

Sustaining the Performance of Family-Owned Businesses through Technology Systems in an Emerging Economy

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Abstract: The role of family-owned businesses (FOBs) in economic development is not in question; however, their sustainability is usually precarious, hence necessitating this study to see how technology adoption can assist them to live longer. The specific objective of the study was to examine the nexus between digital marketing and market reach in FOBs in Southeast Nigeria. The work adopted a survey research design, 4983 FOBs owners or managers alone. Using the Krejcie and Morgan Formula, a sample size of 356 was determined. A structured questionnaire that was verified for validity and reliability was used to collect the data. Following data analysis utilising the Ordinary Least Square Method and basic regression analysis, the hypothesis was assessed at a 5% significance level. Digital marketing and market reach among FOBs were shown to be highly positively correlated, with an R value of 0.948. The study, therefore, concluded that the adoption of digital marketing is critical for the sustainable performance of FOBs, and greater investment in digital strategies will significantly enhance their competitiveness and long-term survival. Among other recommendations, it was recommended that owners and managers of FOBs invest in building digital marketing capacity to capitalise on the massive potential of digital marketing and, by extension, the technology adoption offer for small businesses.

Keywords: Digital marketing, Emerging economy, Family-owned businesses, Technology systems, Market reach, Performance

Study Background

Family-owned businesses (FOBs) have long been touted as the oldest form of business in the world. To this end, Abubakar and Soliu (2024) state that FOBs are the oldest type of commercial organisation. Similarly, Nnabuiife, Okoli, Arachie and Adani (2019); Nnabuiife, Okoli, and Arachie (2018) posit that FOBs have been around for a while; hence, it is assumed to be the world's most popular and oldest form of business. They not only saw FOBs, some of which still operate as micro and small businesses, others have morphed into big corporations, while some have transformed into cooperative societies, as being old in terms of their existence, but they also pointed out that it is a very prominent business model. This was corroborated by Dahliana, Norasekin, Nor, and Irda (2022), who stated that FOBs significantly contribute to world economic development and growth. In a similar vein, Tirdasari and Dhewanto (2020) assert that they are a major contributor to the global economy and the engine of contemporary industries worldwide. The foundation of economies worldwide is FOBs (Abubakar & Soliu, 2024). Therefore, the sustenance of their performance and existence is crucial, thereby giving credence to this study. In terms of enhancing business growth and its sustainability, technology plays a central role. Technology is one of the only means by which small businesses, many of whom are FOBs, can compete locally and globally with big firms in terms of reach. According to Vrontis, Chaudhuri, and Chatterjee (2022), the quick growth of digital technologies and how companies have incorporated them have drastically changed the entrepreneurial environment and impacted regional development. Technology is a crucial instrument that facilitates the progression and enhancement of FOBs by enabling the innovation of operational procedures. The events of the past couple of years have made the adoption

of technology inevitable, and its neglect a terrible error. However, many small businesses, the majority of which appear to be family structured, still struggle to integrate high-end technology into their operations. Despite the acceleration of the technological revolution brought about by COVID-19, small and medium-sized family enterprises, especially artisan family businesses, exhibit low to moderate levels of technology participation (Abd-Hamid, Ismail, & Khairi, 2025). Numerous variables are responsible for this, such as the technology's perceived utility, availability, and competency (Mishrif & Khan, 2023), low technical proficiency (Loo et al., 2023), financial incapacity, digital infrastructure, and security concerns (Begnini et al., 2023). Adoption of technology is one of the simplest methods to address this, as survival records based on available statistics are appalling. According to Glover and Reay (2015) and Chaimahawong and Sakulsriprasert (2012), more than half of family businesses fail throughout the transition and succession stages. Approximately 85% of family enterprises fail to successfully transition from first-generation proprietors, and of those that endure, just 30% progress to the second generation, while hardly 15% reach the third generation (Nwuoke, Nwoye & Onoyima, 2021). The adoption of technology can significantly influence the competitiveness and sustainability of businesses (Dahlia, Norasekin, Nor & Irda, 2022). In their view, Alonso-Almeida and Llach (2013) point out that the adoption of technology by firms goes a long way in determining how sustainable and competitive those businesses can be in the future. The extent to which FOBs in developing economies have adopted technology is relatively unknown. This study is required to examine the role of technology adoption in business sustainability because, while there are several studies on the use of technology by small and medium-sized firms (SMEs), there are currently few that particularly address FOBs. While specifically, the study seeks to:

- a) Examine the nexus between digital marketing and market reach in FOBs of an emerging economy.

Understanding the Related Literature

Diffusion of Innovation Theory (DIT)

The Diffusion of Innovation Theory describes the gradual dissemination of novel concepts, innovations, or technology within a social structure. The idea states that relative benefit, compatibility, complexity, and observability are the five key criteria that impact an innovation's adoption (Rogers, 2003). It also separates adopters into groups based on how open they are to innovation: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. The basic tenet of DIT is that the rate and extent of adoption will depend on how prospective adopters perceive these traits. Innovations are more likely to be swiftly adopted if they are seen as advantageous, in line with contemporary ideals, simpler, testable, and observable. Research on technology adoption in a range of industries, including digital transformation settings and FOBs, has made substantial use of DIT. However, the theory has been criticised for being too linear and deterministic, presuming a consistent adoption process in various circumstances (Greenhalgh et al., 2004). Additionally, it frequently downplays the importance of cultural considerations, resource limitations, and power dynamics that could affect adoption choices, especially in developing nations. Regarding this study, DIT offers a more comprehensive explanation for the sluggish adoption of digital marketing strategies among FOBs in South-East Nigeria. Given their low usage of digital platforms despite obvious advantages, many of these companies can be categorised as laggards or late adopters. Diffusion may be hampered by the perceived complexity of digital marketing technologies, their incompatibility with conventional corporate methods, and the low visibility of successful adoption instances (Monyei 2025; Greenhalgh et al., 2004). Additionally, the study's findings about financial and infrastructure limitations support the DIT's focus on contextual elements influencing adoption rates. DIT provide a solid theoretical framework for this research by shedding light on the larger societal and systemic process of technology dissemination. Its underpinning to this study enables a thorough comprehension of the macro-level (system-driven) and micro-level (perception-driven) elements influencing the adoption of digital marketing and, eventually, the long-term success of FOBs.

Technology Systems

In the modern world, technology is one of the most important elements in the business of life. As posited by Ufomba, Monyei and Ukpere (2025) and Abubakar and Soliu (2024), technology is currently an essential component of all types of businesses. Since technology is necessary for all industries to operate at their best, most businesses, particularly large ones, give it top priority. According to Prasetyani, Cahyadin, and Indriawati (2025), technology adoption is crucial for all businesses across many industries, both in developed and developing countries. Businesses and organisations of all kinds, including small businesses, cooperative societies, and FOBs, can infuse technology into their operations in several ways, including digitising their processes, marketing their products and services online, and utilising digital means to connect to customers, suppliers and partners alike. According to Lorente-Martinez et al. (2020), existing research indicates that SMEs can implement technology through a variety of methods, including digital system security and protecting clients and trading partners in electronic commerce (e-commerce). Studies have shown that businesses that adopt technology outperform and outcompete firms that do not. According to Abubakar and Soliu (2024), people and businesses that are hesitant to embrace technology are limited to functioning locally, which limits their ability to generate substantial profits. In a similar vein, Kitole and Sesabo (2022) assert that technology adoption offers organisations enormous potential in the form of increased productivity, expansion, innovation, and social inclusion. Integrating digital tools, systems, and processes into business operations has become a critical strategy for enhancing the competitiveness and sustainability of SMEs (FAO, 2022; Kitole, & Genda, 2024). Through the utilisation of mobile payments, e-commerce platforms, and cloud-based services, small businesses can surmount conventional barriers to market access, diminish transaction costs, and enhance their market presence. This strategy improves access to new markets and opportunities, promoting sustained growth and diversification for these companies (Romanus & Dickson, 2024). Moreover, technologies can empower SMEs to refine their processes, improve efficiency, and swiftly adapt to fluctuations in market dynamics (Gaglio, CKraemer-Mbula & Lorenz, 2022; Kitole, Mkuna, & Sesabo, 2024). Innovation and technology can enhance the performance and competitive advantage of SMEs (Mishrif & Khan, 2023).

Digital Marketing (DM)

Technology and, by extension, the internet play a role in Digital Marketing. Without technology adoption, there will not be digital marketing. As a result, Okwudiri, Arachie, Elechi, and Egede (2025) claimed that when a business uses the internet for marketing purposes, it is considered to be engaging in digital marketing. It is an online activity which aims to market products and services to the target customers (Kumar et al., 2021). It relegates the traditional marketing mediums to the background and transforms the reach of small businesses exponentially. Digital marketing enables organisations to utilise data analytics and behavioural profiling to precisely target certain client segments, enhancing cost-effectiveness and efficiency in marketing (Fuad et al., 2024; Jadhav, Gaikwad, & Bapat, 2023). It is particularly beneficial in rural and underdeveloped regions where conventional marketing may be less efficient. It assists SMEs in maintaining competitiveness and flourishing (Veseli-Kurtishi, 2023). DM enables organisations to adapt to industry changes and evolving customer preferences, thereby maintaining a competitive edge (Adhikari & Molla, 2024). Furthermore, DM serves as a crucial strategic asset for engaging a broader target audience and facilitating corporate progress (Junaedi, Victoriani & Edmond, 2024). Gao, Siddik, Khawar Abbas, Hamayun, Masukujjaman, and Alam (2023) claim that effective digital marketing helps companies compete with bigger firms, learn about the market, lower marketing expenses, improve the development of new products, and eventually gain a competitive edge and sustainable growth. Digital marketing technology has increased brand visibility, improved corporate communication, and increased sales to both current and new clients. As a result, businesses can use digital marketing platforms to attract customers at a lower cost (Gao et al., 2023). Digital marketing technologies promote cooperation and greatly increase business efficiency (Ufomba et al., 2025; Bruce et al., 2023).

Sustainable Performance

The adoption of technology has enabled small businesses to measure up to big business in some ways. Monyei (2025) asserted that in developing the financial culture of workplaces, a robust technology system is pivotal to its sustained viability. It is also posited by Etele et al. (2024) and Hohman, Crano and Niedbala (2016) that the integration of contemporary technologies has allowed businesses to remain competitive in the current changing business landscape. Academics contend that the incorporation of contemporary technology, such as digital marketing, by small and medium-sized enterprises has yielded favourable results (Ikramuddin, Matriadi, Iis, Mariyudi, 2021; Adam, Ibrahim, Ikramuddin & Syahputra, 2020). Businesses have been able to grow sustainably due to technology. In line with this, Alzubaidi, Slade and Dwivedi (2021) aver that technology and digital marketing have enabled small businesses to attain greater heights. According to Ngwu et al. (2025) and Nasiri, Saunila, Rantala and Ukko (2022), innovativeness is made possible through market competitiveness and the growing rate of digital technologies. Additionally, it has made it possible for small enterprises to personalise their goods and services, which has helped them grow their clientele and achieve long-term success. Singh, Luthra, Mangla, and Uniyal (2019) claim that the usage of digital technologies, such as social media, content marketing, and email marketing, has significantly improved the business outcomes for SMEs and preserved their competitiveness. Owoseni, Hatsu, and Tolani (2022) assert that a company's sustainability is determined by its capacity to adjust to changes in the market brought on by both internal and external variables. In another disposition, Nel (2019) assert that to guarantee the long-term performance of workplaces, it must ensure the complete absence of bullying between superiors and subordinates or amongst employees. Also, in their claim, Lateef and Keikhosrokiani (2022) and Philbin, Viswanathan, and Telukdarie (2022), technology adoption has a favourable correlation with FOBs' long-term success and sustainability. According to research, using digital marketing enables businesses to generate value and gain insights from their customers, hence fostering long-term growth (Mehralian & Khazae, 2022). Elhusseiny and Crispim (2022) asserted that SMEs can improve their performance in satisfying consumer wants and improving customer service techniques by implementing digital marketing, which eventually leads to sustained business development and performance. According to recent studies (Kumar, Syed & Pandey, 2021; Akpan, Udoh & Adebisi, 2022), digital marketing usage improves small firms' customer relationships and marketing awareness.

Market Reach

Technology adoption, such as the adoption of digital marketing, gives businesses the opportunity to transcend geographical barriers, thereby enabling them to show what they sell or offer to a national or even international audience with unprecedented ease and cost-efficiency (Checchinato, Finotto, & Mauracher, 2024). Digital marketing (DM) facilitates businesses in engaging with clients and enhancing brand visibility, while significantly broadening their market reach (Fuad, Natha, Siddiquea, & Chowdhuryb, 2024). It gives businesses the resources they need to use search engine optimisation (SEO), content marketing, and social media advertising to grow their clientele internationally (Wadhwa, 2023). Effective use of digital media improves business performance and increases customer engagement (Sharabati et al., 2024). By sustaining interaction on social media sites like Facebook and Instagram as well as through email marketing, DM increases company visibility and awareness. Trust and loyalty are cultivated as a result (Pavlović, Savić, & Stanković, 2023). This enables real-time communication with clients, providing immediate feedback and personalised attention that fosters deeper relationships (Kotler et al., 2017). Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) and web analytics tools, in particular, are key components of data-driven marketing technologies that help businesses reach a wider audience. To rank better in search engine results for pertinent queries, SEO optimises a company's online content and technical infrastructure (Tatikonda et al., 2024). This enhanced visibility means that an FBC can be discovered by potential customers regardless of their physical location, effectively expanding its market footprint organically (Kuchkovskiy et al., 2021). Complementing this, web analytics tools provide invaluable geographical and demographic data about website visitors (Mohaimin, 2025). By analysing this data, FOBs can identify new regions where their products or services are generating interest, understand the demographics of their online audience, and tailor their digital strategies to specifically target and penetrate these new markets. For businesses, the strategic utilisation of these data-driven technologies is paramount for sustainable growth and competitiveness. Expanding market reach through digital

channels allows them to tap into larger customer bases, diversify their revenue sources, and reduce over-reliance on a limited local market (Jaiswal, 2023). Beyond SEO and web analytics, other digital marketing strategies, such as social media marketing and influencer marketing, also contribute significantly to expanding market reach by exposing the brand to diverse online communities and broader audiences (Ayitey & Amanorkour, 2024; Agustian et al., 2021). By effectively leveraging these integrated data-driven approaches, FOBs can overcome traditional limitations, enhance their competitive stance, and achieve a scale of market penetration that was once exclusive to larger businesses.

Empirical Insights

To determine how innovation, technology adoption, and sustainability contribute to the long-term viability of FOBs in Nigeria, Bayo and Adesina (2024) examined these aspects in Oyo State family businesses. They applied a mixed-methods approach involving both quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews with family business owners. 301 respondents from a pool of 1,221 workers were selected using Yamane's method. With the conclusion that family businesses that embrace innovation and technology are more competitive and sustainable than those that do not, the analysis demonstrated that innovation plays a significant role in sustaining family businesses and that adopting new technologies has a positive impact on their long-term survival.

With an all-encompassing goal, Okwudiri, Arachie, Elechi, and Egede (2025) examined the influence of digital marketing on the growth of Nigerian SMEs. The study used a survey research approach, focusing on 12,301 SMEs in Nigeria's five South-Eastern states. Using Krejcie and Morgan's 1970 computation, a sample size of 372 was derived. Tests of validity and reliability were conducted on a self-structured questionnaire used to gather data. The hypothesis was tested using a 5% significance threshold and a combination of descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings indicated that the primary obstacles to the adoption of DM by SMEs are issues related to electricity and a lack of understanding of DM functionality. The primary problems are a lack of trust in online platforms and insufficient awareness of online marketing. The findings of the hypothesis test show a statistically significant correlation ($R = 0.952$) between the growth of small and medium-sized firms (SMEs) and digital marketing (DM), indicating a very high positive link between the two variables. $R^2 = 0.906$, F -statistic = 3066.902, t -value = 55.380, $p < 0.001$.

The moderating effect of technology resources and their link with marketing innovation of family business viability was studied by Affran and Oppong in 2024. The study utilised a quantitative approach from a post-positivist perspective. The sample for this survey consisted of 204 family-run enterprises in the Accra Metropolitan Assembly. A closed-ended questionnaire was adopted in gathering the data, and using the structural equation model to analyse the results. The sustainability of family companies is clearly positively impacted by marketing innovation. Technological resources significantly moderate the link between marketing innovation and the viability of family businesses.

The extent of productivity in FOBs as moderated by disruptive technology in Akwa Ibom State was assessed by Akpandem and Ukpong (2023). 67 family companies were selected using the purposive sample approach. A questionnaire set was used to gauge new technology and productivity. The data was examined using multiple regression analysis. With a regression coefficient of 0.142, the study's findings showed that disruptive technology has a substantial moderating effect on family business productivity.

In Bantul Regency, Yogyakarta, Indonesia, Bawono, Winarno, and Karyono (2022) conducted a study on the effect of technology and the external business environment on performance, the mediating role of technology 4.0 adoption in SMEs. The study collected primary data from 30 Manding leather SMEs using a census survey approach and structured questionnaires. To analyse the data, partial least squares (PLS) were employed. Utilisation of Technology 4.0 highlighted the crucial impact that technology had in helping SMEs during the COVID-19 pandemic by mediating the link between organisational characteristics and commercial performance. The findings demonstrated that environmental, organisational, and technological factors all significantly and favourably affected SME performance.

Dahlia, Norasekin, Nor, and Irda (2022) investigated how technology adoption lessened the impact of leadership turnover on the sustainability of family businesses in the West Sumatra province's family firm sectors. Participants were chosen through purposeful selection from family companies

that had been in operation for more than five years and were now instructing their successors. There were 231 CEOs or managers of FOBs in the sample as a whole. The results of SEM-PLS version 3.3.2's analysis showed that sustainability is impacted by technology adoption and leadership succession. Furthermore, in West Sumatra, Indonesia, technology use significantly mediated the association between leadership succession and family business viability.

Ratih and Mochamad (2020) examined the connection between technology and the effectiveness and efficiency of family business supply chain performance. In this investigation, a quantitative approach was employed. In addition to explanatory research, the study included partial least squares (PLS), a multivariate data analysis technique. This study included samples from 100 halal food companies in Indonesia. The findings show that a robust and positive association existed between technology and efficacy. Even though technology can be used to successfully ensure that all supply chain processes comply with Sharia norms, it has minimal effect on the overall efficiency of the family-run halal food firm.

Materials and Method

Due to the nature of the study, a questionnaire set was utilised to collect data from the sampled respondents. ,

The population is comprised of nascent FOBs that are duly registered as Small Businesses, and operating in Anambra metropolis, South-Eastern Nigeria. These are pegged at 4983 FOBs owners or managers, and 356 firms were selected as the study's sample size using Krejcie and Morgan's 1970 sample size determination formula. Both validity and reliability tests were conducted on the survey and were further validated through Face and Content validation, yielding an alpha value of 0.893 with the Cronbach alpha reliability test. A total of 356 copies of the questionnaire were distributed, but only 310 were collected, and the analysed copies were 279 because some of the collected copies were not properly completed, while others were incompletely filled out. The hypothesis was assessed at a significance level of 5% after the data was analysed using the Ordinary Least Square Method and Regression analysis.

Data Presentation and Analyses

Examine the nexus between digital marketing and the market reach of FOBs in an emerging economy.

Table 1: Responses Distribution for Digital Marketing and Market Reach

S/N	Questionnaire Items	SA (5)	A (4)	UD (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Mean	Remark
	Digital Marketing							
1	My business markets our products/services online	34	60	-	107	78	2.52	Reject
2	We ensure that we post about what we do on the internet regularly.	16	57	7	99	100	2.25	Reject
3	I use paid adverts online for my business.	10	30	-	120	119	1.90	Reject
4	I tell customers about my business using various online means.	40	79	-	80	80	2.71	Reject
5	I do not talk about my business on the internet.	100	88	-	50	41	3.56	Accept
6	The internet plays no role in selling my services or products.	59	93	4	78	45	3.15	Accept
	Market Reach							
7	Customers far and wide know about my business because I use online means to talk about it.	19	45	32	108	75	2.37	Reject
8	My business is not only known by people within my community	12	40	21	97	109	2.10	Reject
9	I now get orders from people outside my area because of using online marketing.	5	16	-	84	174	1.54	Reject
10	People who are even outside the country see what my business does online.	19	18	60	105	77	2.27	Reject
11	I am not interested in serving people who are outside my community.	-	11	-	118	150	1.54	Reject

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Looking at Table 1 in relation to the benchmark of **3.0 as the threshold of acceptance**, it becomes clear that most of the items recorded mean values **below 3**, which implies rejection. For the digital marketing items, respondents disagreed that they market their products online (mean = 2.52), post about their businesses regularly (mean = 2.25), use paid adverts online (mean = 1.90), or tell customers about their business online (mean = 2.71). All of these fall below the acceptance benchmark, meaning that such practices are not widely adopted among the respondents. On the other hand, items that were negatively worded—such as not talking about their business online (mean = 3.56) and the internet playing no role in selling their products (mean = 3.15) were accepted, since their means are above the benchmark. This indicates that the majority of businesses indeed rely little on the internet for marketing. Similarly, for market reach, all the mean scores fell **below the acceptance threshold of 3**, including customers knowing about the business far and wide through online means (mean = 2.37), being known beyond the community (mean = 2.10), getting orders from outside their area (mean = 1.54), people outside the country seeing what their business does online (mean = 2.27), and showing interest in serving people outside their community (mean = 1.54). The rejection of all these items signifies that the businesses do not see any significant increase in market reach as a result of digital marketing. Taken together, the results clearly show that since the majority of mean scores fell below the threshold of 3, respondents generally do not accept digital marketing as a major contributor to their business operations or market expansion. The few items that were accepted were negatively framed, further confirming that these FOBs perceive the internet as having little to no role in their growth or market penetration.

Table 2: Regression Analysis Output

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	F	Sig.	t
1	.948 ^a	.898	.898	1.563	2439.672	.000 ^b	49.393

Predictors: (Constant), DM

Dependent Variable: MKTREA

Source: Field Survey, 2026

Keys: DM = Digital marketing, MRKREA = Market reach

The results of the regression analysis illustrating the connection between market reach (dependent variable) and digital marketing (independent variable) are shown in Table 2. With an R value of 0.948, the outcome shows a very significant and positive association, suggesting that among FOBs, digital marketing and market reach are highly correlated. The R-squared value of 0.898 indicates that digital marketing accounts for approximately 89.8% of the variation in market reach, with other factors not included in the model contributing only 10.2%. This implies that market reach in the research sector can be accurately predicted by digital marketing. The F-statistic of 2439.672 with a significance value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$) validates the statistical significance of the model and shows that the relationship between digital marketing and market reach was not coincidental. The t-value of 49.393, which is significantly higher than the critical value at the 5% significance level, provides additional evidence of the predictor variable's significance. In summary, the regression analysis indicates that despite the low acceptance of digital marketing practices by respondents, as shown in Table 1, the statistical evidence from Table 2 demonstrates that digital marketing has a very strong and significant effect on the market reach of FOBs. This means that if these businesses increase their adoption of digital marketing strategies, they are likely to experience a significant expansion of their customer base and improved visibility beyond their immediate communities.

Discussion of Findings

The results of this study reveal a very strong and positive relationship between digital marketing and market reach among FOBs in South-East Nigeria, as evidenced by a high correlation coefficient of $R = 0.948$. This statistical finding indicates that digital marketing is a primary predictor of a

business's ability to expand its visibility, with regression analysis showing that 89.8% of the variation in market reach is explained by digital marketing adoption. Such a high correlation emphasises the transformative potential of digital tools for FOBs, even though many current owners have yet to integrate these strategies into their daily operations fully. The findings align closely with recent Nigerian empirical studies, most notably the work of Okwudiri, Arachie, Elechi, and Egede (2025), who reported a nearly identical correlation of $R = 0.952$ when investigating digital marketing and the sustainable growth of SMEs in Nigeria. Likewise, the conclusion that technology adoption is vital for long-term viability is consistent with Bayo and Adesina (2024), who found that family businesses in Oyo State that embrace innovation and technology are significantly more competitive and sustainable than those that do not. Furthermore, research by Akpandem and Ukpogon (2023) in Akwa Ibom State supports this study's direction, demonstrating that disruptive technologies have a considerable impact on the efficiency and productivity of FOBs. International studies within the empirical review further reinforce these findings, showing that the benefits of technology adoption transcend geographical boundaries. For instance, Affran and Oppong (2024) discovered in Ghana that technological resources greatly moderate the relationship between marketing innovation and the viability of family firms. In Indonesia, Bawono, Winarno, and Karyono (2022) established that adopting "Technology 4.0" significantly improves SME performance, while Dahliana, Norasekin, Nor, and Irda (2022) highlighted that technology adoption is a crucial mediator for business sustainability during leadership successions. Additionally, Ratih and Mochamad (2020) found a robust relationship between technology and the efficacy of supply chain performance in family businesses, mirroring the positive impact on market reach identified here. A key point of discussion is the paradox between the high statistical potential of digital marketing and the low actual adoption rates among the sampled FOBs. The descriptive analysis shows that most respondents currently reject or underutilise digital tools, with mean scores for activities like paid online adverts (1.90) and regular internet posting (2.25) falling well below the acceptance threshold of 3.0. This reluctance often stems from barriers identified by Okwudiri et al. (2025), including poor electricity, a lack of technical proficiency, and a lack of belief in online platforms. However, overcoming these traditional limitations and investing in digital marketing capacity can help FOBs achieve a level of market penetration and competitive advantage that was once exclusive to much larger corporations.

Conclusion

Family-owned businesses in emerging economies have not fully embraced digital marketing, as inferred from the study's outcomes; the majority of respondents' responses fell below the acceptance threshold, indicating a limited use of online tools to promote goods and services or increase market reach. Nevertheless, the regression analysis reveals a strong and statistically significant relationship between digital marketing and market reach, with digital marketing explaining nearly 90% of the variation in market reach. This contrast suggests that while digital marketing is currently underutilised, it holds great potential for expanding visibility and attracting customers beyond local communities. Therefore, the study comes to the conclusion that family FOBs must adopt digital marketing in order to perform sustainably, and that investing more in digital strategies will greatly increase their competitiveness and long-term survival.

Policy Implications

Following the findings from this study, it is proffered through the policy implications that:

- a) Owners and managers of FOBs need to invest in building digital marketing capacity to gain from the massive potential digital marketing and, by extension, technology adoption offers to small businesses. They can start by using WhatsApp status and Facebook posting, before graduating to paid adverts and search engine optimisation.
- b) Since FOBs play significant roles in the economic growth and development of a nation, government agencies and business support organisations must provide training and sponsorships in the field of technology systems adoption. They should create enabling environments for them to learn through policies, affordable internet access, and digital infrastructure to encourage the adoption of digital marketing among FOBs.
- c) There is also a necessity for the owners of FOBs to integrate digital marketing into their long-term business strategies, recognising it as a vital tool for expanding market reach,

improving customer engagement, and sustaining competitiveness beyond their immediate communities.

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