

Empowering Sustainability of Small Business Enterprises Through Integration of Systematic Bookkeeping Practices

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Abstract- *This study focused on the manner in which organized bookkeeping procedures support the long-term viability of small enterprises in Barangay Virac, Itogon, Benguet. In particular, it identified difficulties with bookkeeping practices, evaluated the degree of execution in terms of adaptation, accuracy, and consistency, and found significant disparities when respondents were categorized based on profile criteria. 105 Barangay Micro Business Enterprises registered with the Department of Trade and Industry were the subject of a quantitative study. Analysis of variance, t-test, and weighted mean were used to examine the data. The findings indicated a reasonable degree of implementation in terms of adaption, correctness, and consistency; fundamental transaction recording and documentation were strong points, while financial reconciliation, timeliness, and uniformity were poor points. The majority of respondents firmly agreed that time limits, inadequate equipment, and a lack of bookkeeping expertise are the main obstacles to accurate and consistent recording. The significant differences in implementation as to adaption, accuracy, and consistency determines the conclusion that although small enterprises have basic bookkeeping procedures, structural, technical, and resource-related constraints limit their sustainability. Improving financial management and long-term enterprise sustainability requires strengthening financial literacy training, streamlining bookkeeping processes, and offering tiered help based on business capacity.*

Index Terms- *Bookkeeping Enterprises, Business Capacity, Implementation, Micro Business Enterprises, Sustainability*

I. INTRODUCTION

Particularly in emerging nations including the Philippines, small enterprises continue to be vital forces behind local economic expansion, job creation, and poverty alleviation. Studies from around the world constantly show that poor financial management, particularly the lack of systematic bookkeeping, severely limits the sustainability of businesses by reducing financial visibility, hindering decision-making, and limiting access to formal

funding (Chukwuka, et al., 2026; Loreño and Huang, 2025; Hernita, et al., 2021; and Ogedemgbe, et al., 2024). Even simple bookkeeping procedures, when appropriately implemented, precisely carried out, and regularly maintained, serve as fundamental mechanisms for financial control, cash flow management, and long-term viability for small enterprises, according to recent Miguel, et al. (2025), despite the fact that accounting systems in large organizations are highly institutionalized. In this regard, bookkeeping should be depicted as an organized procedure that helps enterprises produce trustworthy financial data for operational and strategic purposes rather than just as a compliance necessity.

Numerous micro and small businesses in the Philippines continue to utilize informal or irregular bookkeeping procedures (Bautista and Belandres, 2022; Hernita, et al., 2021, Kannan and Gambetta, 2025) Combining personal and business funds, recording transactions irregularly, and using financial documents sparingly for decision-making are common problems (Kato, 2024). Because incomplete or erroneous records frequently result in ineffective resource allocation, poor financial planning, and decreased eligibility for credit and investment options, these gaps have a substantial impact on the sustainability of businesses. The degree to which bookkeeping methods are adopted and maintained is further influenced by the fact that recent local research shows that small business owners' financial literacy skills are still inconsistent.

Small enterprises, from sari-sari stores to small food and service enterprises, are crucial to maintaining local economies and boosting household incomes at the regional level, especially in Benguet and municipalities like Itogon. However, according to Orating and De Castro (2025), a large number of these businesses rely on manual, fragmented, or memory-based financial tracking systems, which

limit scalability and raise the risk of errors (Purnomo and Purwandari, 2025). Due to restricted access to formal financial advising services, digital technologies, and training, Benguet's geographic and economic context, which is defined by a blend of rural and semi-urban business environments, further exacerbates these difficulties.

In light of these circumstances, analyzing bookkeeping methods from the perspectives of adoption, accuracy, and consistency becomes essential to comprehending small enterprises' financial capacity. Adoption shows how motivated and capable business owners are to put structured bookkeeping systems into place; accuracy establishes the dependability of recorded financial data; and consistency guarantees that records are kept on a regular and methodical basis over time. Additionally, recognizing the difficulties faced, such as a lack of technical expertise, time restraints, and attitude barriers, offers a deeper understanding of the behavioral and structural elements affecting implementation. A more comprehensive understanding of how business and demographic aspects influence bookkeeping procedures is also made possible by analyzing variances among profile variables.

This initiative seeks to produce context-specific information that can guide focused solutions by positioning bookkeeping as a methodical and quantifiable process. In addition to increasing the sustainability of individual businesses, strengthening bookkeeping procedures among Benguet's small businesses is crucial for boosting the resilience and inclusivity of regional economic systems.

II. METHODOLOGY

For the purpose to explore the application of systematic bookkeeping procedures and their effects on the long-term viability of small businesses in Barangay Virac, Itogon, Benguet, this study used a descriptive quantitative research approach. The respondents were sole proprietorships that were engaged in the Barangay Micro Business Enterprise program and formally registered with the Department of Trade and Industry. To achieve representativeness, simple random sampling was used after a stratified

random sample procedure based on initial capital. Employing the Raosoft sample size calculator, the sample size of 105 respondents was calculated with a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error. A systematic survey questionnaire was used to gather data. The degree of implementation in terms of adoption, correctness, and consistency as well as the difficulties faced were evaluated using descriptive statistics, especially weighted mean. The t-test and analysis of variance were two instances of inferential statistics employed to identify significant differences between profile variables.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Level of bookkeeping practices implementation in terms of accuracy

Table 1: Status of bookkeeping in terms of adaption

Adaption	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1. I keep a daily record of all sales transactions.	3.0000	Moderately Practiced
2. I record all business expenses regularly.	2.8333	Moderately Practiced
3. I maintain receipts and invoices as proof of transactions.	3.1667	Moderately Practiced
4. I use a ledger, notebook, or digital tool for recording finances.	2.8333	Moderately Practiced
5. I prepare simple financial statements for my business.	2.3333	Slightly Practiced
6. I monitor both cash inflows and outflows using records.	3.0000	Moderately Practiced
7. I update financial records on a	3.0000	Moderately

consistent basis.		Practiced
8. I allocate time specifically for bookkeeping tasks.	3.0000	Moderately Practiced
9. I use bookkeeping records as a basis for financial decision-making.	3.0000	Moderately Practiced
10. I separate business finances from personal finances.	2.8333	Moderately Practiced

The findings reveal that small enterprises in Barangay Virac have adopted bookkeeping practices at a typically moderate level, with respondents showing greater involvement in regular transactional recording than in higher-level financial reporting duties. Keeping invoices and receipts as proof of transactions is the highest-rated indication (WM = 3.17), indicating a heavy dependence on tangible documentation as the major basis of bookkeeping. This is consistent with the study of Santos et al. (2025) showing that micro and small businesses value documentation-based procedures due to their ease of use, regularity, and direct connection to day-to-day operations. Also, Carpio (2023) indicates that small enterprises in underdeveloped nations frequently create their bookkeeping systems piecemeal, starting with simple recordkeeping before moving on to formal financial analysis.

A number of indicators, such as daily sales recording, expense tracking, cash flow monitoring, regular record updating, scheduling time for bookkeeping, and using records to make decisions, clustered at a moderate level (WM = 3.00). This indicates that respondents currently utilize financial data for operational awareness and supports a partial integration of bookkeeping into business processes. However, rather than being analytical, this integration is still primarily procedural. This pattern is in line with the results of the study of Orating and De Castor (2025) with micro and small businesses,

by which the study found that bookkeeping practices were only moderately implemented and that their level of adoption had a significant positive relationship with business growth, underscoring bookkeeping as an important but underutilized driver of sustainability. Similarly, another study conducted in the Philippines with Miguel, et al. (2025) revealed that bookkeeping is moderately implemented, supporting the notion that many small enterprises understand the value of bookkeeping but find it difficult to apply it fully and consistently (Kannan and Gambetta, 2025; Ogedengbe, et al., 2024; Purnomo and Purwandari, 2025).

On the other hand, creating basic financial statements (WM = 2.33), the indication with the lowest rating reveals a significant weakness in the capacity for financial transformation. Respondents are capable of producing unstructured financial data; however, they lack the knowledge or tools necessary to transform these records into organized financial reports. Due to low accounting literacy, a lack of formal training, and a lack of standardized reporting methods, recent research repeatedly demonstrates that this gap is prevalent among small businesses (Vinodan and Mahalakshmi, 2026). Because of this, bookkeeping is still more operational than strategic.

The results point to the existence but incompleteness of adaptation. Barangay Virac business owners show great commitment to fundamental recording practices; however, they have made little progress in the direction of analytical financial management. To completely transform bookkeeping into a managerial tool that enhances sustainability and promotes long-term business growth and resilience, it is imperative to strengthen financial literacy and streamline reporting processes.

Table II: Status of bookkeeping in terms of accuracy

Accuracy	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1. My recorded sales match the actual sales collected.	2.3333	Slightly Practiced

2. My expenses are documented completely without missing details.	3.0000	Moderately Practiced
3. I record transactions immediately or on the same day they occur.	2.6667	Moderately Practiced
4. My financial records are free from repeated or duplicate records.	3.0000	Moderately Practiced
5. I regularly review records to identify errors.	2.8333	Moderately Practiced
6. I record amounts and dates correctly.	2.6667	Moderately Practiced
7. I maintain consistency in recording methods (e.g., same format).	2.8333	Moderately Practiced
8. I can easily track cash shortages or overages through records.	2.8333	Moderately Practiced
9. My bookkeeping reflects the true financial condition of my business.	2.8333	Moderately Practiced
10. I reconcile my recorded balance with actual cash or bank balance.	2.6667	Moderately Practiced

The results of the inquiry on bookkeeping accuracy in small businesses in Barangay Virac reveal a typically modest degree of implementation, with noteworthy shortcomings in financial verification and control and obvious strengths in routine documentation. Complete expense documentation (WM = 3.00) and keeping records free of duplicate entries (WM = 3.00), the two highest-rated metrics, show that respondents have developed fundamental bookkeeping procedures. These findings imply that transactional recording is comparatively integrated into day-to-day activities, allowing companies to keep comprehensive and well-organized financial data. According to Mahboob, et al. (2017) and Purnomo and Purwandari (2025), micro and small

businesses typically start with simpler, documentation-focused bookkeeping tasks because they are procedural and do not require an abundance of technological knowledge. Also, accurate expense tracking greatly enhances cost monitoring and facilitates better short-term financial decisions, especially in resource-constrained businesses, according to Santos, et al. (n.d.)

On the other hand, the lowest-rated indicators, matching recorded sales with actual collections (WM = 2.33, slightly practiced) and recording transactions instantly (WM = 2.67), show significant timeliness and reconciliation gaps. Many small business owners find it difficult to maintain the higher level of internal control and financial discipline required for these responsibilities. According to Fernandez-Vallado (2025), poor reconciliation procedures play a significant role in cash flow mismanagement and financial disparities in small businesses, which frequently result in false reporting and decreased financial dependability (Bautista-Belandres, 2022; Carpio, 2023; Kato, et al, 2024; Miguel, et al., 2025). Furthermore, insufficient data capture and memory problems have been associated with delayed transaction recording, which compromises the overall accuracy of financial accounts (Kannan and Gambetta, 2025). According to Vinodan and Mahalakshmi (2026), conducted in Southeast Asian contexts, entrepreneurs are often unable to maintain real-time financial records due to time restrictions and a lack of bookkeeping skills, which weakens decision-support systems.

Reliable inputs for operational decisions like pricing and budgeting are provided by accurate expense documentation and duplicate-free data, according to decision theory. However, the legitimacy of financial output is compromised by the inability to reconcile sales and transaction recording delays, leading to judgments that could not accurately reflect actual business performance. In conclusion, even though Barangay Virac's small businesses exhibit proficiency in fundamental documentation procedures, the absence of reliable reconciliation and prompt recording systems severely restricts total bookkeeping accuracy. To guarantee accurate financial data and promote long-term corporate

decision-making, it is crucial to strengthen these higher-order behaviors through focused training and organized financial controls.

Table III: Level of bookkeeping practices implementation in terms of consistency

Consistency	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
1. I record financial transactions at the same time each day or week.	2.8333	Moderately Practiced
2. I follow a uniform format when recording sales and expenses.	2.6667	Moderately Practiced
3. I keep my bookkeeping records updated without long gaps.	2.5000	Slightly Practiced
4. I consistently record both small and large transactions.	2.6667	Moderately Practiced
5. I prepare financial summaries or reports on a regular schedule (e.g., monthly).	2.6667	Moderately Practiced
6. I use the same bookkeeping method (manual or digital) consistently.	2.5000	Slightly Practiced
7. I regularly compare records with actual cash or bank balances.	3.1667	Moderately Practiced
8. I maintain a systematic filing of receipts and invoices.	3.0000	Moderately Practiced
9. I apply the same rules for recording business income and expenses.	2.6667	Moderately Practiced
10. I avoid skipping bookkeeping tasks even during busy business periods.	2.6667	Moderately Practiced

The results of the study on the consistency of bookkeeping methods among small businesses in Barangay Virac show a generally modest degree of implementation, with significant differences between systematic record maintenance and routine monitoring activities. Regular comparison of records with actual cash or bank balances (WM = 3.17), the highest-rated measure, shows that respondents are comparatively more consistent in confirming financial positions, indicating an understanding of the significance of reconciliation in upholding financial management. In a similar vein, keeping receipts and invoices organized (WM = 3.00) indicates that documentation storage procedures are reasonably well-established, enabling the retrieval and referencing of financial data as required. Although they immediately support continuous operational monitoring, these strengths are consistent with research showing that even micro-enterprises prefer visible and tangible control operations including filing and cash verification (Orating and De Castro, 2025)

These findings show a generally modest degree of implementation, with significant differences between systematic record maintenance and routine monitoring activities. Regular comparison of records with actual cash or bank balances (WM = 3.17), the highest-rated measure, shows that respondents are comparatively more consistent in confirming financial positions, indicating an understanding of the significance of reconciliation in preserving financial control. In a similar vein, keeping receipts and invoices organized (WM = 3.00) indicates that documentation storage procedures are reasonably well-established, enabling the retrieval and referencing of financial data as required. Because they immediately support daily operational monitoring, these attributes are consistent with research showing that even micro-enterprises prefer visible and tangible control operations like filing and cash verification.

Whereas the lowest-rated indicators, using the same bookkeeping procedure consistently (WM = 2.50) and keeping bookkeeping records updated without significant gaps (WM = 2.50), show serious flaws in system standardization and temporal consistency. These gaps point to inconsistent financial record

updating and the use of mixed or shifting recording approaches, which might result in financial data that is inconsistent and untrustworthy. According to Hernita, et al. (2021), irregular recording intervals are a significant cause of financial reporting errors in small businesses because irregular or delayed entries raise the risk of omissions and gradually skew financial accuracy. Similar to this, inconsistent bookkeeping practices hinder long-term financial tracking and reduce comparability, such as switching between manual and unofficial computerized systems (Bin-Nashwan and Li, 2025).

From a system's perspective, consistency is a critical determinant of bookkeeping reliability, as it ensures that financial data are comparable, continuous, and structurally stable over time. Although respondents show a reasonable level of adherence to structured procedures like filing and reconciliation, the overall integrity of their bookkeeping systems is limited by the absence of regular updates and standardized procedures. Barangay Virac's small enterprises have a partially consistent bookkeeping system, with strengths in documentation and verification and weaknesses in inconsistent techniques and irregular recording practices. Standardizing bookkeeping procedures and bolstering disciplined scheduling are crucial to obtaining consistent and dependable financial records that facilitate long-term decision-making and company expansion.

Challenges Encountered in the Implementation of Bookkeeping Practices

Table IV: Challenges encountered in terms of adaption, accuracy and consistency

Challenges	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
Adaption	3.5000	Strongly Agree
1. I lack knowledge of proper bookkeeping.	3.5000	Strongly Agree
2. I find bookkeeping tasks time-consuming.	3.6667	Strongly

		Agree
3. I do not have access to bookkeeping training or materials.	2.6667	Agree
4. I feel bookkeeping is too complicated for my business size.	3.1667	Agree
5. I lack proper tools for record-keeping.	3.5000	Strongly Agree

Accuracy

1. My recorded sales do not match the actual sales.	3.5000	Strongly Agree
2. I lack knowledge on how to do proper recordings of sales and expenses.	3.5000	Strongly Agree
3. I get overwhelmed by too much paperwork or data to record.	3.1667	Agree
4. I record wrong amounts and dates.	3.0000	Agree
5. My recorded disbursements do not match the actual disbursements.	3.0000	Agree

Consistency

1. I do not have enough time to manually record every transaction that occurred during the day.	3.5000	Strongly Agree
2. I do not maintain a one record book for all my business	3.3333	Strongly Agree

transactions.

3. I have a hard time preparing monthly reports for my business.	3.1667	Agree
4. I do not use a single format in recording the daily transactions of my business.	2.8333	Agree
5. My record book is not updated. It doesn't show the actual transaction occurred during a particular day.	2.6667	Agree

The outcomes of the study on the difficulties small businesses in Barangay Virac face with their bookkeeping procedures show a distinct structural pattern: these issues are not limited to a single dimension, but rather are intricately linked across adaptation, accuracy, and consistency. The consistently high agreement ratings, particularly in lack of knowledge (WM = 3.50), time-consuming bookkeeping tasks (WM = 3.67), and lack of proper tools (WM = 3.50), indicate that the primary barrier is not merely behavioral resistance but a compounded constraint involving human capital, time allocation, and resource availability. This confirms the findings of Kato (2024) that small enterprises in developing nations frequently function under capacity scarcity conditions, where owners concurrently handle managerial, operational, and accounting responsibilities, leaving little space for structured financial management.

Due to a cognitive hurdle, entrepreneurs consider bookkeeping's perceived complexity (WM = 3.17) as being out of proportion to the size of their businesses. This is consistent with earlier studies that indicate micro-enterprises often oppose formalization when they believe financial institutions are overly complex or unrelated to their everyday requirements (Belandres, 2016; Bin-Nashwan and Li, 2025;

Kannan and Gambetta, 2025; Ogedengbe, et al., 2024). Even though it is marginally lower, the lack of training access (WM = 2.67) still points to structural deficiencies in institutional support, especially in rural or semi-urban areas with few financial literacy programs.

A significant breakdown in internal financial control is revealed by the strong agreement that recorded sales do not match real sales (WM = 3.50) and that respondents lack sufficient recording expertise (WM = 3.50). This is a result of poor reconciliation mechanisms and a lack of knowledge of fundamental accounting concepts rather than just a clerical problem. According to Chukwuka, et al. (2026), these discrepancies are a major sign of financial instability in small enterprises and frequently result in inaccurate profit estimates and subpar cash flow management. Errors in documenting disbursements and amounts (WM = 3.00) further support the lack of uniform recording practices.

The primary challenges to consistency are time constraints (WM = 3.50) and the lack of a single record system (WM = 3.33), which emphasize the fragmentation of bookkeeping procedures. Entrepreneurs frequently use ad hoc recording techniques, which lead to irregular data structures. According to Miguel, et al. (2025), uneven bookkeeping practices drastically lower financial comparability over time, making it challenging for owners to monitor performance trends or create trustworthy summaries.

The evidence shows that the problems are systemic rather than isolated: poor controls compromise accuracy, weak processes weaken consistency, and limited information limits adaptation. These interconnected flaws point to the need for an integrated solution that combines financial literacy training, streamlined bookkeeping tools, and time-efficient recording techniques to enhance bookkeeping in small enterprises.

Significant Difference in the Level of Implementation of the Respondents

Table 5: Level of Implementation of the respondents as to Adaption, Accuracy, and Consistency

Level of Implem-entation	Years of Business		Initial Capit-al		Net Current Working Capital	
	<i>F-</i>	<i>P-</i>	<i>F-</i>	<i>P-</i>	<i>F-</i>	<i>P-</i>
	<i>Valu-e</i>	<i>Valu-e</i>	<i>Valu-e</i>	<i>Valu-e</i>	<i>Valu-e</i>	<i>Valu-e</i>
Adaption	15.6	0.00	7.49	0.00	26.9	0.00
	4	*		*	3	*
Accurac-y	22.3	0.00	11.2	0.00	25.4	0.00
	9	*	5	*	4	*
Consist-ency	26.8	0.00	8.20	0.00	10.6	0.00
	9	*		*	4	*

Strong empirical evidence that adaptation, accuracy, and consistency are not consistently practiced but are significantly with p-values of 0.00, is provided by the findings regarding the significant differences in the level of bookkeeping implementation among small business enterprises in Barangay Virac. This shows a statistically significant correlation, indicating that fundamental business features, rather than merely personal desire or awareness, have a significant influence on bookkeeping behavior.

The vast F-values for adaption suggest that enterprises with greater financial capacity and longer operational experience are better equipped to incorporate bookkeeping procedures into their day-to-day operations. This is in line with the study of Hernita et al. (2021), which highlights how financial maturity and capital availability improve management expertise and enable businesses to move from unstructured to structured financial systems. Newer and lower-capital businesses, on the other hand, frequently put survival efforts ahead of methodical recordkeeping, which restricts their ability to adopt.

The notable variations in accuracy (22.39, 11.25, and 25.44) show that the dependability of recorded financial data is strongly impacted by financial resources and company duration. Businesses with larger capital bases are more likely to invest in improved recordkeeping systems, training, or instruments that lower errors and enhance reconciliation procedures (Ogebengde, et al., 2024).

This clarifies the reason established enterprises have more accurate bookkeeping procedures since they have the infrastructure and experience necessary to support financial control systems.

Consistency also varies significantly across all factors (26.89, 8.20, and 10.64), indicating a substantial correlation between resource availability and enterprises maturity and consistent and methodical bookkeeping methods. In support of this, Vinodan and Mahalakshmi (2026) point out that when enterprises attain a degree of operational stability where regular procedures and routines are already ingrained in day-to-day operations, consistency in financial documentation is usually attained. Bookkeeping tends to stay erratic and disjointed in the absence of such consistency.

Generally, the findings support the fundamental differences in bookkeeping implementation between businesses. In terms of adaptation, accuracy, and consistency, enterprises with more experience and better financial resources routinely outperform smaller and more recent businesses. This supports the idea that bookkeeping is a result of organizational maturity and resource accessibility rather than just a technical skill. In conclusion, focused interventions are necessary to close the gap between less established and more established businesses and ensure more equitable financial competence development. These interventions should focus on training, streamlined bookkeeping systems, and financial assistance mechanisms.

V. CONCLUSION

The primary obstacles, which include a lack of equipment, time limits, and limited understanding, call for relatively simple training programs as well as obtainable, inexpensive resources like pre-formatted ledgers and basic digital tools. Interventions should be graded, with more sophisticated systems for well-established companies and basic bookkeeping instruction for smaller and newer enterprises due to the notable variations in implementation throughout years of operation and financial capacity. This distinctive strategy develops financial discipline, fosters inclusive capacity-building, and improves

sustainability across a range of enterprise characteristics.

Small businesses have a moderate application of bookkeeping practices, with strengths in basic transaction recording, however, persistent shortcomings in financial summary, reconciliation, and periodic updating. To improve flexibility, accuracy, and consistency, owners ought to set up fundamental daily bookkeeping operations and regularly use records for financial decision-making rather than just paperwork. In particular, when it pertains to generating basic financial summaries and balancing records with actual cash flow, support organizations are recommended to offer standardized, easier-to-use templates and practical training.

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