneurial leadership is important in driving organizations and their external environments towards sustainability. Furthermore, the research highlighted the role of leadership support in fostering sustainable innovation within the enterprises. It explains that leaders' endorsement and encouragement of sustainable innovation have an influence on enhancing employees' innovation capabilities and cultivating a culture of innovation in enterprises. The study emphasized the relationship between leadership support, employee innovation potential, and the overall organizational culture of innovation for business sustainability. It concluded that sustainability initiatives driven by entrepreneurial leadership lead to superior product and service quality, increased sales and profits, reduction of environmental degradation, fulfillment of customer and employee needs, reciprocal benefits to the community, and ultimately contribute to sustainable development. These findings align with the research of Sandybayev (2019), which demonstrated that when entrepreneurial leadership is effectively utilized, it can enhance organizational performance. To fully maximize the opportunities entrepreneurial leadership provides, organizations need to utilize innovative practices to drive business performance toward sustainability. It also aligns with the findings of Mehmood et al. (2021), who recognized entrepreneurial leadership as a key element in fostering employee creativity. Their study consistently demonstrated a positive relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and employee creative performance. Similarly, several other studies have shown that entrepreneurial leaders actively contribute to enhancing the creative potential of their employees. This aligns with the findings of Paudel (2019), which highlighted the role of entrepreneurial leadership in fostering learning, creativity, and innovation within organizations. By recognizing and applying entrepreneurial leadership practices, businesses can swiftly adapt to changing business environments, influence open innovation (OI) advantages, and ultimately improve both their financial and non-financial performance. The ability of SMEs to thrive in uncertain environments is largely influenced by the entrepreneurial and leadership capabilities of their owners and managers, along with their talent, energy, and expertise (Paudel, 2019; Demartini & Beretta, 2020).

Business sustainability

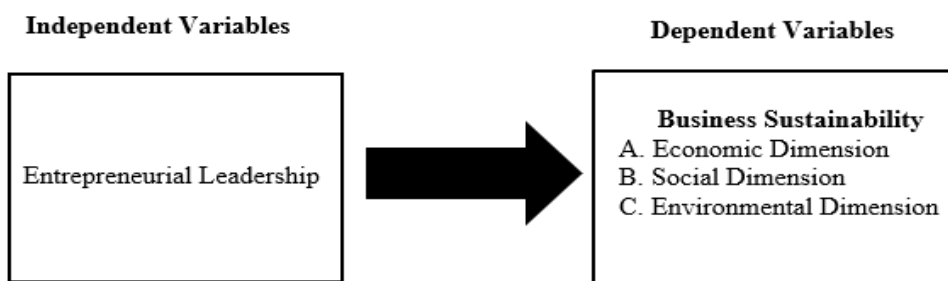
The concept of business sustainability has evolved significantly since the 1990s, becoming increasingly important in public consciousness. Najib et al. (2020) define business sustainability as a strategic focus on long-term goals, supported by Aganan and Santos (2019), who emphasized minimizing adverse effects on communities and the environment. Martins et al. (2022) go further, suggesting that sustainability entails exceeding stakeholder expectations by creating additional value.

The triple bottom line (3BL) framework, introduced by Elkington and Loviscek (2020), advocates for the consideration of the three dimensions: economic, social, and environmental, commonly integrated in discussions of sustainability.

1. **Economic Dimension (Profit):** Malesios et al. (2021) propose various criteria for economic sustainability, including financial stability, operational efficiency, and market competitiveness. Economic growth, as defined by Grossman and Krueger (1995), involves sustained increases in production and income levels. The sharing economy, highlighted by Boar et al. (2020), is seen as a sustainable model contributing to economic opportunities and equitable consumption.
2. **Social Dimension (People):** Historically, businesses focused on corporate social responsibility (CSR) and philanthropy, but Chunhyalpa (2019) notes a shift towards adopting sustainable practices and values. Westman et al. (2019) observe that small firms often align with socially accepted practices through personal beliefs and local context.
3. **Environmental Dimension (Planet):** Green entrepreneurship, as defined by Mou and Azeez (2019), focuses on addressing environmental and social issues while taking financial risks. This aligns with caring for the planet and ensuring environmental sustainability.

Business sustainability represents a fundamental shift in organizational thinking and behavior, emphasizing the importance of integrating environmental, social, and economic considerations into its core business strategies. The study of Medne, A., & Lapina, I. (2019), indicated that organizations that employed predefined frameworks for sustainability, modified existing methods for data analysis, and benchmarked sustainable solutions are likely to gain greater benefits compared to others. Thus, continuous improvements will naturally drive organizational sustainability.

Conceptual framework



The research paradigm illustrates the relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability: economic, social, and environmental dimensions. In this paradigm, the entrepreneurial leadership of owners and managers of food establishments around Mariano Marcos State University-Batac Campus served as the independent variable, while the dependent variables encompassed the three dimensions of business sustainability: economic, social, and environmental.

Statement of problems

The primary focus of this study was to examine the extent to which entrepreneurial leadership influences the business sustainability of food establishments around Mariano Marcos State University – Batac Campus. The research sought to answer the following questions:

- 1) What is the level of entrepreneurial leadership of the owners and managers of food establishments around the Mariano Marcos State University-Batac Campus in terms of:
 - a) opportunity recognition and innovation;
 - b) risk-taking and decision-making;
 - c) vision and strategic thinking;
 - d) adaptability and resilience;
 - e) team and culture development; and
 - f) business performance and growth?

- 2) What is the level of business sustainability in terms of:
 - a) economic dimensions;
 - b) social dimensions; and
 - c) environmental dimensions?

- 3) Is there a significant relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability in economic dimensions?

- 4) Is there a significant relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability on social dimensions?

- 5) Is there a significant relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability in environmental dimensions?

Research methodology

The study employed quantitative methods and utilized a correlational design to examine the relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability across its economic, social, and environmental dimensions. The researcher utilized a survey questionnaire as the primary tool for data collection, focusing on the levels of entrepreneurial leadership, the levels of business sustainability practices in each dimension, and the relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability across economic, social, and environmental dimensions. A total of seventy-eight (78) food establishments were identified as the population of this study. However, only sixty-two (62) owners and managers participated in the final survey, as some owners and managers declined to participate in the study. The researcher adhered to the ethical principles where participants were not exposed to any form of harm, and informed consent was obtained. The privacy of the research participants was safeguarded, and their voluntary participation was respected and highly valued. In terms of data handling, a sufficient level of confidentiality was maintained, the researcher ensured that no misleading information was presented, and all forms of biased data and findings were strictly avoided. The researcher constructed the questionnaire because of

the literature review and related studies, and had it reviewed by three experts, then had it validated. The computed Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient was 0.853 for all items combined. This study employed descriptive and inferential statistics, and the collected data were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for the level of entrepreneurial leadership and level of business sustainability practices in each dimension. Pearson’s correlation coefficient was employed to determine the strength and direction of the linear relationship between independent and dependent variables. The results were interpreted using a predefined range of values, accompanied by specific interpretations.

Norm	Statistical range	Descriptive Interpretation	Overall Rating
4	3.26-4.00	Strongly Agree (SA)	Very High (VH)
3	2.51-3.25	Agree (A)	High (H)
2	1.76-2.50	Disagree (D)	Low (L)
1	1.75-1.00	Strongly Disagree (SD)	Very Low (VL)

Data presentation and analysis

Problem 1. What is the level of entrepreneurial leadership of owners and managers of food establishments around Mariano Marcos State University – Batac Campus in terms of opportunity recognition and innovation, risk-taking and decision-making, vision and strategic thinking, adaptability and resilience, team and culture development, and business performance and growth?

Table 1: Level of entrepreneurial leadership of owners and managers of food establishments in terms of opportunity recognition and innovation

Indicators	Mean	Stdev	DR
1. I actively seek new business opportunities to enhance our competitive advantage.	3.50	0.671	SA
2. I am quick to identify market gaps and potential business opportunities.	3.24	0.619	A
3. I quickly identify and capitalize on evolving market trends.	3.13	0.665	A
4. I foster a culture that supports creative thinking to develop innovative products and process.	3.39	0.554	SA
5. I continuously explore ways to improve existing processes and offerings by investing in research and development.	3.44	0.643	SA
Overall Mean	3.34	0.460	VH

Legend: SA = Strongly Agree, A= Agree, VH = Very High

(Source: SPSS IBM)

Table 1 summarizes how food business owners and managers near MMSU – Batac Campus view their ability to spot opportunities and innovate. Overall, the results show that respondents have strong entrepreneurial qualities in these areas.

The statement with the highest mean (3.50) suggests that many business owners are actively looking for new business opportunities to stay competitive. The low standard deviation (0.671) shows that most respondents felt similarly, meaning this behavior is common among them.

The lowest-rated item still received a positive rating (3.13, Agree) with a similar standard deviation (0.665). This means that while responses varied slightly, most owners and managers believe they can respond to market changes and take advantage of new trends when needed.

The overall mean score for the dimension (3.34, Very High) suggests that these entrepreneurs are both open to new opportunities and capable of innovating when business conditions change.

Interestingly, this result contradicts Ebdane and Samar (2019), who found that tourism MSME owners rated themselves only moderately innovative. This indicates that food business owners in the MMSU area may be more proactive and innovative than tourism business owners in other regions.

Table 2: Level of entrepreneurial leadership of owners and managers of food establishments in terms of risk-taking and decision-making

Indicators	Mean	Stdev	DR
6. I am willing to take calculated risks to achieve business growth.	3.47	0.620	SA
7. I make bold decisions and stay confident, even in uncertain business situations.	3.19	0.649	A
8. I carefully analyze potential risks and rewards before making significant business moves.	3.44	0.617	SA
9. I adapt my strategies based on new information and market changes.	3.44	0.617	SA
10. I make strategic decisions to ensure that the product we offer remains profitable and sustainable.	3.53	0.593	SA
Overall Mean	3.41	0.448	VH

Legend: SA = Strongly Agree, A= Agree, VH = Very High

(Source: SPSS IBM)

Table 2 presents the entrepreneurial leadership competencies of food establishment owners near Mariano Marcos State University – Batac Campus, specifically in the areas of risk-taking and decision-making. The highest-rated indicator recorded a mean of 3.53 (Strongly Agree), suggesting that respondents prioritize long-term profitability when making business decisions. In contrast, the lowest-rated indicator obtained a mean of 3.19 (Agree), indicating a moderate confidence in dealing with uncertainty.

Both indicators showed relatively low standard deviations (0.593 and 0.649, respectively), demonstrating consistent perceptions among respondents. The overall mean score of 3.41 (Very High) and standard deviation of 0.448 further emphasize the strong risk-taking and decision-making competencies of food business owners and managers in the area. These results imply that they are confident in evaluating risks and making timely and strategic decisions.

These findings differ from those of Ebdane and Samar (2019), who found that MSME tourism business owners rated themselves only moderately effective in risk-taking. The contrast suggests that industry characteristics and operational contexts may explain the stronger perceived leadership competencies among food business owners in this study.

Table 3: Level of entrepreneurial leadership of owners and managers of food establishments in terms of vision and strategic thinking

Indicators	Mean	Stdev	DR
11. I have a clear long-term vision for the business and develop strategies that ensure sustained success.	3.60	0.639	SA
12. I effectively communicate business goals to my team and ensure short-term objectives align with our overall vision.	3.45	0.592	SA
13. I anticipate business changes and adapt business strategies to remain competitive and innovative.	3.48	0.535	SA
14. I gather and analyze data to find practical and efficient solutions to challenges.	3.47	0.593	SA
15. I am deeply committed to achieving our vision and mission, and I inspire others with my passion and enthusiasm.	3.61	0.523	SA
Overall Mean	3.52	0.444	VH

Legend: SA = Strongly Agree, VH = Very High

(Source: SPSS IBM)

Table 3 shows their entrepreneurial leadership competencies in terms of vision and strategic thinking. The highest-rated indicator was their commitment to achieving the vision and inspiring others, with a mean score of 3.61, while the lowest was that of effective communication of goals, with a mean score of 3.45, which was all interpreted as Strongly Agree, with the low standard deviations, 0.523 and 0.592, respectively, which indicated consistent response. Overall, the level of entrepreneurial leadership in terms of vision and strategic thinking obtained a mean score of 3.52, interpreted as Very High. The results implied that the respondents possessed a clear vision for their business and could think strategically in planning for the long-term success of their businesses. These findings agree with the study of Nor-Aishah et al. (2020), that entrepreneurial leadership involves being visionary to sustain business progress. This alignment presents the importance of visionary and strategic thinking as key components of entrepreneurial leadership, particularly in small business operations.

Table 4: Level of entrepreneurial leadership of owners and managers of food establishments in terms of adaptability and resilience

Indicators	Mean	Stdev	DR
16. I remain flexible and optimistic in adapting to business challenges and changes.	3.56	0.532	SA
17. I foster a mindset of continuous learning and improvement.	3.71	0.524	SA
18. I view failures as opportunities for growth and development.	3.52	0.671	SA
19. I practice self-care and maintain work-life balance to manage stress.	3.39	0.610	SA
20. I quickly adjust strategies when faced with changes in the business environment.	3.45	0.592	SA
Mean	3.53	0.458	VH

Legend: SA = Strongly Agree, VH = Very High

(Source: SPSS IBM)

Table 4 focuses on how food establishment owners around Mariano Marcos State University – Batac Campus demonstrate adaptability and resilience in their businesses. In simple terms, this section looks at how well they adjust to changes and handle challenges in their daily operations.

The highest-rated indicator recorded a mean of 3.71, while the lowest-rated indicator had a mean of 3.39. Both are interpreted as Strongly Agree, and the relatively low standard deviations show that respondents answered consistently. Overall, the dimension obtained a mean score of 3.53 (Very High), suggesting that these business owners are highly capable of adapting to a fast-changing and competitive market, overcoming difficulties, and recovering from setbacks. Their ability to adjust and remain resilient highlights strong leadership qualities that support business sustainability.

These results are aligned with Paudel’s (2019) findings, which showed that SME owners display adaptability and resilience through practices like framing challenges, managing uncertainties, and mobilizing commitment within their organizations. This reinforces that adaptability and resilience are essential traits for entrepreneurial leaders.

Table 5: Level of entrepreneurial leadership of owners and managers of food establishments in terms of team and culture development

Indicators	Mean	Stdev	DR
21. I foster a conducive work environment that promotes collaboration, teamwork, and innovation.	3.50	0.594	SA
22. I support work-life balance to enhance my team's productivity and engagement.	3.58	0.529	SA
23. I hire people who have the expertise and values that align with the business vision and mission and invest in their development.	3.24	0.717	A
24. I recognize and reward my team's achievements while using setbacks as learning opportunities for everyone.	3.50	0.647	SA
25. I prioritize building a diverse and inclusive team culture.	3.39	0.662	SA
Overall Mean	3.44	0.494	VH

Legend: SA = Strongly Agree, A = Agree, VH = Very High

(Source: SPSS IBM)

Table 5 looks at how food business owners around Mariano Marcos State University – Batac Campus build and support their teams and create a positive work culture. The highest-rated indicator had a mean score of 3.58 (Strongly Agree), while the lowest-rated indicator scored 3.24 (Agree). These results suggest that respondents place strong importance on employee well-being and recognize that a healthy work-life balance contributes to better motivation and performance. However, the slightly lower score also indicates an area for improvement in terms of strategic hiring and developing employees' skills.

The overall mean of 3.44 (Very High) shows that the respondents highly value team collaboration and positive organizational culture. This suggests that most of the owners prioritize supportive workplace relationships and a culture that encourages participation and teamwork.

These findings are consistent with Khan and Ilyas (2018), who found that entrepreneurial leaders inspire their teams to take initiative and support organizational goals, increasing the chances of success. This highlights the importance of cultivating strong team dynamics and a positive work environment as essential components of entrepreneurial leadership.

Table 6: Level of entrepreneurial leadership of owners and managers of food establishments in terms of business performance and growth

Indicators	Mean	Stdev	DR
26. I set SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) goals for business growth and performance.	3.42	0.588	SA
27. I measure success based on both financial and non-financial key performance indicators.	3.47	0.646	SA
28. I am proactive in identifying areas for improvement in our operations.	3.58	0.497	SA
29. I explore ways to expand the business operations.	3.58	0.615	SA
30. I regularly evaluate business performance to identify areas for improvement and make necessary adjustments.	3.47	0.671	SA
Overall Mean	3.50	0.461	VH

Legend: SA = Strongly Agree, VH = Very High

(Source: SPSS IBM)

Table 6 examines the entrepreneurial leadership competencies of food business owners around MMSU–Batac Campus in relation to their business performance and growth. Results show that the two highest-rated indicators both received a mean of 3.58 (Strongly Agree), with standard deviations of 0.497 and 0.615. This suggests that most of the respondents consistently work on improving their business processes. In simple terms, many owners actively look for ways to make things better — whether in service, operations, or decision-making — which reflects a mindset geared toward innovation and competitiveness.

Meanwhile, the indicator with the lowest rating still received a mean of 3.42 (Strongly Agree) with a standard deviation of 0.588. Although slightly lower, this still shows strong agreement. This may indicate that while owners value goal-setting, some may not always formalize or document these goals in detail. In practice, this could mean that goals are set mentally or discussed informally rather than written and tracked consistently.

Overall, the composite mean of 3.50 (Very High) and standard deviation of 0.461 shows that the respondents are generally confident in setting strategic directions for their business and monitoring their progress. They display initiative, planning, and adaptive skills — qualities that help sustain business growth, especially in a competitive local food industry.

These findings align with Ebdane and Samar’s results, wherein respondents also rated themselves highly in financial control and related business functions, reinforcing the link between strong entrepreneurial leadership, innovation, and positive organizational outcomes.

Table 7: Summary of the level of entrepreneurial leadership of owners and managers of food establishments across different dimensions

Dimensions	Mean	Stdev	DR
A. Opportunity recognition and innovation	3.34	0.460	VH
B. Risk-taking and decision-making	3.41	0.448	VH
C. Vision and strategic thinking	3.52	0.444	VH
D. Adaptability and resilience	3.53	0.458	VH
E. Team and culture development	3.44	0.494	VH
F. Business performance and growth	3.50	0.461	VH
Overall Mean	3.46		VH

Legend: VH = Very High

(Source: SPSS IBM)

Table 7 summarizes the level of entrepreneurial leadership among food business owners around the MMSU–Batac Campus. The results show an overall mean score of 3.46, interpreted as Very High. This suggests that most of the respondents consistently exhibit strong entrepreneurial leadership qualities. In particular, they demonstrate the ability to identify business opportunities, innovate, take calculated risks, make sound decisions, think strategically, adapt to challenges, and sustain business performance and growth.

These findings echo the insights of Najib et al. (2021), who emphasized that leaders play a critical role in shaping organizational success and long-term sustainability. Their study notes that leaders who can set a clear vision, make strategic choices, and align operational performance with growth targets are key drivers of sustained business development. Likewise, Nor-Aishah et al. (2020) highlighted the strong relationship between supportive leadership, employee innovation, and a culture that encourages creative thinking—factors that contribute to business resilience and longevity. The entrepreneurial leadership shown by the surveyed food business owners aligns with these perspectives, illustrating how their practices foster innovation, empower employees, and help their businesses remain competitive in a dynamic market environment.

However, these results differ from the findings of Ebdane and Samar (2019), where MSME tourism business owners rated themselves only moderately effective in areas such as marketing, innovation, management, and risk-taking. This contrast suggests that entrepreneurial competencies may vary across industries and contexts, and that food business owners in the MMSU–Batac area may be demonstrating a stronger entrepreneurial posture compared to their counterparts in the tourism sector.

Problem 2. What is the level of business sustainability in terms of economic dimensions, social dimensions, and environmental dimensions?

Table 8: Level of business sustainability practices in economic dimension

Indicators	Mean	Stdev	DR
1. Our business generates sufficient revenue to sustain its operations.	3.40	0.557	SA
2. We implement effective sales and pricing strategies to drive consistent growth and maximize profits.	3.47	0.564	SA
3. Our business implements cost-efficient strategies, including resource optimization, energy-efficient practices, and technology adoption, to minimize operational expenses without compromising product quality.	3.47	0.593	SA
4. We effectively manage operational costs by regularly assessing and optimizing resource allocation to maximize profitability.	3.45	0.645	SA
5. Our business stays competitive by adapting to market trends, competitor analysis, and product differentiation.	3.47	0.593	SA
6. We align our sales and pricing strategies with market demand while prioritizing customer satisfaction and loyalty to strengthen our market position.	3.58	0.560	SA
7. Our business enhances customer experience by offering additional services that create more value.	3.48	0.620	SA
8. We prioritize customer feedback, loyalty programs and after-sales support to continuously improve our operations and increase customer retention.	3.52	0.593	SA
9. Our business continues to explore new business models to ensure long-term growth and profitability.	3.40	0.613	SA
10. We continuously improve our products to reduce financial risks.	3.53	0.593	SA
Overall Mean	3.48	0.426	VH

Legend: SA = Strongly Agree, VH = Very High

(Source: SPSS IBM)

Table 8 presents the respondents' level of agreement regarding business sustainability practices in the economic dimension. The highest mean was 3.58, interpreted as Strongly Agree, which implies that the businesses recognize the importance of aligning their business offerings with market expectations while ensuring customer-centric business strategies. On the other hand, the lowest mean score was 3.40, interpreted as Strongly Agree, which implies that while interpreted as Strongly Agree, this was a relatively low score among the other indicators, suggesting that some businesses faced challenges in ensuring consistent revenue generation. The standard deviation, ranging from 0.560 to 0.645, indicates that responses were relatively consistent among respondents. The overall mean score was 3.48, with a standard deviation of 0.426, interpreted as Very High. This indicates that the businesses are highly practiced among the business owners. The findings disagree with the point of Malesios et al. (2021), who revealed that environmental and social sustainability practices were commonly utilized with sustainability performance when compared to economic sustainability practices. The food

establishments should place greater importance on financial viability for a stronger economic foundation for long-term success.

Table 9: Level of business sustainability practices in social dimension

Indicators	Mean	Stdev	DR
1. Our business ensures fair and just compensation as well as career growth opportunities for all employees.	3.60	0.495	SA
2. We actively gather employee feedback and improve workplace policies to enhance job satisfaction.	3.45	0.694	SA
3. Our business actively collects customer feedback and provides a responsive service to enhance the overall customer experience.	3.52	0.646	SA
4. We prioritize offering high-quality products at affordable prices while upholding ethical business practices to meet customer expectations and build trust.	3.56	0.617	SA
5. Our business is committed to supporting local businesses, job creation, and educational initiatives.	3.47	0.620	SA
6. We partner with local organizations to support social programs that address community needs and foster long-term sustainability.	3.13	0.859	A
7. Our business fosters a safety-first culture by providing healthcare benefits, implementing wellness programs, and encouraging employees to report safety concerns.	3.44	0.643	SA
8. We maintain a safe and hazard-free work environment by strictly complying with health and safety regulations and implementing emergency response plans.	3.52	0.593	SA
9. Our business integrates corporate social responsibility into its operations through ethical raw material source and community outreach.	3.27	0.682	SA
10. We allocate resources to support activities of student organizations and environmental maintenance programs to create a positive societal impact.	3.26	0.745	SA
Overall Mean	3.42	0.492	VH

Legend: SA = Strongly Agree, A= Agree, VH = Very High

(Source: SPSS IBM)

Table 9 presents the respondents’ level of agreement regarding business sustainability practices in the social dimension. The highest mean was 3.60, interpreted as Strongly Agree, which implies that the businesses are strongly committed to equitable employee treatment and development. On the other hand, the lowest mean score was 3.13, interpreted as Agree, which implies that despite general agreement, there are fewer resources allocated to extend external social partnerships. The standard deviation, ranging from 0.495 to 0.859, indicates moderate variability in the responses, especially on community-centered initiatives. This means that the business has different levels of implementation for community-centered initiatives. The overall mean score was 3.42, with a standard deviation of 0.492, interpreted as

Very High. This indicates that the businesses show a very high level in recognizing and upholding socially responsible business practices, particularly in providing fair benefits and compensation, employee development, and customer satisfaction; however, there was relatively less engagement and partnership within the community. The study by Westman et al (2019) emphasized the importance of inclusive work environments and personal workplace connections in fostering social awareness. The study also highlighted that strong external social relations could enhance a business community's reputation and broaden the impact of sustainability programs.

Table 10: Level of business sustainability practices in environmental dimension

Indicators	Mean	Stdev	DR
1. Our business strictly adheres to local and national environmental regulations by securing necessary permits and conducting regular compliance inspections.	3.69	0.499	SA
2. We proactively implement energy-saving measures by investing in energy-efficient technologies and promoting water conservation through water recycling practices and monitoring usage.	3.35	0.655	SA
3. Our business uses eco-friendly and biodegradable packaging for our products.	3.31	0.715	SA
4. We implement proper waste management through waste segregation and the reduce, reuse, and recycle (3R) method.	3.50	0.671	SA
5. Our business reduces its carbon footprint by maximizing natural light and installing energy-efficient materials.	3.35	0.704	SA
6. We ensure that the sourcing of raw materials and packaging is responsible in our business operations.	3.35	0.749	SA
7. Our business has reduced the consumption and use of hazardous materials.	3.39	0.732	SA
8. We encourage responsible consumption to minimize food waste.	3.50	0.647	SA
9. Our business participates in environmental preservation activities such as tree planting, coastal cleanups, and community clean-up drives.	2.98	0.839	A
10. We minimize food waste by repurposing unsold products or unused materials for other purposes, such as donations and composting.	3.23	0.777	A
Overall Mean	3.37	0.555	VH

Legend: SA = Strongly Agree, A= Agree, VH = Very High

(Source: SPSS IBM)

Table 10 presents the extent to which respondents integrate environmentally sustainable practices in their operations. The highest rated indicator has a mean of 3.69 and a standard deviation of 0.499, interpreted as Strongly Agree, which shows that businesses prioritize legal compliance with environmental policies, indicating a strong commitment to environmental matters. On the other hand, the lowest mean was 2.98, interpreted as Agree. This means that businesses did not participate much in environmental preservation activities such as tree planting, coastal cleanups, and community clean-up drives. These findings show that businesses highly value and practice environmental sustainability, particularly in regulatory

compliance, waste reduction, responsible sourcing of raw materials, and resource efficiency. However, lower means for activities like food repurpose and external environmental initiative participation are also found. The overall mean was 3.37, with a standard deviation of 0.555, interpreted as Very High, indicating strong commitment to environmental sustainability. The standard deviation ranges from 0.499 to 0.839, reflecting a relatively consistent level of agreement across environmentally sustainable business practices, with slightly greater variability in participation in external environmental initiatives. The result is inconsistent with the findings of Ebdane and Samar (2019), whose study showed that business owners had only a moderate level of intention toward sustainable growth, particularly in relation to environmental sustainability. However, it is consistent with the study of Mou and Azeez (2019), who emphasized that the principle of green entrepreneurship can effectively reduce environmental risks both within business operations and the community. The current results indicate a favorable shift towards environmentally responsible entrepreneurship.

Problem 3. Is there a significant relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability in economic dimensions?

Table 11: Correlational result between entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability – economic dimension

Entrepreneurial leadership	Pearson’s r	Interpretation	p-value	Decision (Null)	Interpretation
Economic dimension	.74*	Strong positive relationship	<.001	Rejected	Significant relationship

Note: “*” indicates $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed)

Table 11 presents the correlational analysis between entrepreneurial leadership and the economic dimension of business sustainability. The Pearson correlation coefficient showed a strong positive relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability – economic dimension. The p-value, which was less than the significant level of 0.01, led to the rejection of the null hypothesis, which confirms that there is a statistically significant relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability – economic dimension. The result indicated a statistically significant relationship, implying that higher levels of entrepreneurial leadership were associated with greater business sustainability in the economic dimension. The findings reveal a strong positive correlation between entrepreneurial leadership and economic business sustainability. The result suggests that entrepreneurial leaders who are skilled in identifying opportunities, innovating, and making sound strategic decisions contribute significantly to the economic sustainability of their businesses. Owners and managers of food establishments who actively scan the environment for opportunities, take calculated risks, and establish clear strategic directions are more likely to increase profitability, manage operational costs effectively, and respond quickly to evolving market demands. However, this finding contrasts with the results of Nor-Aishah et al. (2020), who reported an insignificant relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and economically sustainable performance. Their study attributed the lack of significance to external pressures faced by businesses, particularly in complying with sustainability regulations.

Problem 4. Is there a significant relationship between entrepreneurial relationships and business sustainability social dimensions?

Table 12: Correlational result between entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability – social dimension

Entrepreneurial leadership	Pearson’s r	Interpretation	p-value	Decision (Null)	Interpretation
Economic dimension	.74*	Strong positive relationship	<.001	Rejected	Significant relationship

Note: “*” indicates $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed)

Table 12 presents the correlational analysis between entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability – social dimension. The Pearson correlation coefficient showed a strong positive relationship between the variables. The p-value, which was less than the significant level of 0.01, led to the rejection of the null hypothesis, which confirms that there is a statistically significant relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability – social dimension. This result indicates a strong positive correlation, implying that higher levels of entrepreneurial leadership were associated with greater business sustainability in the social dimension. The findings reveal that entrepreneurial leadership demonstrates a strong positive relationship with social sustainability dimensions. This result highlights that entrepreneurial behavior, such as team cultures, supporting employee continuous improvement and development, and aligning sociate goals, is closely associated with improved social outcomes in food establishments. This implies that an entrepreneurial leader who communicates a strong vision, builds inclusive teams, and rewards good performance is closely associated with higher employee morale, stronger customer loyalty, and deeper community relationships. This finding agrees well with the results of the study conducted by Nor-Aishah et al. (2020), where entrepreneurial leadership was found to have a significant relationship with social sustainability performance.

Problem 5. Is there a significant relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and business in environmental dimensions?

Table 13: Correlational result between entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability – environmental dimension

Entrepreneurial leadership	Pearson’s r	Interpretation	p-value	Decision (Null)	Interpretation
Economic dimension	.57*	Moderate positive relationship	<.001	Rejected	Significant relationship

Note: “*” indicates $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed)

Table 13 presents the correlational analysis between entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability – environmental dimension. The Pearson correlation coefficient is 0.57, interpreted as a moderate positive relationship. The p-value, which was less than the significant level of 0.01, led to the rejection of the null hypothesis, which confirms that there is a statistically significant relationship

between entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability – environmental dimension. The relationship showed a moderate and statistically significant positive correlation between entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability – environmental dimension. This suggests that as entrepreneurial leadership improves, environmental sustainability practices also tend to improve, although the relationship was not as strong as the other dimensions. Entrepreneurial leadership shows a moderate positive relationship with environmental sustainability. Although the relationship is slightly weaker than those observed for the economic and social dimensions, the moderate correlation still indicates a meaningful association. This suggests that entrepreneurial leadership practices are positively related to environmental sustainability, though perhaps less directly compared to economic and social sustainability. The moderate positive association shows that entrepreneurial leadership matters for environmental sustainability. This is in contrast with the study of Nor-Aishah et al. (2020), that entrepreneurial leadership has a strong positive influence on environmental sustainability. It was described that leaders play a significant role in driving sustainable practices where which leads to organizational efficiency and a reputable green image. Most prior research agreed that sustainability has a positive relationship with environmental performance through the reduction of waste, resources, and environmental concerns.

Discussion

The study contributed to the understanding of entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability by reinforcing existing theories and studies. The strong positive correlation between entrepreneurial leadership and both economic and social dimensions confirmed the proposition of this theory that profit and people are central pillars of sustainability. Furthermore, the moderate positive relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and environmental sustainability highlighted that the planet is relatively important in business sustainability. The result also validated Hambrick and Mason's Upper Echelon Theory (UET) because the qualities, values, and behaviors of owners and managers directly influence decisions, organizational performance, and long-term survival of food establishments. Thus, the study contributed new empirical evidence that strengthens the application of these theories in the context of small and medium enterprises.

At the local level, the study benefited food establishments around Mariano Marcos State University – Batac Campus by emphasizing that entrepreneurial leadership directly improves profitability, social responsibility, and environmental stewardship. At the national level, the study provides insights into the role of entrepreneurial leadership in achieving sustainable development goals through SMEs. Additionally, on the international level, the study added to the growing body of literature on entrepreneurial leadership and business sustainability, particularly in developing countries.

The study not only affirmed the theories but also provided practical implications for entrepreneurs and communities that entrepreneurial leadership is a strategic driver of sustainable business practices.

Conclusion

Overall, the results clearly indicate clear, significant, and positive relationships between entrepreneurial leadership and all three dimensions of business sustainability – economic, social, and environmental.

The strongest associations were found in the economic and social dimension, indicating that effective entrepreneurial leadership contributes to improved financial performance and integration of social responsibilities with food establishments around Mariano Marcos State University – Batac Campus. Meanwhile, the relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and environmental sustainability is moderate; it remains statistically significant. This suggests that while entrepreneurial leadership supports environmentally sustainable practices, there is still a big room to further integrate environmental considerations into leadership strategies. This study reinforces the role of entrepreneurial leadership in driving business sustainability. It highlights that food establishment owners and managers need to invest in improving and developing their entrepreneurial leadership skills as a strategic approach to achieving long-term business sustainability across economic, social, and environmental dimensions.

Author's contributions: This paper was written by Remalyn dela Rosa with valuable assistance provided by Dr. Elita B. Valdez. They express their heartfelt gratitude to Prof. Marie Joy G. Encarnacion, Dr. Francisco G. Alcalde, and Prof. Robert M. Rodrigo for their invaluable support and guidance in reviewing this research work and providing insightful suggestions to enhance its quality.

Conflict of interest statement: The Author declares no conflict of interest.

Ethical review statement: The study followed the ethical conduct of research. It does not involve human sensitive issues.

Funding: The study is funded by the author.

References

- Abad-Segura, E., & González-Zamar, M. D. (2021). Sustainable economic development in higher education institutions: A global analysis within the SDGs framework. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 294, 126133. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2021.126133>
- Aganan, J., & Santos, Z. (2019). Sustainability of online merchandising business in Cavite. *Southeast Asian Journal of Science and Technology*, 4(1), 29–32.
- Bell, E., & Bryman, A. (2007). The ethics of management research: An exploratory content analysis. *British Journal of Management*, 18(1), 63–77. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8551.2006.00487.x>
- Boar, A., Bastida, R., & Marimon, F. (2020). Relationships between the sharing economy, sustainability, and sustainable development goals: A systematic literature review. *Sustainability*, 12(17), 6744. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12176744>
- Campos, J. D. S. (2021). Analysis of entrepreneurial leadership skills and sustainable employee productivity of MSMEs. *Journal of Social Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice*, 1(1), 12–27.

- Carag, C. R., Danao, K. C., Lara, C. A. M. A., Pablico, R. K. D., Rola, R. A. C., Tindowen, D. J., & Joy, K. (2023). Development and validation of a sustainability framework for SMEs. *Asian Journal of Mechatronics and Electrical Engineering*, 2(1), 69–94.
- Chungyalpa, W., & von Rosing, M. (2025). *Understanding business sustainability: The what, why, and how of sustainable business practices*. In *The Sustainability Handbook* (Vol. 1, pp. 579–600). Elsevier.
- Correia, M. S. (2019). Sustainability: An overview of the triple bottom line and sustainability implementation. *International Journal of Strategic Engineering*, 2(1), 29–38.
- Ciulla, J. B. (2020). The importance of leadership in shaping business values. In *The search for ethics in leadership, business, and beyond* (pp. 153–163). Springer.
- Demartini, M. C., & Beretta, V. (2020). Intellectual capital and SMEs' performance: A structured literature review. *Journal of Small Business Management*, 58(2), 288–332. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00472778.2019.1659675>
- Ebdane, T. M. L., & Samar, N. (2019). Entrepreneurial intention towards sustainable growth: The case of tourism MSMEs. *DLSU Business & Economics Review*, 28(3), 11–20.
- Hernita, H., Surya, B., Perwira, I., Abubakar, H., & Idris, M. (2021). Economic business sustainability and strengthening human resource capacity based on increasing the productivity of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Makassar City, Indonesia. *Sustainability*, 13(6), 3177. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13063177>
- Iqbal, Q., Ahmad, N. H., & Halim, H. A. (2020). How does sustainable leadership influence sustainable performance? Empirical evidence from selected ASEAN countries. *Sage Open*, 10(4), 2158244020969394. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2158244020969394>
- Khan, N., Ahmad, I., & Ilyas, M. (2018). Impact of ethical leadership on organizational safety performance: The mediating role of safety culture and safety consciousness. *Ethics & Behavior*, 28(8), 628–643. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10508422.2017.1393354>
- Loviscek, V. (2020). Triple bottom line toward a holistic framework for sustainability: A systematic review. *Revista de Administração Contemporânea*, 25(3), e200017. <https://doi.org/10.1590/1982-7849rac2021200017>
- Malesios, C., De, D., Moursellas, A., Dey, P. K., & Evangelinos, K. (2021). Sustainability performance analysis of small and medium-sized enterprises: Criteria, methods, and framework. *Socio-Economic Planning Sciences*, 75, 100993. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.seps.2020.100993>

- Martins, A., Branco, M. C., Melo, P. N., & Machado, C. (2022). Sustainability in small and medium-sized enterprises: A systematic literature review and future research agenda. *Sustainability*, 14(11), 6493. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su14116493>
- Medne, A., & Lapina, I. (2019). Sustainability and continuous improvement of organization: Review of process-oriented performance indicators. *Journal of Open Innovation: Technology, Market, and Complexity*, 5(3), 49. <https://doi.org/10.3390/joitmc5030049>
- Mehmood, M. S., Jian, Z., Akram, U., & Tariq, A. (2021). Entrepreneurial leadership: The key to developing creativity in organizations. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 42(3), 434–452. <https://doi.org/10.1108/LODJ-08-2020-0353>
- Muo, I., & Azeez, A. A. (2019). Green entrepreneurship: Literature review and agenda for future research. *International Journal of Entrepreneurial Knowledge*, 7(2), 17–29. <https://doi.org/10.37335/ijek.v7i2.93>
- Najib, M., Septiani, S., & Nurlaela, S. (2020). The role of innovation, entrepreneurial self-efficacy, and local uniqueness on marketing performance in small and medium-sized restaurants. *Journal of Foodservice Business Research*, 23(6), 499–519. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15378020.2020.1803687>
- Nor-Aishah, H., Ahmad, N. H., & Thurasamy, R. (2020). Entrepreneurial leadership and sustainable performance of manufacturing SMEs in Malaysia: The contingent role of entrepreneurial bricolage. *Sustainability*, 12(8), 3100. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12083100>
- Paudel, S. (2019). Entrepreneurial leadership and business performance: Effect of organizational innovation and environmental dynamism. *South Asian Journal of Business Studies*, 8(3), 348–369. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SAJBS-12-2018-0142>
- Rashed, A. H., & Shah, A. (2021). The role of the private sector in the implementation of sustainable development goals. *Environment, Development and Sustainability*, 23(3), 2931–2948. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10668-020-00672-6>
- Rosati, F., & Faria, L. G. D. (2019). Business contribution to the sustainable development agenda: Organizational factors related to early adoption of SDG reporting. *Corporate Social Responsibility and Environmental Management*, 26(3), 588–597. <https://doi.org/10.1002/csr.1705>
- Sandybayev, A. (2019). Impact of effective entrepreneurial leadership style on organizational performance: Critical review. *International Journal of Economics and Management*, 1(1), 47–55.
- United Nations. (1987). *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our common future*. https://www.are.admin.ch/dam/are/en/dokumente/nachhaltige_entwicklung/dokumente/bericht/o

Abun et al., *Divine Word International Journal of Management and Humanities* 4(4)(2025) 2198-2217
ur_common_futurebrundtlandreport1987.pdf.download.pdf/our_common_futurebrundtlandreport
1987.pdf

United Nations. (2015). *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*.
<https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>

Westman, L., Luederitz, C., Kunderpi, A., Mercado, A. J., Weber, O., & Burch, S. L. (2019).
Conceptualizing businesses as social actors: A framework for understanding sustainability actions
in small and medium-sized enterprises. *Business Strategy and the Environment*, 28(2), 388–402.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/bse.2233>

Wolff, S., Brönnner, M., Held, M., & Lienkamp, M. (2020). Transforming automotive companies into
sustainability leaders: A concept for managing current challenges. *Journal of Cleaner Production*,
276, 124179. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2020.124179>

Publisher's Note: DWIJMH stays neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.



© 2025 by the authors. Licensee DWIJMH. This article is an open access article distributed under the terms and conditions
of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International License
(<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-sa/4.0/>)

Divine Word International Journal of Management and Humanities. DWIJMH is licensed under a Creative Commons
Attribution 4.0 International License.