



Entrepreneurial Aspirations and Business Practices of Filipino Migrants in Thailand to Pursue Strategic Operational Success

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Abstract

Migrant entrepreneurs have learned to seize opportunities and respond to necessity, often adopting survival strategies, to pursue sustainability while navigating structural and institutional challenge. Recent research focuses on motivations, challenges, and socio-cultural aspects across different countries, yet the experiences of Filipino Migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand remain underexplored. The study examined how aspirations, business practices, and challenges interact to influence operational success, which is rarely studied in current literature. The study acknowledged four variables shaped by multi-layered theories: aspirations (Theory of Planned Behavior), business practices (mixed-embeddedness), challenges (Push-Pull Theory and Liability of Foreignness), and operational success (Resource-Based View). These, together with the entrepreneurial ecosystem that gives rise to recommendations. The study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-method research design, combining a quantitative survey of 100 respondents followed by qualitative methods of eight in-depth interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, reliability test, normality test (Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk), and Spearman's rho correlations. Qualitative data were thematically analyzed to provide deeper insights. The findings revealed that aspiration and business practices have a significant influence on operational success, while challenges did not have a direct significant effect. Operational success among Filipino migrant entrepreneurs varies by scale, legal position, and mixed networks. Their resilience is deeply rooted in adaptability, financial discipline, and resourcefulness, emphasizing their ability to navigate their businesses in Thailand's culturally diverse business landscape. They demonstrate adaptive resilience, sustained by motivation, resourcefulness, cultural harmony, and community-based support. The study divulges distinct interpretations and strategies among micro and small enterprises, giving them a competitive advantage, despite existing structural and institutional challenges. The study recommends strategies to mitigate the challenges faced by Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand by improving their access to finance, strengthening cross-cultural networks, expanding their market opportunities, developing human capital, and implementing inclusive policies and cultural integration to enhance their competitiveness and pursue sustainability.

Keywords: Filipino migrant entrepreneurs, entrepreneurial aspiration, business practices, challenges, operational success, Thailand



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INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship was seen as a way for migrants to empower themselves and seize opportunities as a strategic response to migration. Migrants who choose entrepreneurship made a strategic choice and a means of survival (Zagala, 2023a; Estallo, 2023b; Chen, 2024). Migrant entrepreneur underlines entrepreneurship as a personal enabler, a blessing, a support system, and community development, particularly when the

government lacks institutional support, like funding, mentoring, and language training for them to succeed in a host country (Bertsen et al., 2021; Polychronopoulos & Nguyen-Duc, 2024). Likewise, Czinkota, Alon, & McMillan (2021) and Ashourizadeh & Saeedikiya (2023) emphasize that migrant entrepreneurs have a unique access to international ventures, which helps them to enhance their network among both the host and their home country. It is viewed as a leverage across borders, resources, networks, and a strategic move for

international collaboration. Further, Jacob et al. (2021) and David & Terstriep (2025) found that entrepreneurship among migrants became a frame of resilience highlighting how migrants respond to challenges and adapt their creativity. In addition, entrepreneurship was utilized as a reintegration tool and framed as both an opportunity and a challenging strategy as a solution to the inequality of Filipino migrant entrepreneurs (MarcaliÉas, 2023; Spitzer, 2016). Entrepreneurs among Filipinos overseas were part of a larger trend among the Filipino community abroad. It was also part of a global phenomenon of how Filipinos who lived and worked outside the Philippines started engaging in entrepreneurship (Estallo, 2023). Niverba et al. (2024) found that Filipino migrant entrepreneurs were significantly increasing, and they expressed varied career aspirations, from concurrent entrepreneurship to full-time ventures. The author also highlighted that Filipino migrant entrepreneurs were often driven to achieve financial independence to change the path of contractual employment. Other studies supported their families through remittances or engaged in entrepreneurship (Jacod et al., 2021). However, Estallo (2023) pointed out that Filipino migrant entrepreneurs were pushed into entrepreneurship primarily due to opportunity-driven factors and business opportunities. Filipino migrant entrepreneurs incorporated resilience, adaptability in employment to entrepreneurship, strong families, and preferences for small-scale or community-centered businesses such as restaurants, online or retail stores, and services (Jacob et al., 2021; Marquez et al., 2022). Filipino migrant entrepreneurs also integrated Filipino culture and values into their entrepreneurial journey and often engaged in using social media platforms for marketing and customer engagement (Cayatoc et al., 2022; Marquez et al., 2022).

Moreover, the study was focused on Thailand's business landscape. It was primarily influenced by the government, Thai culture, and economic foundations that support Thai families and community-focused businesses, particularly among Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

According to Chairatana et al. (2024) and Hasayotin et al. (2024), Thai entrepreneurs were mostly subjected to traditional family structures and relationships to maintain businesses. They were also provided with government support, and from the Board of Investments, like One Tambon One Product (OTOP) initiatives. Further, in urban areas such as Bangkok and Chiangmai, the business practices frequently prioritize relationship building, in-person encounters, and steady digital integration (Chairatana et al., 2024). On the other hand, Filipino migrant entrepreneurs and other foreign businesses in Thailand do not have access to the same government support system and instead rely on digital platforms such as social media, transnational capital, and their diaspora networks in starting a business and growing their businesses (Cayatoc et al., 2022; Marquez et al., 2022). In addition, foreign businesses like Filipino migrant entrepreneurs and Thai SMEs both deal with challenges and issues, including unpredictability in the environment, an excessive dependence on tourists, and vulnerability brought on by economic situations like the COVID-19 pandemic, businesses that operate in the tourism and services industries, such as restaurants or salons (Hasayotin et al., 2024; Thunyachairat et al., 2023).

Estallo (2023) highlighted that Filipino migrant entrepreneurs often faced institutional disadvantages as they adjusted to a system that was not created and designed for migrants. They typically faced challenges such as limited funding, language barriers, and cultural adaptations that hinder business operations (Robert et al., 2022). In addition, they encountered difficulties in business regulations, taxation systems, and mental health from balancing family obligations with entrepreneurial risks (Estallo, 2023; Jacob et al., 2021).

According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (2024), there were an estimated 2.16 million Filipinos who left the Philippines to work overseas. Further, females comprised a larger share of the total number of Filipinos who

worked abroad, accounting for 55.6 percent of OFWs, thereby representing the majority segment of overseas employment – gendered dynamics in labor migration.

The country in the world that has become a leading destination for OFWs is Saudi Arabia, where 20 percent of the data were OFWs. In 2023, the distribution of OFWs across countries worldwide is in Asia (77.4%), North and South America (9.8%), Europe (8.4%), Australia (3.0%), and Africa (1.3%). These were the leading destinations for Overseas Filipino Workers (OFWs). In addition, the demographic of this study was in Thailand. The foreign investment in Thailand was ruled by 49/51, where foreigners can hold no more than 49 percent of the shares and 51 percent shares for a local Thai owner (Digital Solutions for Corporate Management, 2024).

According to data from the Department of Business Development (DBD, 2025) and DataWarehouse, there were 798,607 wholly Thai-owned companies and 137,232 Thai companies with foreign investments. The majority (54.47%) of investment in Thai legal entities was domestic or Thai-owned. A significant 45.53% share of foreign investors shows a strong presence in the Thai economy. Therefore, the number of Thai-owned businesses (798,607) was significantly higher than those with foreign investments (137,232). Among those were 824 investments by Filipino nationals in Thai legal entities still operating in Thailand, with a 2,273.90-million-baht investment value. Likewise, the Filipino investors/entrepreneurs invested the most in the manufacturing firms of parts and accessories, second, in the production of electric wires and cable, third, in the snacks/crispy products, fourth, was the wholesale of general merchandise, and fifth, in the sector for chemical and fertilizer production. (DBD, 2015). In addition, according to the International Labor Organization, (Statista, 2025), Filipinos were the second-largest group of non-Thai nationals holding work permits for professionals and skilled occupations, with 18,640 or more Filipinos.

Recent studies explored entrepreneurship and migrant business across different countries. However, there remains a lack of focused research on Filipino migrant entrepreneurs on their aspirations, business practices, and challenges they face, specifically in Thailand. Current literature highlights Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in various countries, including New Zealand (Zagala, 2023), Finland (Estallo, 2023), and Qatar (Cayatoc et al., 2022), emphasizing the challenges they face, such as access to capital, liability of foreignness, and cultural adaptation. Furthermore, recent studies on Filipinos in Thailand have focused on socio-cultural aspects and the well-being of restaurant businesses (Marquez et al., 2022). Nevertheless, research on Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand remains limited, with little to no empirical work examining how they navigate their entrepreneurial aspirations, business practices, and challenges while pursuing operational success (Zagala, 2023; Marquez et al., 2022; Estallo, 2023). Against this backdrop, the present research study was conducted to address this gap.

Specifically, the study focused on Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand to understand factors influencing aspirations, business practices, challenges they faced, and their operational success. The study explored how they respond to both institutional limitations and cultural opportunities. Similarly, the study delved deeper into how they operate within and around Thailand's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Finally, this study proposed effective strategies and practical recommendations. This study informed policy decisions, entrepreneurial education programs, and support initiatives targeted at improving the business landscape and promoting the growth of every Filipino migrant entrepreneur in Thailand.

The study examined the entrepreneurial aspirations, business practices, challenges, and operational success of Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand, serving as basis for proposed strategies for operational success, which can also be applied to the global context.

Specifically, the research aimed to: (1) Identify the demographic profile of Filipino entrepreneurs in Thailand in terms of gender, age, level of education, civil status, years of residence in Thailand, type of business, operation of the business in Thailand, and the structure of their business, (2) Identify and analyze the entrepreneurial aspirations that influence Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand towards motivation, long-term goals, financial independence, and self-efficacy, (3) Examine the business practices used by Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand towards financial management, marketing practices, adaptation to the Thai Market, and networking. (4) Analyze the challenges faced by Filipino migrant entrepreneurs while doing business in Thailand, (5) Assess the impact of entrepreneurial aspiration and business practices on the operational success of the businesses of Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand, (6) Assess the impact of the challenges faced by the Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand on their entrepreneurial aspiration, business practices, and operational success, and (7) Provide recommendations and strategies that improve the operational success and sustainability of Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand.

The results of the study hold a significant value to multiple stakeholders. First, Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand would benefit from this study by offering critical insights into the determinants of operational success, particularly in the areas of networking, financial management, marketing, and cultural adaptation. Aspiring Filipino entrepreneurs may utilize the study's identification of common challenges, practical solutions, and best practices as a framework for informed decision-making and business planning. At the community level, the study provides data-driven insights that may foster solidarity within the Filipino communities. Policymakers in both the Philippines and Thailand can draw upon the findings to inform bilateral trade relations, business regulations, and investment policies aimed at enhancing the growth and sustainability of Filipino-owned enterprises

abroad. The study also contributes to the scholarly discourse on migrant entrepreneurs by extending the literature on Filipino entrepreneurial practices in foreign markets and offering conceptual foundations for future academic inquiry into operational success among migrant business ventures.

The research also provided insights for policymakers, business support organizations, the Philippine embassy in Thailand, and the Filipino community. It enables the development of new strategies and efforts to empower Filipino entrepreneurs and investors to strive and contribute meaningfully to economic and social welfare. Geographically, the study was delimited to Thailand, examining Filipino entrepreneurs, business owners, and investors engaged in operating enterprises within the Kingdom. The research's conclusions do not apply to other countries or areas with dissimilar backgrounds and business environments.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The review of related literature highlighted the previous studies that explored entrepreneurship and migrant businesses across different countries. Migrant entrepreneurs around the world have been recognized as important contributors to innovation, job creation, and cross-border trade. Current literature conducted in various countries, including New Zealand (Zagala, 2023), Finland (Estallo, 2023), and Qatar (Cayatoc et al., 2022), highlights how they establish business as a means of survival, economic independence, and community empowerment. They also faced challenges, such as access to capital, liability of foreignness, and cultural adaptation. However, the existing literature remains a lack of focused research on the entrepreneurial aspiration, business practices, and operational success of Filipino migrant entrepreneurs, specifically in Thailand. Recent studies in Thailand have focused on socio-cultural aspects and the well-being of restaurant businesses owned by Filipino and Thai business owners (Marquez et al., 2022). Nevertheless, their experiences on

how aspirations, business practices, and challenges interact to influence operational success remain limited, with little to no empirical research. The study highlights four variables with multi-layered theories that influence Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand, such as their entrepreneurial aspirations (Theory of Planned Behavior), business practices (mixed-embeddedness), challenges they face (Push-Pull Theory and Liability of Foreignness), and their operational success (Resource-Based View). An entrepreneurial ecosystem (EE) gives rise to recommendations and provides a suggested plan. The integration of variables and multi-layered theories allows for a holistic understanding of their lived experiences, aspiration, business practices, challenges they face, and their operational success.

Entrepreneurial Aspiration Among Filipinos. Estallo (2023) emphasized that migrant entrepreneurs' motivations to do business were primarily driven by opportunities rather than forced by unemployment. Estallo also found out that it was a growing trend within the migrant business landscape and among Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW). In addition, the motivations for entrepreneurship have a varied definition; some entrepreneurs define it as a pursuit of achievement and power, while others define it as a drive for social impact and ethical leadership. (Curtin et al., 2024). According to Fuentelsaz et al. (2023), failure in entrepreneurial practice can lead to higher aspirations. Fuentelsaz emphasizes that experiences with failure strengthen the positive effect, promote growth, and lead to learning from past mistakes. It helped entrepreneurs broaden their societal learning from exposure to failure, increasing their entrepreneurial ambitions. However, Zagala (2024) emphasized that aspiration acts as a guiding force on how entrepreneurs' structure and plan for the operations of the business, where proactivity was a way to improve rather than just reacting to challenges.

Catapang (2022) suggested that succession should be addressed for long-term goals and

outcomes. However, Guliman (2023), who studied 390 Filipino entrepreneurs, conveyed that long-term goals in entrepreneurship are primarily driven to gain financial independence, social welfare, and, ultimately, financial necessity. Ignacio (2023) emphasized that promoting balance in business profitability, moral responsibility, and policies to enhance ethical entrepreneurship will sustain long-term business success. Widodo (2024) highlighted that entrepreneurial success goes beyond cultural values and drives practical strategies and maintains entrepreneurial development to achieve long-term success. Hanaysha and Al-Shaikh (2024) underscored that entrepreneurial mindset, market responsiveness, and strong marketing capabilities are key drivers of sustainability. According to Spitzer (2016), migrants who engage in entrepreneurial activities display alleviation in poverty, leverage in financial aspects, and social remittances to create wealth in their homeland. Roberto et al. (2022) emphasized that promoting entrepreneurship, investing in education, and skills training increases employability and entrepreneurial capabilities, reducing income inequality. In addition, Marcalinas (2023) found that former Filipino entertainers in Japan turn to entrepreneurship as a way to achieve financial independence. They also underscore that their aspiration in business was an assortment of economic necessity, personal ambition, and adaptations to their new life.

Uy et al. (2021) emphasized that entrepreneurs who have a better understanding of feedback and put in more effort to realize decisions tend to progress more in their business goals. Further, persistence in business and an entrepreneurial mindset enhance self-efficacy, enable entrepreneurs to face major challenges like limited access to finances (Cruz, 2024). Relatively, Gómez-Jorge et al. (2025) highlighted that entrepreneurs with high self-esteem are more proactive in innovation and willing to take risks. The authors also highlight that defining success in entrepreneurs drives in multiple ways, where financial success is defined as personal satisfaction, business growth, and social recognition.

Practices of Filipino entrepreneurs. Sharma (2023) found that factors and practices such as budgeting, cash flow management, and financial forecasting significantly impact the success and profitability of the business. The author also highlights that small business owners struggle due to a lack of financial expertise and inadequate systems that slow down business growth and lead to business failure. Okeke et al. (2024) found that managing risks, enhancing predictability, and implementing best practices in financial planning enhance the strategic budgeting and revenue management of the business.

Czinkota et al. (2020) discovered that they develop entrepreneurial leverage where they successfully compete in different international markets and local markets due to a distinctive mix of resources, orientation, and capabilities. Further, Santos et al. (2024) emphasized that online platforms have a huge impact on marketing efforts that significantly enhance the brand awareness, customer engagement, and sales performance of the company. Traya (2024) underscored that both traditional and digital strategies can enhance the competitiveness and sustainability of the business.

Marquez & Jamieson (2022) emphasized that through well-being-centered strategies, Filipino entrepreneurs in Thailand can enhance their business resilience, brand identity, and consumer appeal. Meedach & Lekcharoen (2023) highlighted that Thai entrepreneurs have the potential to expand into the global market through digital competency, noting that essential skills for digital entrepreneurs in Thailand are critical for achieving a competitive advantage. Potjanajaruwit et al. (2024) underlined that the success of tourism businesses in Thailand is significantly influenced by three key factors: marketing strategies, personnel competency, and business partnerships.

Satar et al. (2024) and Berntsen et al. (2021) discovered that access to networking, partnerships, and business groups strengthens business opportunities. The author also

underlined that the sustainability of the business, and the structural factors, like laws, policies, or other business environment, trigger the business of migrant entrepreneurs. Further, the author also explained that personal abilities and support from social networks enhance the sustainability and success of the business. Likewise, Mignenan (2021) highlighted that entrepreneurs who practice mutual support, collaboration, and share resources have a higher chance of surviving business challenges. Mignenan explained that building resilience and long-term connections helps the company to be prepared for any future disruptions. Al-Kassem (2022) featured government programs as effective and playing a key role in facilitating business ease, enhancing support, and enabling entrepreneurship for nurturing startups.

Operational Success of Filipino Entrepreneurs. Operational success does not always translate to sustained business growth, but rather the ability to recover, adapt, and thrive professionally after setbacks, transforming business failure into personal growth and renewed purpose (Jacob et al., 2021; Anand et al., 2023). Moreover, leveraging collaborative networking boosts entrepreneurial marketing strategies, where it strengthens local and international connections, partnerships, and community-based resilience, leading to operational success of the business (Ashourizadeh and Saeedikiya, 2023; Chen et al., 2024; Widodo et al., 2024; Chen, 2024; David and Terstriep, 2024; Mignenan, 2024).

Challenges in operation, such as capital access, limited resources, regulatory support, cultural barriers, and entrepreneurial knowledge, are factors that push migrant entrepreneurs to strategically drive their entrepreneurial spirit to succeed in operating the business (Niverba et al., 2024; Chen, 2024; David and Terstriep, 2024). Mignenan (2024) explained that entrepreneurs have adopted a range of strategies during the pandemic to maintain operational success, including cost minimization techniques, modifying products and services, and fostering community-based resilience. Mignenan found that one key strategy is digital adaptation,

where businesses pivot to online platforms and market to sustain customer engagement and sales. Cayatoc et al. (2022) highlighted that Filipino migrant entrepreneurs transitioned from traditional storefronts to social media marketing, and adapting to digital marketing tools helps entrepreneurs survive and thrive in a competitive setting.

Challenges of Filipino Migrant Entrepreneurs. In starting a business, the impact of entrepreneurship and unemployment on income was a structural challenge, such as without adequate capital, a support network, and being low-skilled entrepreneurs, which deepens socioeconomic disparities rather than providing universal economic uplift (Roberto et al., 2021). Likewise, Filipino migrant entrepreneurs faced several challenges, such as limited access to capital, regulatory issues, support network, local culture, competition, and lack of entrepreneurial knowledge (Zagala, 2023; MarcaliÉas, 2023; Polychronopoulos & Nguyen-Duc, 2024; Nirverba et al., 2024). Czinkota et al. (2020) emphasized that they may struggle to gain trust and connect with local customers, and relying too much on their ethnic networks can also limit their business growth internationally. David & Terstriep (2025) underscored that Filipino migrant entrepreneurs faced several challenges, such as social exclusion, lack of institutional support, and discrimination, which are not merely limitations but also catalyzed creative coping strategies.

Moreover, Jacod et al. (2021) found that Filipino migrant entrepreneurs demonstrate resilience and adaptability in recovering from failure, where they exhibit strong business intent but face common failures due to poor management, financial issues, and staff conflicts. Filipino migrant entrepreneurs are proactive in utilizing digital tools for marketing, and social media platforms help entrepreneurs to survive and thrive in a competitive environment where they enhance awareness, engagement, and sales (Cayatoc et al., 2022; Mia et al., 2024; Santos et al., 2024). However, Cayatoc et al. (2022) and Mia et al. (2024) found that several challenges that

hinder the operation are limited technical knowledge in using digital tools, difficulty in consistently creating marketing content, establishing trust with customers in the digital space, and competition online. In addition, Mia et al. (2024) stated that cybersecurity risk, lack of trust in digital transactions, and infrastructure limitations show barriers or hesitation to adopt digitalization.

Operational Framework. Figure 1 illustrates that the operational frameworks of Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand are interconnected with two variables: the independent variables, such as entrepreneurial aspirations, business practices, and challenges, and the dependent variable, which lies at the center of operational framework – the operational success.

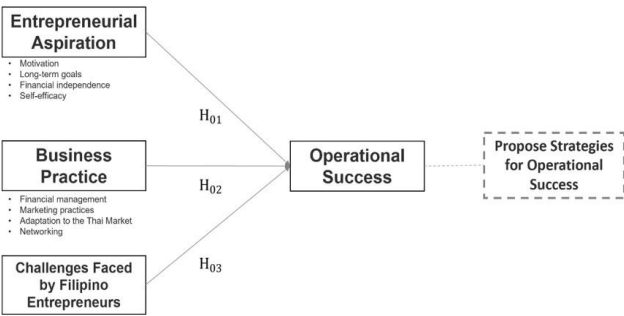


Figure 1
Research Paradigm

The operational framework includes the Proposed Strategies for Operational Success, connected with dashed arrows, which represent the practical recommendations and outcomes of the study. The entrepreneurial aspiration has a direct effect on the operational success, which was employed by TPB by Ajzen (1991), where it examined motivation, long-term goals, financial independence, and self-efficacy that led to an understanding of the entrepreneurial aspiration of Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in starting and sustaining a business in Thailand.

Moreover, business practices among migrant entrepreneurs are widely explained through Mixed Embeddedness Theory by Klosterman & Rath (2001), which helps to understand how migrants navigate their businesses. The study

was an anchor to MET and explained the importance of relational networks, marketing practices, and adaptation to the Thai local market and financial management. Further, entrepreneurial aspiration and business practices are directly influencing operational success, where the RBV by Barney (1991) is applied to examine the overall business performance and strategy in achieving operational success. The theory supported the study in understanding how Filipino migrant entrepreneurs succeed in doing business in Thailand.

Challenges faced by Filipino migrant entrepreneurs exerted a direct effect on operational success. The Push-Pull (Lee, 1966) and LOF (Zaheer, 1995) frameworks served as anchors to examine the migrant decision-making process and challenges faced by Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand. Furthermore, the diagram clearly represents how internal aspirations, adaptive practices, and challenges collectively shape the success process of Filipino migrant entrepreneurs who operate their businesses in Thailand. The operational framework directly responded to addressing the identified research gap of the study, thereby providing the outcome or evidence-based strategy of the study, and providing recommended strategies for operational success that lead to long-term growth, development and sustainability in the host country.

Ho₁. Entrepreneurial aspiration has no significant effect on operational success.

Entrepreneurial aspiration was a driving force behind every successful business outcome (Ajzen, 2019). The Theory of Planned Behavior explained that aspirations and intentions are key predictors of entrepreneurial success (Nayak et al., 2024). Curtin et al. (2024) underlined that aspirations have a diverse definition, such as the pursuit of achievement, power, social impact, and ethical leadership. Fuentelsaz et al. (2023) highlighted that aspirations are shaped by past experiences, such as failures or challenges they faced, which lead them to act toward growth in the future.

However, Zagala (2024) explained that aspiration in business serves as a guiding force for clear goals that push entrepreneurs to plan instead of reacting to challenges.

Ho₂. Business practices have no significant effect on operational success.

Business practices were essential for maintaining operations and achieving growth (Kloosterman & Rath, 2001). Yamamura Lassalee (2022) discovered that mixed embeddedness is still the most common way to understand the business practices of migrant entrepreneurs. The author emphasizes that migrant entrepreneurs' practices are embedded both in host-country institutions and their transnational networks to survive and thrive. Mignenan (2024) explained that strategies like cost minimization techniques, modifying products and services, and fostering community-based resilience. Mignenan also found that one key strategy is digital adaptation, where businesses pivoted to online platforms and market to sustain customer engagement and sales. Filipino migrant entrepreneurs are proactive in utilizing digital tools for marketing, and social media platforms that help entrepreneurs to survive and thrive in a competitive environment where they enhance awareness, engagement, and sales (Cayatoc et al., 2022; Mia et al., 2024; Santos et al., 2024). Likewise, Cayatoc et al. (2022) highlighted that Filipino migrant entrepreneurs transitioned from traditional storefronts to social media marketing, which shows how adapting to digital marketing tools helps entrepreneurs survive and thrive in a competitive setting.

Ho₃. Challenges faced by Filipino migrant entrepreneurs have no significant effect on their operational success.

Recent studies emphasized challenges faced by Filipino migrants and their impact on operational success. Filipino migrant entrepreneurs face several challenges, such as limited access to capital, regulatory issues, support network, local culture, competition, and lack of entrepreneurial knowledge (Zagala,

2023; MarcaliÉas, 2023; Polychronopoulos & Nguyen-Duc, 2024; Nirverba et al., 2024). Zaheer (1995) determined that foreign companies experience additional costs and disadvantages when operating in a host country compared to local companies. The author also underscored that these are not due to poor management but because the entrepreneur is foreign. Lee (1966) explained that Pull factors of migrants are things that influence people to their destinations, such as job opportunities, better education, and political freedom, while Push factors are adverse conditions why people leave their origin, like poverty, poor services, and unemployment.

METHODS

The study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-method research design, combining quantitative and qualitative methods to provide a deeper explanation and interpretation of the results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The design analyzes the relationship between entrepreneurial aspiration, business practice, challenges they faced, and operational success among Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand. A cross-sectional study design was also employed, which collects data at a single point in time to examine the relationships among variables without manipulations of the study environment (Setia, 2016). The quantitative method was employed to collect measurable data from a larger sample of Filipino migrant entrepreneurs through a structured survey questionnaire distributed online via Microsoft Forms, Facebook groups, LinkedIn, and the business networks of Filipino migrant entrepreneurs. Further, qualitative data is collected through personal interviews, providing a deeper context to understand the quantitative findings. The mixed methods approach provided a robust interpretation of the data, trends, behavior, and narrative explanations, mostly to enhance the validity of the study about Filipino migrant entrepreneurs operating in Thailand.

The research used a non-probability sampling design to reach specific populations that align

with the research objectives. The design was appropriate since the target population was hard to reach due to its niche or geographic location. The research employed a combination of purposive sampling, which involved selecting respondents who met the research criteria – Filipino nationals currently engaged in business operating in Thailand, whether registered or informal (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). Also, with snowball sampling, respondents were asked to refer other Filipino entrepreneurs from their professional and personal networks (Goodman, 2011). The purposive and snowball sampling strengthened the accessibility of relevant respondents while having diverse business types, sizes, and lengths of business operations.

The study purposively selected 100 Filipino migrant entrepreneurs, Thai-Filipino partnerships, managers, investors, and operators of small-scale or community-based enterprises in Thailand who currently own and manage business entities, thereby ensuring sufficient statistical power for inferential analysis. The qualitative phase involved 8 respondents, based on their experience, in-depth knowledge, and leadership roles in the Filipino migrant entrepreneur community.

The researcher employed two primary data collection methods. The quantitative data were gathered through a self-administered online survey questionnaire, disseminated either online via Microsoft Forms, Facebook groups, LinkedIn, and business networks of Filipino entrepreneurs. The qualitative data was collected through interviews, either face-to-face or via social media platforms like Line ID, Zoom, or Google Meet. The interviews were recorded with the consent of the respondent and transcribed for analysis to provide a deeper context for understanding the quantitative findings. The method of the study was flexible and ensured consistency in any procedure while allowing for exploration of new insights that arise during the collection of data.

The researcher commenced with purposive sampling, where the respondents were

identified based on predetermined populations. Through the social media platform, personal Facebook messages, sending an email, posting on Facebook groups, and sending or asking for support from the Filipino community in different parts of Thailand, the researcher reached out to the potential respondents to send a survey questionnaire. Further, once initial participants were recruited, the snowball sampling was employed next by asking these participants to refer other eligible Filipino entrepreneurs to the community and networks. The method or procedure that had been done was very effective, particularly in migrant or immigrant research where the respondents were relatively small in numbers, though interconnected. Then, a qualitative method was administered to potential respondents who answered the survey questionnaire and confirmed a scheduled interview. The study adhered to ethical considerations in data collection and analysis. The participants were given an informed consent document that explained the purpose and the objectives of the study, their contributions, the extent of the quantitative and qualitative questionnaires, and the ethics of the approved research study. They were also informed that the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants were strictly maintained by assigning codes or pseudonyms. Participants were volunteers, and respondents could decline or discontinue their involvement. Ethical procedures were observed to ensure the protection and dignity of all participants throughout the research process.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows that the majority of the respondents were women (50%), primarily aged 36-45 years old (43%). The level of their education was a bachelor's degree (94%), indicating a highly educated group of entrepreneurs. Civil status shows that 57% were married, while 32% were single. It also shows that 63% were living in Thailand for seven years or more, which indicates long-term residence and adaptation to the host country. Most of the respondents were services-related enterprises (43%), followed by retail businesses

(34%). Their businesses had been running for four to six years (35%), suggesting a level of maturity and stability in their journey. Further, nearly half (48%) described their enterprises as small-scale businesses, while 2% operated as sole proprietorships and 25% as partners. This reflects a predominance of independently managed small enterprises among Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand.

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics

Demographic	Description	Frequency	%
Gender	Man	33	33.0
	Woman	50	50.0
	Non-Binary	12	12.0
	Prefer not to say	5	5.0
Age	26 - 35	25	25.0
	36 - 45	43	43.0
	46 - 55	23	23.0
	>55	9	9.0
Highest Educational attainment	Bachelor's degree	94	94.0
	Master's degree	5	5.0
	Doctorate degree	1	1.0
Current civil status	Single	32	32.0
	Married	57	57.0
	In a domestic partnership / Live-in partner	6	6.0
	Separated	5	5.0
How long have you been living in Thailand	Less than 1 year	2	2.0
	1-3 years	13	13.0
	4-6 years	22	22.0
	7 years or more	63	63.0
Type of business are you operating in Thailand	Food and Beverages	10	10.0
	Restaurant	13	13.0
	Retail	34	31.0
	Services	43	43.0
How long have you been operating your business in Thailand	Less than 1 year	10	10.0
	1 - 3 years	27	27.0
	4-6 years	35	35.0
	7 years or more	28	28.0
Structure of your business	Partnership	25	25.0
	Small-scale business	48	48.0
	Sole proprietorship	27	27.0

Table 2 shows the summary of findings connecting the multi-layered theories, variables, degree, and analytical insights. The table provided an overview of the quantitative studies, indicating that entrepreneurial aspirations and business practices have a significant influence on operational success, while external challenges were present but not perceived as a critical obstacle. These conclusions were also supported by the results of the test of the hypothesis, resulting in the significant effect of the entrepreneurial

aspirational and business practices towards operational success, while challenges do not.

Table 2
Quantitative Result

Theories /Sources	Variables/Indicators	Mean	SD	Overall Interpretation	Analytical Insight
<i>The Theory of Planned Behavior (Ick Ajzen, 2019)</i>	Entrepreneurial Aspiration	4.01	0.83	Agree	Filipino migrant entrepreneurs have high aspirations toward business success (1) Highest factor, highlighting strong confidence in entrepreneurial capability per TPB. (2) Indicates strong entrepreneurial drive consistent with TPB's focus on intention. (3) Moderate alignment with future-oriented aspiration, supporting TPB's predictive role. (4) Lowest among indicators, suggesting mixed views on prioritizing independence over stability. Entrepreneurs consistently apply effective business management, particularly in financial handling and adaptation to the Thai market. (1) Highest rated, showing top tier among practices. (2) Indicates effective cultural and business adaptation as a key survival practice (3) Moderately practices, reflects limited formal marketing strategies, often replaced by digital or word of mouth (4) Lowest factor, suggest weak engagement in formal network, highlighting reliance on personal or co-ethnic ties instead. The overall rating indicates that entrepreneurs moderately achieve operational success by leveraging financial discipline, digital tools, and cultural adaptation. This supports RBV's argument that access to, and effective use of resources contribute to sustainability, though success remains uneven across respondents. The neutral overall ratings suggest that while challenges exist, such as legal restrictions, institutional barriers, and liability of foreignness, Filipino migrant entrepreneurs mitigate these through personal networks, family support, Thai-Filipino partnerships, and the ethnic Filipino community. These indicate that external barriers are present but not perceived as a critical obstacle.
	1. Self-efficacy	4.11			
	2. Motivation	4.09	0.83	Agree	
	3. Long-term goals	3.95	0.79	Agree	
	4. Financial independence	3.88	0.84	Agree	
<i>Mixed Embeddedness Theory by Kloosterman & Rath (2007)</i>	Business Practices	3.74	0.90	Agree	
	1. Financial management	4.32	0.61	Strongly Agree	
	2. Adaptation to the Thai market	4.13	0.69	Agree	
	3. Marketing practices	3.49	1.24	Agree	
	4. Networking	3.00	1.07	Neutral	
<i>Resource-Based View Theory by Jay Barney (1991)</i>	Operational Success	3.46	1.10	Agree	
<i>Push-Pull Theory of Migration by Everett S. Lee (1966) and Liability of Foreignness by Hymer (1960)</i>	Challenges Faced by Filipino Migrant Entrepreneurs	3.34	0.98	Neutral	

Table 3 shows the five major themes that emerged from the qualitative results. The themes underlined how Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand associate internal motivation, adaptive business practices, and social connectedness to achieve operational success despite regulatory and institutional limitations. The qualitative results were primarily driven by motivation, family-oriented aspiration, and adaptive business practices that help them to sustain their business in a foreign environment. Their strong desire for family stability, financial independence, and legacy building underscores entrepreneurship not merely as a livelihood but as a life goal. This result was supported by Ajzen's (2019) Theory of Planned Behavior, where self-efficacy and intentions guide entrepreneurial action. The respondent also emphasized financial literacy, cost control, and the use of digital tools such as QR-code payment, online banking, and social media marketing. It demonstrates how internal competencies strengthen competitiveness. This result was supported by the Resource-Based

View (Barney, 1991). Moreover, entrepreneurs integrate Thai cultural norms, Buddhist values, and language into their operations while retaining Filipino authenticity. Kloosterman (2019) highlighted the mixed embeddedness theory, which explains the importance of cultural and structural adaptations for migrant success.

Table 3
Qualitative Themes

Theme	Theoretical Anchor	Conceptual Interpretation	Exemplar Quotation
1. Motivation and Long-term aspiration	Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 2019)	Filipino entrepreneurs are driven by family welfare, financial independence, and the desire to build a lasting livelihood. Their businesses represent both survival and legacy.	"This business was truly for the long-term support of our family and our children's education."
2. Financial Discipline and Digital Adaptation	Resource-Based View (Barney, 1991)	Success is sustained through financial literacy, careful record-keeping, cost control, and adoption of digital tools such as QR code payments and social media marketing.	"Knowing accounting and monitoring my finances helps me a lot ... I accept online bank transactions only."
3. Cultural Integration and Market Adaptability	Mixed Embeddedness Theory (Kloosterman, 2019)	Entrepreneurs respect Thai cultural norms, Buddhist values, and language while maintaining Filipino authenticity to reach both Thai and Filipino customers.	"We promote Buddhist practices in our business and daily lives and donate to the temple."
4. Community Networks and Partnerships	Entrepreneurial Ecosystem	Filipino associations, church groups, and Thai partners provide legitimacy, marketing links, and moral support, forming an informal ecosystem for migrants.	"Our organization helps us to process documents since they know the Thai regulations. We market our product to the Filipino community."
5. Resilience amid Legal and Institutional Constraints	Push-Pull Migration Theory/Liability of Foreignness	Despite the 51/49 ownership rule, limited government support, and exposure to scams, entrepreneurs persevere through trust-based partnerships and optimism.	"A Thai must hold 51%, that puts us at a disadvantage, but we keep going for our family."

The study also highlighted the importance of community networks, partnerships, and resilience in overcoming institutional and legal barriers. Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand rely on the Filipino community, church groups, and Thai partners for legal and operational support, forming an informal yet effective ecosystem that promotes collaborations and trust, reflecting the entrepreneurial ecosystem perspective. In the midst of challenges facing foreign-ownership restrictions, limited government support, and exposure to scams, they demonstrate strong resilience through optimism, family values, and adaptive coping mechanisms. This resonates with the Push-Pull Migration Theory and the Liability of Foreignness concept. Furthermore, these five themes strengthen the qualitative results that entrepreneurial aspirations and business practices significantly influence operational success, while challenges play an indirect role by nurturing creativity, perseverance, and innovation. Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand can be characterized as a process of adaptive resilience, sustained by

motivation, resourcefulness, cultural harmony, and community-based support.

Table 4
Test of Hypothesis and Relationships of Variables

Hypothesis	Spearman r	t-value	p-value	Decision	Conclusion
H1: Entrepreneurial aspiration has no significant effect on operational success	0.246	2.52	0.014	Reject Ho	Significant
H2: Business practices have no significant effect on operational success	0.607	7.57	0.000	Reject Ho	Significant
H3: Challenges faced by Filipino migrant entrepreneurs have no significant effect on their operational success	-0.037	-0.37	0.718	Fail to reject Ho	Not significant

Table 4 shows the resulting p-value of 0.014, which is less than 0.05, implying rejection of the null hypothesis. Specifically, this implies that entrepreneurial aspiration has a significant effect on their level of operational success. The R-value of 0.246 denotes that higher aspiration is related to higher operational success. Likewise, the p-value of 0.000 also implies a significant effect of business practices on their operational success. The r value of 0.607 denotes a positive relationship; better business practices are related to better operational success. On the other hand, the p-value of 0.718 implies failure to reject the null hypothesis. The challenges faced are not significantly affecting operational success. The hypothesis testing highlights that entrepreneurial aspirations and business practices significantly influence operational success. This was significantly connected to the Resources-Based View (RBV) Theory, which highlights the business resources and capabilities to strive and practice effectively in business, where they gain competitive advantages to sustain their business or achieve operational success.

The non-significant effect of challenges on operational success underscores that Filipino migrant entrepreneurs have developed strong adaptive mechanisms that mitigate the impact of external challenges. In addition, Mixed Embeddedness supported this result, where entrepreneurs rely on familial support, community networks, and Thai-Filipino partnerships, allowing them to navigate instructional and institutional barriers. These

support systems might reduce the negative impact of the challenges on business performance, explaining why Hypothesis 3 was not significant and statistically supported. The statistical results emphasize the importance of internal factors, such as the aspirations and business practices of Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand, and the external challenges to determining business outcomes.

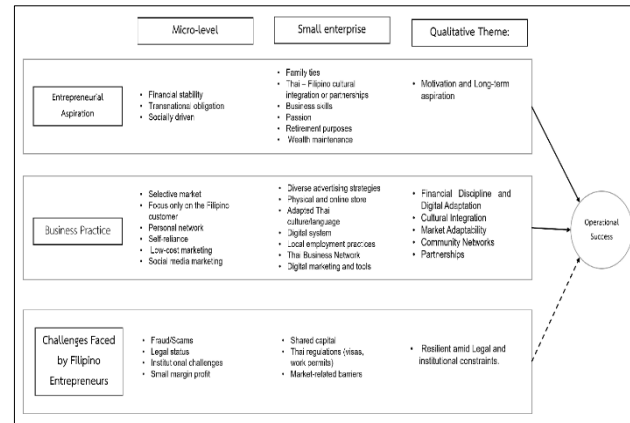


Figure 2
Final Research Model

Figure 2 of the final research model shows how entrepreneurial aspiration, business practices, and challenges faced by Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand interact to influence operational success. The model highlights both micro-level entrepreneurs and small enterprises, disclosing the distinct but interconnected drivers of business performance.

The framework is also supplemented with qualitative themes that emerged from interviews, which provide deeper insight into the lived experiences of Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand. Micro-level migrants are mainly motivated by financial stability, transnational obligation (sending remittances, supporting family), and socially driven purposes such as community services or survival-based entrepreneurship. They often operate within limited means or selective markets, reliance on Filipino customers, personal networks, and low-cost marketing such as Facebook promotions. Their survival hinges on self-reliance and grassroots strategies. They also

face higher vulnerability, such as fraud, scams, legal status issues, institutional barriers, and low profit margins. These highlight the liability of foreignness and the precariousness of informal operations. Small enterprises, on the other hand, are shaped by family ties, Filipino-Thai cultural integration, business skills, and longer-term goals such as retirement and wealth maintenance. They exhibit more diverse and professional practices such as multiple advertising strategies, physical and online stores, integration of Thai language and culture, and a broader digital marketing and employment system. They also engage with the Thai business network, reflecting stronger embeddedness in the host economy. Small enterprises face challenges of shared capital, work permits, Thai regulations, and broader market barriers, suggesting that even with more resources, formalization brings its own set of restrictions. Moreover, across both groups, aspirations are anchored in motivation and long-term goals supported by Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behavior, where intentions strongly influence business actions. In addition, business practices revolve around financial discipline, digital adaptations, cultural integrations, and partnerships. This strengthens the Resources-Based View (RBV), where capabilities act as competitive advantages. They both show resiliency amid these challenges, finding ways to adapt, negotiate legally, and use networks to sustain the business operations.

The final research model focused on operational success, which is defined not just by financial outcomes but also by sustainability, adaptability, resourcefulness, and cultural integrations. Entrepreneurial aspirations provide the vision and motivation that drive individuals to pursue and maintain their businesses, while business practices equip them with the necessary tools and strategies to succeed effectively. Concurrently, challenges which is external and often restrictive became a catalyst that shapes resilience and adaptive capacity. The dotted arrow from challenges to operational success underlines that constraints do not directly determine success, but rather it

is the entrepreneur's ability to adjust, innovate, and persevere that reveals that aspiration and practices significantly influence operational success, whereas challenges did not exert a direct effect.

Conclusion and Recommendation. The study revealed that entrepreneurial aspirations and business practices significantly influence operational success, while challenges do not affect operational success, meaning higher aspirations and business practices are key drivers of operational success, while challenges are not. The study also identified varying interpretations, particularly between micro entrepreneurs and small enterprises. Micro entrepreneurs were largely influenced by achieving financial stability, transnational obligations, and socially driven to do business. They remain selective in marketing their business, focusing only on the ethnic Filipino community as their personal network. They were pushed into migrations due to limited career growth and peer-influenced, and pulled for better opportunities and cultural influences, which led them to start informal entrepreneurship. They were strongly tied to self-reliance, cost-saving, and social media marketing utilizing digital channels, which gives them consistency to sustain their market and strong confidence to do business while facing challenges such as fraud/scams, legal status, and institutional challenges. Their operational success was measured by survival, small profit margins, and serving the Filipino community rather than large-scale growth. Further, small enterprises were mostly driven by family ties, Thai-Filipino cultural integration, improving entrepreneurial skills, passion, retirement purposes, wealth maintenance, Thai partnerships, and organizational support. They market through diverse advertising strategies, combining physical stores and online platforms while adapting to the Thai culture, language, digital systems, local marketplace, and employment practices. They were also pulled by opportunities by Thai spouses, Thai business connections, and a long-running family business as their networks. They overcame institutional barriers and expanded to a larger

market, which gives them a competitive advantage; however, challenges among them, such as shared capital, Thai regulations (visas, work permits), and market-related barriers, limit their sustainability. They were strongly tied to Thai family ties, cultural integrations, digital marketing and tools, and Thai partnerships, which enable them to maintain the sustainability of their business. These results show that operational success varies by scale, legal position, and mixed networks. In addition, their resilience is deep-rooted in adaptability, financial discipline, and resourcefulness, emphasizing their strategies to navigate and thrive in the Thai market. The study also provided recommendations to mitigate the challenges faced by Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand in order to strengthen their access to finance, engage in cross-cultural networks, expand their market, leverage human capital, and implement inclusive policies to enhance their competitiveness and cultural integration to pursue sustainability.

The study recommends a proposed action plan matrix to mitigate challenges faced by Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand. This is to strengthen financial access through microfinance, cooperative models, and Filipino associations, while encouraging policy reforms that grant special permissions and inclusive regulations for migrant entrepreneurs. Market expansion should be pursued through digital platforms, diaspora networks, and culturally adaptive strategies, supported by continuous human capital development in business skills, cultural competence, and compliance knowledge. Cultural integration and bilateral exchange programs are essential in reducing biases and fostering stronger Thai-Filipino relations, while expanding the network beyond ethnic enclaves into Thai and ASEAN business associations that will enhance legitimacy, mentorships, and broader opportunities. These measures mitigate the liability of foreignness and foster the sustainable success of Filipino migrant entrepreneurs in Thailand.

The study acknowledges that it has varied limitations that form the basis for future research. The scope was confined to Filipino micro and small entrepreneurs in Thailand, which limits generalization; comparative studies across ASEAN countries or with other migrant groups could provide broader insights. The cross-sectional design captured practices at a single point in time, highlighting the need for longitudinal studies to trace entrepreneurial adaptation as businesses and policies evolve.

The focus on aspiration and practices excluded long-term outcomes, such as profitability, sustainability, and employment generations, which future quantitative models should address. Qualitative themes drawn from a limited sample, suggesting that expanded surveys and ethnographic case studies could strengthen validity. The study did not analyze how other Asian countries manage migrant entrepreneurs, and cross-country policy comparisons could identify best practices adaptable to the Thai context.

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