

Modern Day Heroes' Entrepreneurial Venture: Knowledge and Challenges

Ronnie L. Capa-an¹ and Easter B. Belandres²

¹ Researcher, Master in Business Administration, Urdaneta City University, Urdaneta City, Pangasinan, Philippines

² Adviser, Master in Business Administration, Urdaneta City University, Urdaneta City, Pangasinan, Philippines

ABSTRACT

The objective of the current study is to determine the degree of business operation, budgeting, market trends, and marketing knowledge that Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) possess in their entrepreneurial endeavors. Finding out the difficulties they faced when starting a business in terms of money, market competitiveness, and management was also considered important. 282 OFWs who have worked in business participated in this study using a convenience sampling plan and a descriptive research design. To collect the necessary data, a standardized survey questionnaire was also employed. Based on their business knowledge, it has been determined that they have a moderate understanding of marketing and business operations, but little grasp of budgeting and market trends. In keeping with their knowledge, it has been discovered that they have faced difficulties in managing their business, dealing with market competition, and financial aspects. In conclusion, despite having low incomes, these OFWs are driven to pursue entrepreneurship to provide long-term stability and financial independence for their families. The OFW entrepreneurs are particularly weak in managing cash flow, cost control, and financial forecasting, where their knowledge is noticeably lacking, indicating a significant area for improvement; they are moderately proficient in creating realistic budgets, tracking expenses, and allocating resources; they possess a basic level of proficiency in analyzing current market trends while adapting business strategies; they have a firm grasp of key marketing practices, but still require improvement in pricing and promotional tactics; they face significant financial challenges, highlighting the pervasive influence of these factors on their operations; and they have little understanding of business management and operations standards.

Keyword: business, financial aspects, entrepreneurial endeavors, market competitiveness, Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs)

1. INTRODUCTION

Due to their extraordinary dedication and selflessness amid numerous hardships abroad, Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) are rightfully honored as modern-day heroes. The distinction and respect bestowed upon our kababayans, as reliable providers not only for their families but also for the national economy, are deeply recognized by every Filipino. Despite the many risks they face in foreign countries, OFWs continuously demonstrate exceptional perseverance and unwavering faith. They make profound sacrifices to support their loved ones, send their children to private schools and universities, and elevate their family's standard of living in ways they may not have achieved through local employment opportunities. It is well established that the majority of OFWs leave the Philippines for economic and financial reasons, seeking improved livelihood prospects abroad (Garabiles et al., 2022). Depending on the destination country and prevailing exchange rates, many OFWs earn significantly more in foreign currencies than they would in Philippine pesos. This disparity allows them to secure financial stability and enhance their family's lifestyle upon returning home or while supporting them from afar. For many OFWs, the favorable exchange rate signifies not only increased earning capacity but also a sense of abundance and prosperity. In 2022, remittances from OFWs reached a total of PHP 197 billion. Of the 1.96 million OFWs, 41.7 percent sent between PHP 40,000 and PHP 100,000, while 20.7 percent remitted at least PHP 100,000 between April and September of that year. The breakdown includes PHP 145.40 billion in cash remittances, PHP 43.90 billion brought

home personally, and PHP 8.17 billion in-kind contributions. Asian countries accounted for PHP 103.45 billion of the total cash remittances (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2023).

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority, an estimated 1.96 million Filipinos were employed abroad between April and September 2022, a 7.6 percent increase from the 1.83 million OFWs recorded during the same period in 2021. Of these, 1.94 million were Overseas Contract Workers (OCWs) with active employment contracts. Meanwhile, approximately 26,000 Filipinos worked overseas without a valid work permit or visa, falling under non-immigrant categories such as tourist, student, or visitor visas. OCWs represented 98.7 percent of all overseas Filipino workers, while other OFWs comprised the remaining 1.3 percent (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2023). Although the Philippine government has recognized Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) as modern-day heroes, many continue to face persistent challenges upon their return. Despite their unwavering commitment to supporting loved ones and contributing to the national economy, OFWs often encounter financial instability due to the prioritization of family obligations. These include funding vacations, purchasing luxury or imported goods, repaying debts, covering educational expenses for children or relatives, and managing medical costs for friends and family.

While many OFWs acquire tangible assets such as spacious homes, farmland, vehicles, and jewelry, these visible signs of prosperity do not always reflect long-term financial security. The experience of being an OFW involves considerable sacrifice, including prolonged separation from family and the burden of coping with cultural adjustments, financial pressure, emotional stress, and demanding workplace environments. Entrepreneurship presents a viable path toward financial independence by reducing reliance on overseas employment and creating opportunities for the wealthy generation through diversified income sources. Through investment in profitable ventures instead of relying solely on remittances, OFWs can optimize their earnings and secure the financial future of their families. In addition, entrepreneurial activity strengthens the Philippine economy and enables OFWs to remain in the country while pursuing economic stability. Estallo Jr. (2023) suggests that OFWs should consider establishing their own enterprises as a means of achieving enduring security. This is especially important given that overseas employment is usually temporary and subject to risks such as contract expiration, job loss, and economic downturns in host countries. By engaging in business ownership, OFWs can build a reliable source of income that supports their families even after their return to the Philippines.

Many OFWs bring practical knowledge gained from their overseas work to their entrepreneurial endeavors, particularly in sectors like retail, commerce, and food service. Some have attended short business courses or conducted independent research to better understand financial management and operational practices. However, despite their strong motivation and financial investments, many still lack essential business acumen. This is especially evident in areas such as branding, market research, and strategic planning for long-term sustainability. Numerous OFWs demonstrate limited financial literacy, particularly in budgeting, monitoring cash flow, and making informed decisions. Others have received training in launching ventures that yield returns beyond initial investment and in acquiring assets such as vehicles, land for resale or rental, and residential property. Still, the level of business management competence among OFWs varies depending on individual educational backgrounds, professional experience, and exposure to financial education programs (Murata, 2024).

When establishing an enterprise, entrepreneurs must possess a comprehensive understanding of several core domains, including customer relations, marketing strategies, financial management, and operational efficiency (Ang and Tiongson, 2023). Strategic decision-making that fosters business success requires insight into consumer behavior, prevailing industry trends, and competitive landscapes. Additionally, knowledge of investment techniques, cash flow monitoring, and budgeting enables entrepreneurs to allocate resources effectively and sustain profitability. In light of rapid digitalization, modern business owners must also be adept at utilizing digital marketing tools, e-commerce platforms, and online systems to expand market reach and remain competitive within an evolving business environment. Empirical research by Frial (2022) illustrates that Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) from Mindanao frequently engage in both entrepreneurial and agricultural activities, contributing to diverse livelihood strategies. Moreover, the rise in unemployment rates following the return of OFWs to the Philippines serves as a catalyst for increased self-employment and entrepreneurial interest.

To enhance the effectiveness of reintegration efforts, stronger collaboration is encouraged among the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), the Department of Agriculture (DA) regional offices, the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), the National Reintegration Center for OFWs (NRCO), and Local Government Units (LGUs) at the sub-regional level. These institutions play a vital role in delivering targeted assistance to returning OFWs and supporting their transition into productive entrepreneurship. Albert et al. (2024) identified distinct

differences in investment behavior and timing between regions, alongside influential factors related to the conditions surrounding OFW reintegration, the rate of investment, and the nature of businesses being established. Variables such as the length of overseas employment, proficiency in business planning, attainment of college education (particularly among female OFWs), and the presence of household savings were found to significantly facilitate investment. Conversely, challenges including illness, high dependency on remittances, and the distribution of financial resources across basic needs, such as housing, food, transportation, health care, and utilities, were found to inhibit or delay business investments.

Furthermore, business sector engagement among OFWs is often shaped by skill sets. Those who demonstrate competencies in procurement, human resources, planning, and sales frequently pursue ventures in the retail trade. In contrast, OFWs with knowledge in information technology and operations management are more likely to invest in manufacturing, service-based enterprises, and financial sectors. However, most OFWs' skill profiles remain misaligned with agricultural entrepreneurship, except in roles related to sales (Banta and Pratt, 2021). This underscores that OFWs' investment decisions are largely influenced by their individual expertise and transferable skills. Many Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) pursue entrepreneurial ventures and engage in revenue-generating activities to achieve financial goals and address economic challenges. While some successful entrepreneurs lack formal education, they acquire business acumen through close observation, leadership mentoring, and personal initiative. Practical experience in business operations remains an asset. According to De Jesus and Adducul (2024), six core domains require strategic management for entrepreneurial success: management, marketing, accounting and finance, production and operations, research and development, and management information systems. These areas demand deliberate planning, organization, monitoring, and control to ensure sustainable performance.

To foster resilience, grit, and long-term viability in business, Union and Confederation (2023) identified key indicators that entrepreneurs must cultivate. These include reflective leadership and decision-making, situational awareness of internal and external environments, robust physical and social networks, market sensitivity, innovation, diversification, access to external resources, and the ability to leverage information, comply with regulations, and adapt to evolving conditions. Despite their potential, many OFWs face limitations due to the lack of access to mentorship and structured entrepreneurial education. This knowledge gap often impedes their ability to scale operations and respond effectively to economic shifts. The present study assessed both the knowledge and challenges encountered by OFWs in their entrepreneurial pursuits. Its findings offer actionable insights for designing targeted interventions and support mechanisms that can empower both current and aspiring OFW entrepreneurs. Furthermore, the study provides relevant data to inform strategic planning, policy formulation, and program development by government agencies, non-government organizations, and future researchers committed to enhancing the financial resilience and economic reintegration of OFWs.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design and Strategy

Descriptive research provides insight into OFWs' present readiness for business ventures by methodically documenting their entrepreneurial journey. It records how well they comprehend fundamental business principles, financial tactics, and the degree to which they have had access to capital resources or training. Additionally, it identifies persistent challenges such as a lack of mentorship, inconsistent income, and insufficient financial expertise, all of which could jeopardize the long-term viability of their endeavors. Descriptive research is a solid basis for developing responsive interventions, support systems, and policy frameworks since it emphasizes observation and reporting above testing. These initiatives can be modified to accommodate the real requirements and goals of OFW business owners, thereby fostering long-term resilience and inclusive economic reintegration. Descriptive study is crucial to comprehending the knowledge and challenges experienced by Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) in entrepreneurship because it provides a comprehensive picture of their viewpoints, skills, and life experiences. Through the use of surveys, interviews, and observational techniques, researchers can learn more about OFWs' financial literacy, business process expertise, and resource accessibility. Furthermore, this method preserves the authenticity of respondents' circumstances without altering any factors by detecting typical barriers such as a lack of funds, insufficient training, or ignorance of local marketplaces.

2.2 Population and Locale of the Study

The study's respondents were 282 Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs) who had completed their overseas contracts and taken a holiday in the Philippines while still conducting business. Data from the respondents was gathered using the convenience sampling technique.

2.3 Data Gathering Tools

A survey questionnaire was utilized to collect information from overseas Filipino workers who intend to start their own business after their contract expires. The main instrument used to collect the data required for this study was a questionnaire checklist, which was examined by the researcher's consultant and confirmed by a group of experts. There were two sections on the study's questionnaire checklist. The first section included the profiles of the respondents, including their age, sex, highest level of education, marital status, average monthly income, and type of work overseas. The second section covered the business knowledge of overseas Filipino workers and the difficulties they may face when running their own businesses. A questionnaire is a standardized instrument used to meet or collect data from target respondents. It could include the respondents' viewpoints, backgrounds, attitudes, and opinions. It is common in fields that gather both qualitative and quantitative data, such as marketing, social science, and health science research.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Level of Knowledge of OFWs in Business Venture in Terms of Business Operation

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Mean Interpretation
1. Effective management of business finances, including budgeting, pricing, and cash flow,	2.75	Moderately Knowledgeable
2. Ability to streamline workflows, optimize resources, and maintain operational efficiency.	2.44	Knowledgeable
3. Compliance with business requirements (i.e compliance with securing business permits, filing of taxes and implementing rules and regulations of business)	2.63	Moderately Knowledgeable
4. Effective management of inventory, suppliers, and operational costs	2.50	Moderately Knowledgeable
5. Ability to quickly respond to market changes, operational challenges, and customer needs,	2.63	Moderately Knowledgeable
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	2.59	Moderately Knowledgeable

With an average weighted mean of 2.59, the results show that OFWs have a moderate level of expertise in important business operations domains. With a score of 2.75, which indicates comparatively greater expertise with pricing, cash flow, and budgeting techniques, they seem to be the most confident in their ability to manage corporate finances. However, when it came to managing resources and streamlining operations, they received the lowest score (2.44), indicating a gap in operational efficiency. Their mediocre comprehension of inventory and supplier management, as well as adherence to business requirements, indicates that although they possess a solid foundation, their practical understanding of subtle or strategic elements, like adaptability in meeting market demands or enhancing operational flow, is still growing. These observations are consistent with research by Loyola and De Los Santos (2021), which highlights the direct relationship between entrepreneurial effectiveness and targeted

knowledge in business operations. According to the survey, OFWs have a moderate level of business operations knowledge, with strengths in financial management and weaknesses in strategic responsiveness and workflow optimization. This unequal distribution of information implies that OFWs are more likely to succeed as entrepreneurs when they acquire specialized education or training that is adapted to the real demands of operating an enterprise, especially in operational efficiency, compliance, and market adaption. Four preferred leadership styles, transformational, transactional, servant, and authentic leadership—were recognized by Belandres (2016) as crucial characteristics that stakeholders in military situations value. These leadership models place a strong emphasis on stakeholder participation, ethical decision-making, flexibility, and strategic thinking, all of which are equally important in entrepreneurial contexts.

In this regard, OFWs had a reasonable level of expertise in areas such as financial management and compliance, but they had difficulty with activities that call for significant leadership acumen, such as streamlining operations and reacting to market changes. For example, transformational leadership fosters creativity and adaptability, two traits that OFWs require to increase their operational agility. The OFWs' need to cultivate client relationships and integrate into the local market is in line with servant leadership, which emphasizes empathy and community development. Budgeting and inventory management can be improved by transactional leadership's support of organized goal setting and performance monitoring. Finally, self-awareness and ethical behavior are encouraged by authentic leadership, which is essential for maintaining trust and long-term business achievement. Based on Belandres' results, organizations such as NRCO or OWWA might assist OFWs in developing the leadership behaviors and strategic mentality required for effective business operations, in addition to providing technical knowledge, by including leadership development into OFW training programs.

The idea is consistent with Estallo Jr.'s (2023) scholarly results, which emphasize the critical role operational knowledge plays in resilience and well-informed decision-making in competitive settings. It also shows that even a moderate level of familiarity with inventory and financial management procedures influences OFWs' preparedness to pursue entrepreneurial endeavors. Additionally, he highlights how important specialized knowledge is to improve organizational agility and business productivity. Nonetheless, the comparatively poor ratings in domains like workflow optimization indicate an urgent need for customized solutions. Improving performance in post-migration company ventures require strengthening operational competencies. Therefore, it is not only sensible but also necessary to provide OFWs with focused training in operational approaches with the aim of promoting long-term business success. Likewise, Mosuela (2018) notes that new business owners sometimes disregard workflow and resource management, especially in service-oriented enterprises, which could account for the OFWs' lower scores in these domains. In order to achieve sustainable reintegration, research by Rodriguez et al. (2024) further supports the necessity of enhancing OFWs' organizational, technological, and human entrepreneurial skills. Thus, offering customized capacity-building initiatives that fill up these knowledge gaps may greatly improve OFWs' effectiveness in their post-return business endeavors.

3.II Level of Knowledge of OFWs in Business Venture in Terms of Budgeting

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Mean Interpretation
1. Creating realistic budgets, track expenses, and allocating resources efficiently.	2.75	Moderately Knowledgeable
2. Management of cash flow, cost controlling, and financial forecasting	1.47	Not Knowledgeable
3. Setting financial goals, monitoring the business financial performance, and adjusting budgets accordingly.	2.63	Moderately Knowledgeable
4. Analyzing financial data, and making informed financial decisions	2.49	Knowledgeable
5. Balancing the income and expenses while ensuring business sustainability	2.46	Knowledgeable
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	2.36	Knowledgeable

With a weighted average of 2.36, Table 2 shows that OFWs have a good degree of financial awareness when it comes to commercial endeavors. They show a practical understanding of basic financial planning by demonstrating relative strength in fundamental financial tasks like resource allocation, budget development, and spending tracking (2.75). But the glaringly low score of 1.47 in financial forecasting, cost control, and cash flow management points to a serious weakness in strategic financial operations, areas that are essential for maintaining a company in volatile economic times. This discrepancy implies that although OFWs might be skilled at short-term planning and financial performance tracking, their ability to predict financial patterns, control liquidity, and negotiate cost structures is still restricted. These results are consistent with research on OFWs by Ramirez and Hinlayagan, which highlights the value of organized training and financial literacy in enhancing entrepreneurial outcomes (2024). Enhancing entrepreneurial results for overseas Filipino workers (OFWs), particularly when they move from working abroad to owning their own business, requires financial literacy and structured training. OFWs that possess financial literacy are better able to comprehend and handle important financial ideas including risk assessment, cash flow, investment, and budgeting. They can make wise judgments; steer clear of typical financial mistakes and maintain their businesses despite changes in the economy thanks to this fundamental knowledge. This is enhanced by structured training, which provides a methodical approach to education and covers topics such as business planning, marketing, compliance, and operational strategies in addition to financial management.

Entrepreneurs that receive organized financial education are more likely to create realistic budgets, make correct financial performance projections, and find funding opportunities, claims Frial (2022). With workable business plans and self-assurance to handle market and regulatory obstacles, OFWs will be better equipped to reintegrate into the community. Furthermore, Mosuela (2018) backs up the idea that OFWs frequently lack the technical know-how needed for sophisticated financial operations, even when they have experience with income management overseas. Findings from MDPI's publications on SME sustainability, which emphasize how a lack of financial information directly hinders decision-making and long-term viability, further support this. The study essentially highlights the urgent need for focused interventions that emphasize advanced financial management skills, especially cash flow optimization and forecasting, to enable OFWs to not only launch a firm but also maintain and expand it. It could prove revolutionary to incorporate digital financial tools or create programs that mimic actual financial situations.

3.III Level of Knowledge of OFWs in Business Venture in Terms of Market Trends

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Mean Interpretation
1. Analyzing the consumer behavior, industry shifts, and competitor strategies.	3.52	Highly Knowledgeable
2. Examining of updated emerging technologies, economic changes, and customer preferences	2.53	Moderately Knowledgeable
3. Predicting demand fluctuations and adjusting business strategies.	1.56	Knowledgeable
4. Identify new opportunities and innovate products or services offered.	1.50	Knowledgeable
5. Adapt business strategies based on economic changes and emerging technologies	1.20	Not Knowledgeable
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	2.06	Knowledgeable

With an average weighted mean of 2.06, OFWs have a high degree of market trend knowledge. Many OFWs are very sensitive to market dynamics and competitive positioning, as seen by their exceptional proficiency in

assessing consumer behavior, industry changes, and rival strategies (3.52). Their expertise, however, sharply declines in domains that need flexible and progressive approaches, like anticipating shifts in demand (1.56), and reacting to economic shifts and new technologies (1.20). These lower scores imply that although OFWs might be aware of the state of the market, they might find it difficult to convert their observations into creative or flexible business solutions. Due to a combination of structural, experiential, and contextual constraints, overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) frequently find it difficult to convert market information into innovative or flexible business actions.

During their stay overseas, many OFWs have keen observational skills and an understanding of consumer behavior, but they are often not exposed to formal business training, digital technologies, or strategic planning frameworks that facilitate rapid innovation and adaptation. Limited access to mentorship, changing technology, and localized market data upon their return all contribute to this disparity. Returning OFWs encounter obstacles such as lack of funding, a lack of essential information, and strict reintegration procedures that make it difficult for them to successfully change course or develop their businesses (Albert et al., 2024). Furthermore, many OFWs lack the mentality necessary to make the leap from employee to entrepreneur from task execution to strategic leadership. Their capacity to act on discoveries is limited in the absence of organized support networks and chances for ongoing education, which leads to lost chances for creativity and long-term development. This pattern is consistent with the research of Roldan (2020), which highlights the importance of technological adaptability and data-driven market analysis for long-term entrepreneurial success. Digital transformation and strategic agility are crucial elements of global business strategies, particularly in markets that are changing quickly (Sampan, n.d.). The lack of exposure to organized market intelligence tools or changing digital platforms may be the cause of the disparity in OFWs' capacity for innovation and adaptation. Essentially, specialized training in market forecasting, innovation, and adaptive strategy formulation could greatly improve OFWs' entrepreneurial outcomes, even though they show promising analytical ability in analyzing market behavior.

3.IV Level of Knowledge of OFWs in Business Venture in Terms of Marketing

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Mean Interpretation
1. Identify what products their customers frequently buy and adjusts inventory accordingly.	3.55	Highly Knowledgeable
2. Arranging items in a way that attracts customers and encourages impulse buying.	3.55	Highly Knowledgeable
3. Setting competitive prices while ensuring profitability.	3.00	Moderately Knowledgeable
4. Implementing special offers, bundle deals, or discounts to attract and retain customers	3.23	Moderately Knowledgeable
5. Encouraging satisfied customers to refer friends and family	3.59	Highly Knowledgeable
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	3.38	Moderately Knowledgeable

The research shows that, with an average weighted mean of 3.38, OFWs have a relatively thorough comprehension of marketing strategies. Their proficiency in customer-focused tactics is notably evident in their ability to recognize frequently bought items and modify inventory appropriately (3.55), arrange products to promote impulsive purchases (3.55), and capitalize on consumer recommendations (3.59). According to these excellent ratings, OFWs are exceptionally aware of how customers behave and know how to design captivating retail spaces

that increase sales. Their expertise in establishing competitive rates while maintaining profitability (3.00) and putting promotional tactics like discounts or package offers into practice (3.23), however, is a little weaker. To optimize revenue and customer retention, OFWs may benefit from more in-depth training in pricing strategies and promotional planning, even when they are proficient in customer engagement and product presentation.

Marketing knowledge is most effective when it incorporates strategic ideas, consumer information, and structural frameworks like pricing models and promotional methods, claim Banta and Pratt (2021). The study highlights that without strategic marketing concepts that direct profitability and long-term growth, customer information alone is inadequate. Furthermore, it emphasizes that the ability to convert consumer insights into structured pricing and promotional tactics is essential for marketing performance, highlighting the necessity for OFWs to bolster these areas for long-term entrepreneurship. In a nutshell OFWs exhibit promising marketing intuition based on consumer behavior, but organized training in pricing, promotions, and strategic marketing planning could greatly increase their entrepreneurial success.

3.V Challenges Encountered by OFW Business Owners in Terms of Financial Aspect

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Mean Interpretation
1. Difficulty in securing loans or financial support from banks and investors due to lack of collateral or credit history	3.59	Encountered
2. Absence of savings or financial backup in case of unexpected expenses or economic downturns.	2.31	Moderately Encountered
3. Rising costs of rent, utilities, raw materials, and labor that reduces profitability.	3.19	Encountered
4. Lack of knowledge or tools to create and manage an effective budget, leading to overspending or underinvestment.	3.06	Encountered
5. Failure to track income, expenses, and financial performance accurately, leading to poor decision-making	2.25	Moderately Encountered
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	2.66	Encountered

With an average weighted mean of 2.66, the data shows that OFWs frequently face financial difficulties in their entrepreneurial endeavors. The most urgent problem is the inability to obtain loans or other financial assistance (3.59), which is a result of structural obstacles such as a lack of collateral, a short credit history, and a lack of knowledge about official lending organizations. Concerns about growing operating expenses (3.19) and budgetary constraints (4.06), which have an immediate effect on resource allocation and profitability, come next. While some OFWs may have basic financial practices, they frequently lack the depth and consistency required for sustainable business management, as seen by the moderately encountered lack of savings (2.31) and inability to effectively assess financial performance (2.25). These conclusions are corroborated by Ang and Tiongson's (2023) research on overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) in Oman, which highlights the need of financial literacy and discipline in resource management. However, the study also found that many OFWs are not exposed to formal financial education. Comparably, the study by Garabiles et al. (2022) emphasizes that inadequate financial planning and restricted credit availability are persistent challenges for OFWs, frequently resulting in unsuccessful entrepreneurial endeavors and reintegration attempts. It also demonstrates that insufficient financial plans and emotional spending are frequently the causes of financial mismanagement, a lack of savings, and debt growth.

The figure essentially highlights the pressing need for digital tools for tracking and budgeting, access to accessible financing options, and focused financial instruction. Through these initiatives, OFWs may be able overcome over systemic obstacles and create robust, successful businesses.

3.VI Challenges Encountered by OFW Business Owners in Terms of Market Competition

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Mean Interpretation
1. Struggling to compete with well-established businesses that have stronger branding, wider reach, and better resources.	3.59	Encountered
2. Difficulty in setting competitive prices while maintaining profitability due to aggressive pricing strategies from competitors.	2.31	Moderately Encountered
3. Difficulty in keeping up with shifting consumer trends and demands, making it harder to retain customers.	3.19	Encountered
4. Difficulty in building strong relationships with customers due to fierce competition and better incentives offered by competitors.	3.06	Encountered
5. Struggles to adopt new technologies and digital marketing tools that competitors use to gain an edge.	2.25	Moderately Encountered
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	2.66	Encountered

With an average weighted mean of 2.66, the data indicates that OFWs frequently face competitive obstacles while starting their own businesses. Their inability to compete with well-established companies (3.59), which frequently have stronger branding, a wider market reach, and more substantial resources, is the biggest problem. This disadvantage is made worse by challenges in maintaining good client relationships (3.06) and keeping up with changing consumer trends (3.19), both of which are essential for maintaining market relevance and loyalty. Challenges with pricing strategies (2.31) and implementing new technologies and digital marketing tools (2.25), on the other hand, only moderately impact OFWs, indicating that while these areas are troublesome, they might not be as obvious or urgent as problems with branding and client retention.

Many OFWs have difficulty competing successfully with established businesses due to a lack of essential business knowledge, restricted access to money, and inadequate training, according to (2020). The report also points out that, although being important factors that influence competitiveness, branding, innovation, and technology adoption are frequently disregarded in OFW-led companies. Additionally, study by Duru and Hammoud (2022) highlighted the clear relationship between company competitiveness and innovation strategy and digital capacity, particularly in crowded markets. The capacity of innovation strategy and digital capability to boost company competitiveness, especially in crowded markets where differentiation is essential, is what makes them fundamental. Businesses can create distinctive goods, services, and procedures in response to changing consumer demands and market trends by implementing an innovative strategy. When integrated with digital capabilities like automation, digital platforms, and data analytics, OFWs can quickly grow, customize, and change their offers, providing them with a competitive advantage.

Essentially, even though OFWs exhibit tenacity and entrepreneurial spirit, market saturation, technology limitations, and a lack of strategic positioning frequently pose obstacles to their endeavors. Their competitive edge might be greatly increased by addressing these issues with focused training in branding, consumer engagement, and digital marketing—as well as access to funding and mentorship.

3.VII Challenges Encountered by OFW Business Owners in Terms of Management

Indicators	Weighted Mean	Mean Interpretation
1. Difficulty in making strategic decisions due to limited knowledge of business operations and management principles.	3.59	Encountered
2. Difficulty in setting competitive prices while maintaining profitability due to aggressive pricing strategies from competitors.	2.31	Moderately Encountered
3. Difficulty in keeping up with shifting consumer trends and demands, making it harder to retain customers.	3.19	Encountered
4. Difficulty in building strong relationships with customers due to fierce competition and better incentives offered by competitors.	3.06	Encountered
5. Struggles to adopt new technologies and digital marketing tools that competitors use to gain an edge.	2.25	Moderately Encountered
AVERAGE WEIGHTED MEAN	2.66	Encountered

With an average weighed mean of 2.66, the data shows that OFW business owners face substantial management issues. The most urgent problem is the inability to make strategic decisions (3.59) due to a lack of understanding of fundamental management concepts and business operations. This implies that many OFWs could not have the strategic frameworks required to direct long-term planning, resource allocation, and competitive positioning, even in spite of their entrepreneurial intentions. Furthermore, businesses struggle to preserve market relevance and loyalty by keeping up with changing consumer trends (3.19) and cultivating enduring client relationships (3.06). Setting competitive prices (2.31) and implementing digital marketing techniques and technologies (2.25), on the other hand, are also found to present moderate challenges. This suggests that although OFWs may acknowledge the significance of these areas, they frequently lack the resources, expertise, or self-assurance necessary to carry them out successfully.

Ramirez and Hinlayagan's study support these findings by pointing out that a lack of mentorship and organized business education causes many OFWs to struggle with branding, digital adoption, and strategic planning (2024). Additionally, the Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship highlights the clear correlation between company competitiveness and innovation strategy and digital capacity, particularly in crowded industries where differentiation and adaptability are crucial. This essentially emphasizes the necessity of thorough management training programs that emphasize digital transformation, client involvement, and strategic decision-making. Giving OFWs these skills can help close the gap between long-term company success and entrepreneurial aspirations.

4. CONCLUSIONS

It is concluded that, despite the limited earnings of Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs), they remain motivated to engage in entrepreneurial activities as a means of attaining financial independence and long-term stability for their families. However, their transition into business ventures is often accompanied by challenges, including limited access to capital, inadequate financial literacy, and insufficient market knowledge. To effectively

support their entrepreneurial aspirations, it is imperative to implement accessible business training, financial assistance, and mentorship programs that are tailored to their specific needs. Providing OFW entrepreneurs with essential skills and resources will enable them to establish sustainable enterprises and improve their overall economic well-being.

Findings indicate that OFW entrepreneurs possess notable weaknesses in cash flow management, cost control, and financial forecasting. These areas reflect a significantly low level of knowledge and represent critical gaps that require immediate attention. Addressing these deficiencies through targeted financial training and strategic support mechanisms may enhance their budgeting competencies and contribute to more effective financial oversight within their business operations.

Additionally, OFWs demonstrate moderate proficiency in developing realistic budgets, monitoring expenditures, and allocating resources. Their understanding of market trends is basic, with limited ability to analyze current economic conditions and adjust business strategies accordingly. Strengthening their ability to interpret market shifts and integrate emerging technologies into their operations is essential for fostering competitiveness and sustainable growth in the entrepreneurial landscape.

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