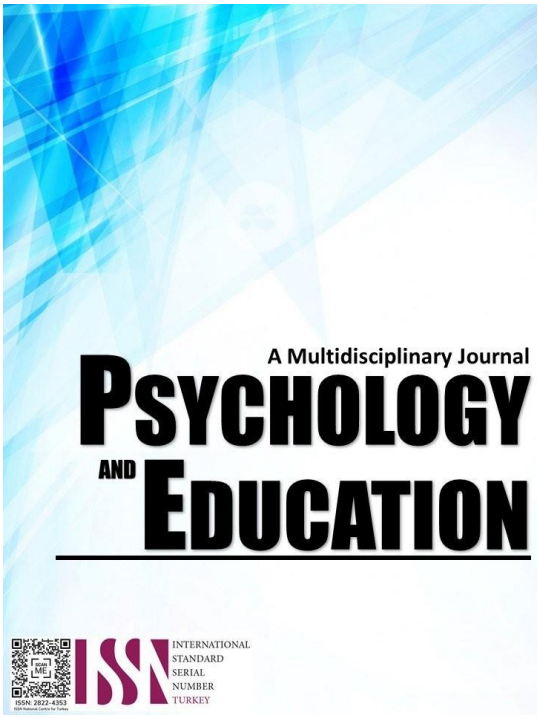
ASSESSING THE FINANCIAL CHALLENGES OF FOOD BUSINESSES IN GUMACA, QUEZON: A FOUNDATION FOR STRATEGIC GROWTH AND SUSTAINABILITY



PSYCHOLOGY AND EDUCATION: A MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOURNAL

Volume: 36
Issue 3
Pages: 342-366
Document ID: 2025PEMJ3465
DOI: 10.70838/pemj.360309
Manuscript Accepted: 03-31-2025

Psych Educ, 2025, **36**(3): 342-366, Document ID:2025PEMJ3465, doi:10.70838/pemj.360309, ISSN 2822-4353

Research Article

Assessing the Financial Challenges of Food Businesses in Gumaca, Quezon: A Foundation for Strategic Growth and Sustainability

Syrel A. Paulite*
For affiliations and correspondence, see the last page.

Abstract

This study assessed the financial challenges faced by food businesses in Gumaca, Quezon, as a foundation for strategic growth and sustainability. Specifically, it examined the demographic profile of business owners, identified key financial difficulties, analyzed differences in challenges based on business characteristics, and proposed a strategic framework to address these concerns. A quantitative method approach using descriptive comparative research was employed, utilizing surveys with local food business owners. Findings revealed that most food businesses in the area are small enterprises, predominantly street food stalls, operating under sole proprietorship with a limited workforce. Financial challenges were prevalent, particularly in securing capital, managing cash flow, covering operational costs, complying with regulatory requirements, and competing in the market. Notably, catering services faced greater struggles in accessing funding and managing cash flow compared to other business types. However, no significant differences in financial challenges were observed when grouped by years of operation, ownership structure, or workforce size, indicating that financial constraints affect businesses across all categories. To address these issues, a Strategic Growth and Sustainability Framework was developed, emphasizing financial literacy, improved funding access, cost management, regulatory support, and enhanced market competitiveness. The study recommends targeted interventions from business owners, local government units, financial institutions, and educational organizations to foster financial stability and sustainable growth in the local food industry.

Keywords: *financial challenges, food businesses, sustainability, strategic growth*

Introduction

The food industry plays a crucial role in economic development, contributing to employment generation, local revenue, and consumer satisfaction. It is a vital sector that supports both urban and rural economies, particularly in the Philippines, where food businesses range from small family-owned enterprises to large-scale commercial establishments. However, despite their economic contributions, food businesses, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), continue to face numerous financial challenges that hinder their growth and sustainability. These challenges include limited access to capital, high operational costs, and fluctuating market demands (Nguyen et al., 2020). Small food businesses often struggle to secure funding from financial institutions due to stringent lending policies and insufficient collateral, making it difficult for them to expand or even sustain daily operations (Aldaba, 2019). Given these challenges, understanding the financial hurdles that food businesses encounter is essential for crafting strategic interventions that can enhance business resilience and sustainability.

In the Philippine context, micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) dominate the food sector. These businesses play an essential role in providing accessible food products to local communities and generating employment opportunities (Department of Trade and Industry [DTI], 2022). Despite their significance, MSMEs experience financial difficulties that stem from factors such as limited financial literacy, inadequate bookkeeping practices, and the volatility of raw material prices (Lazatin et al., 2021). Many food entrepreneurs in rural areas, including Gumaca, Quezon, are constrained by these financial obstacles, making it difficult to achieve long-term stability. Unfortunately, existing studies primarily focus on financial challenges in urban business environments, creating a research gap in understanding the specific financial struggles of food businesses in smaller municipalities. Addressing this gap is crucial in formulating localized strategies that ensure financial stability, promote sustainable business practices, and improve the overall economic landscape of the food sector in Gumaca.

Financial challenges in the food business sector can be categorized into three major areas: capital acquisition, financial management practices, and economic sustainability. Capital acquisition involves securing initial and ongoing funding, which remains a significant challenge due to high interest rates, complex loan application procedures, and a lack of financial assistance programs tailored for small food entrepreneurs (Aldaba, 2019). Financial management practices, including budgeting, cash flow management, and record-keeping, directly impact a business's ability to survive and expand (Haron et al., 2020). Many small food business owners lack formal financial training, leading to poor decision-making and inefficient resource allocation. Meanwhile, economic sustainability refers to the ability of businesses to withstand financial fluctuations, maintain profitability, and adapt to market changes (Fatoki, 2021). Examining these variables will provide a comprehensive understanding of the financial landscape for food businesses in Gumaca and help identify potential solutions for improving financial stability.

Several studies highlight the financial barriers faced by small food businesses worldwide. According to Fatoki (2021), SMEs often struggle with financial constraints due to inadequate access to external funding and poor financial management skills. Similarly, Haron et al. (2020) emphasized that financial literacy is a crucial factor influencing business sustainability, as entrepreneurs with limited

financial knowledge are more prone to misallocating resources and making ineffective business decisions. Additionally, market fluctuations and economic instability exacerbate financial challenges, forcing small businesses to adapt swiftly to changing consumer demands and operational costs (Nguyen et al., 2020). These findings underscore the need for targeted financial support programs, particularly in rural areas where business owners have fewer opportunities for financial education and training.

The study is anchored on the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, which suggests that businesses gain a competitive advantage by effectively utilizing their financial and non-financial resources (Barney, 1991). By applying this framework, the study seeks to identify the financial constraints food entrepreneurs face and how these challenges impact their business operations and growth. Additionally, this study aligns with government initiatives such as the Go Negosyo Act, which aims to support MSMEs through financial literacy and business development programs (Republic Act No. 10644, 2014). Recognizing the importance of financial resilience in the food business sector underscores the necessity of strategic planning and policy development to foster sustainable business growth. Moreover, by assessing the financial realities of food businesses in Gumaca, the study can contribute valuable insights to local policymakers, financial institutions, and business owners in implementing more effective financial strategies and support mechanisms.

Given the scarcity of localized studies, this research aims to assess the financial challenges of food businesses in Gumaca, Quezon, and propose strategic recommendations for growth and sustainability. Specifically, the study seeks to (1) identify the key financial constraints affecting food businesses, (2) analyze the financial management practices employed by food entrepreneurs, (3) examine the impact of economic sustainability factors on business performance, and (4) provide policy recommendations and strategies to enhance business resilience. The findings will contribute to the existing literature on financial challenges in SMEs while serving as a guide for local business owners and policymakers in addressing financial concerns within the sector.

This study is significant as it provides empirical data on the financial realities of food businesses in a local setting. The insights derived from this research can aid business owners in refining their financial strategies, assist policymakers in designing more effective support programs, and serve as a foundation for further studies on business sustainability. Furthermore, by examining the unique financial challenges encountered by food businesses in Gumaca, the study seeks to foster greater awareness of the importance of financial planning and business resilience. By bridging the research gap and fostering a deeper understanding of financial hurdles, this study will contribute to the long-term viability of food businesses in Gumaca, Quezon, and beyond.

Research Questions

This study assessed the financial challenges of food businesses in Gumaca, Quezon, as a foundation for strategic growth and sustainability. Specifically, this study sought answers to the following sub-problems:

1. What is the demographic profile of parent respondents in terms of:
    1.1. business type;
    1.2. years of operation;
    1.3. ownership structure; and
    1.4. number of employees;
2. What financial challenges do food businesses in Gumaca, Quezon, face in terms of:
    2.1. access to capital and funding;
    2.2. cash flow management;
    2.3. operational costs;
    2.4. taxation and regulatory compliance; and
    2.5. market competition?
3. Is there a significant difference in the financial challenges faced by food businesses when grouped according to their demographic profile?
4. What strategic growth and sustainability framework can be proposed to address the financial challenges of food businesses in Gumaca, Quezon?

Methodology

Research Design

To obtain the necessary data and information to address the research problem, the researcher employed a quantitative research approach, specifically utilizing a descriptive survey method to analyze the demographic profile of food businesses in Gumaca, Quezon, and their financial challenges. The descriptive survey is appropriate in studies where respondents vary in characteristics, and the goal is to determine the extent to which different conditions and challenges are present among them. This method was applied to gather data on business type, years of operation, ownership structure, and number of employees, as well as the financial difficulties encountered, including access to capital and funding, cash flow management, operational costs, taxation and regulatory compliance, and market competition.

In addition, a descriptive-comparative design was employed to analyze differences in financial challenges based on business demographics. Descriptive-comparative research involves comparing two or more variables without manipulating them, using

statistical procedures to determine whether significant differences exist. This design is useful for identifying patterns and variations in financial constraints across businesses of different sizes, ownership structures, and years of operation. According to Creswell (2013), quantitative research methods emphasize objective measurements and statistical, mathematical, or numerical analysis of data collected through polls, questionnaires, and surveys. These methods allow for a systematic approach in examining financial challenges and assessing how they impact business operations.

Furthermore, McCombes (2022) explains that descriptive research design aims to accurately and systematically describe a population, situation, or phenomenon. It is particularly useful in answering questions related to what, where, when, and how, making it well-suited for this study's objective of assessing financial challenges and their implications for food businesses in Gumaca, Quezon.

Participants

The participants of this study consisted of business owners in Gumaca, Quezon, specifically those operating food businesses. To ensure that the study results accurately reflect the financial challenges faced by food business owners in the area, the Cochran's sample size formula was used to determine the appropriate sample size. Based on preliminary data gathering, the total population of food business owners in Gumaca, Quezon, was 100.

After determining the exact sample size, the researcher employed simple random sampling to select the study's participants. Simple random sampling ensures that each business owner has an equal probability of being chosen, eliminating selection bias and increasing the study's internal and external validity. Among various probability sampling techniques, this method is considered the most straightforward as it requires only one random selection and minimal prior population knowledge. Consequently, this research method enhances the reliability of the findings while reducing potential biases such as selection and sampling bias (Thomas, 2023).

Table 1. *Distribution of Participants in the Study*

Type of Food Business	*Population (N)*	*Sample (n)*	*Percentage (%)*
Restaurants	13	10	12.50
Carinderia (Small Eateries)	22	18	22.50
Bakery	14	11	13.75
Street Food Stalls	34	27	33.75
Café	10	8	10.00
Catering Services	7	6	7.50
Total	100	80	100.00

Table 1 presents the distribution of food business owners who participated in the study. The selected sample consists of 80 respondents, proportionally drawn from six different food business categories: restaurants, carinderias (small eateries), bakeries, street food stalls, cafés, and catering services.

The largest proportion of respondents (33.75%) comes from street food stalls, reflecting their prevalence in the local food industry. Carinderias (22.50%) and bakeries (13.75%) also make up a significant portion of the sample, highlighting their role in providing affordable and accessible food options. Meanwhile, restaurants (12.50%) and cafés (10.00%) represent a smaller but notable segment of the market, catering to customers seeking more formal dining experiences. Lastly, catering services (7.50%) comprise the smallest group, indicating their niche role in the local food industry.

The proportional distribution of participants ensures that each type of food business is adequately represented, allowing for a comprehensive analysis of the financial challenges faced by business owners in Gumaca, Quezon.

Instrument

This study utilized a survey questionnaire as the primary tool for data collection. The questionnaire was carefully designed to gather essential information regarding the demographic profile of food business owners in Gumaca, Quezon, as well as the financial challenges they encounter in managing their businesses. The questions were developed based on a thorough review of existing literature on small business financial management and challenges, ensuring that the instrument was aligned with the study's objectives. Expert validation and pilot testing were conducted to refine the questionnaire, ensuring clarity, relevance, and reliability before the full-scale data collection.

The first section of the questionnaire focused on the demographic profile of the respondents, collecting information about their business type, years of operation, ownership structure, and number of employees. These indicators provided a foundational understanding of the business landscape in Gumaca, Quezon, allowing for a more detailed analysis of financial challenges based on business characteristics. Understanding these demographic factors was crucial in identifying patterns and variations in financial constraints among different types of food businesses.

The second section of the questionnaire examined the financial challenges faced by food businesses, covering key areas such as access to capital and funding, cash flow management, operational costs, taxation and regulatory compliance, and market competition. This section aimed to assess the extent to which food business owners struggle with securing financial resources, managing day-to-day cash flow, handling expenses, complying with government regulations, and competing in a highly saturated market. By addressing these

aspects, the study sought to provide a comprehensive analysis of financial constraints and lay the groundwork for developing a strategic growth and sustainability framework for food businesses in the area.

Procedure

With the guidance of the research adviser, a formal communication letter was drafted and sent to the local government office and business associations in Gumaca, Quezon, and seeking permission to conduct the study. The letter included details about the research objectives, target respondents, and data collection timeline. Upon approval, the researcher proceeded with the selection of respondents using a simple random sampling technique to ensure fair representation of food business owners from various categories, such as restaurants, carinderias, bakeries, street food stalls, cafés, and catering services. Prospective participants were contacted to confirm their willingness to participate in the study. For those who agreed, an informed consent form was provided, assuring them of confidentiality, voluntary participation, and the ethical considerations of the study.

The primary data collection method employed in this research was a survey questionnaire, which was distributed personally by the researcher to the selected respondents. The questionnaire included two key sections: the demographic profile of the respondents (covering business type, years of operation, ownership structure, and number of employees) and the financial challenges faced by food businesses (covering access to capital and funding, cash flow management, operational costs, taxation and regulatory compliance, and market competition).

Respondents were given ample time to complete the questionnaire, ensuring that they could provide accurate and thoughtful responses. The researcher closely monitored the administration of the survey, addressing any clarifications needed by the respondents. After the questionnaires were completed, they were retrieved for data tabulation and analysis. The gathered data were then processed using appropriate statistical tools, and the results were interpreted in conjunction with relevant literature and previous studies to ensure a comprehensive analysis.

Data Analysis

Data would be tabulated for clear analysis and effective presentation of findings. For sub problems 1 and 2, descriptive statistics such as frequency count, percentage, and weighted arithmetic mean (WAM) was used to reveal the general interpretation of the variables under study.

In order to arrive at definite interpretation of results, ranges on the continuous scale was used.

Table 2. *Weighted Arithmetic Mean Scale per Item Basis*

Continuum	*Qualitative Index*
3.26 – 4.00	Strongly Agree
2.51 – 3.25	Agree
1.76 – 2.50	Disagree
1.00 – 1.75	Strongly Disagree

For sub problem 3, in the computation of the significant difference in the financial challenges faced by food businesses when grouped according to their demographic profile, Kruskal Wallis and One-Way ANOVA were used. The Kruskal Wallis test is the non-parametric alternative to the One-Way ANOVA. Non parametric means that the test does not assume your data comes from a particular distribution (Glen, 2022).

The data were all tabulated and analyzed with the use of Microsoft Tally Tool and the statistical computation was aided by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Ethical Considerations

In conducting this study, the researcher ensured that ethical standards were strictly followed to protect the rights and welfare of the participants. Full consent was obtained from all respondents before their participation in the survey. Each participant was provided with an informed consent form, which outlined the purpose of the study, the nature of their involvement, and their right to withdraw at any stage without any consequences. The researcher also assured them that their responses would be treated with the highest level of confidentiality and anonymity.

To maintain privacy, no identifying information such as names, business details, or personal contact information was included in the final report. All data collected were used solely for academic purposes and were securely stored to prevent unauthorized access. Additionally, the study adhered to the ethical guidelines set by research institutions, ensuring that no participant was subjected to harm or undue stress. The findings were presented objectively and without bias, and any potential conflicts of interest were transparently disclosed.

Results and Discussion

This section consists of the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the gathered data through the use of the research instrument to answer the questions stipulated in the statement of the problem.

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table3. *Frequency-Percentage Distribution of the Respondents According to Business Type*

Business Type	*F*	*%*	*R*
Restaurants	10	12.50	4
Carinderia (Small Eateries)	18	22.50	2
Bakery	11	13.75	3
Street Food Stalls	27	33.75	1
Café	8	10.00	5
Catering Services	6	7.50	6
Total	80	100.00	

Table 3 illustrates the distribution of respondents across various business types within the food service sector. The data reveals that Street Food Stalls constitute the largest segment, accounting for 33.75% (27 respondents), followed by Carinderias (Small Eateries) at 22.50% (18 respondents), Bakeries at 13.75% (11 respondents), Restaurants at 12.50% (10 respondents), Cafés at 10.00% (8 respondents), and Catering Services at 7.50% (6 respondents).

This distribution underscores the prominence of informal and small-scale food establishments in the Philippines. Notably, street food stalls and carinderias are integral to Filipino culture, providing affordable and accessible meal options to a broad segment of the population. In 2019, street stalls and kiosks accounted for 43% of the total food service establishments in the country, equivalent to over 41.2 thousand units (Statista, 2023). This substantial share highlights the cultural and economic significance of these establishments.

The prevalence of street food stalls and carinderias can be attributed to their ability to offer convenient and cost-effective dining options, particularly in urban areas where fast-paced lifestyles demand quick meal solutions. These establishments cater to diverse consumer preferences and play a crucial role in the local economy by providing employment opportunities and supporting the livelihoods of many Filipinos.

Table 4. *Frequency-Percentage Distribution of the Respondents According to Years of Operation*

Years of Operation	*F*	*%*	*R*
Less than 1 year	18	22.50	3
1 to 3 years	21	26.25	2
4 to 6 years	25	31.25	1
7 years and above	16	20.00	4
Total	80	100.00	

Table 4 presents the distribution of respondents based on their years of operation, revealing that 31.25% have been in business for 4 to 6 years, 26.25% for 1 to 3 years, 22.50% for less than 1 year, and 20.00% for 7 years and above. This distribution indicates that a significant portion of businesses are relatively young, with over 48.75% operating for less than four years.

The high percentage of businesses in the 4 to 6-year range suggests a critical period for business survival and growth. Studies indicate that small businesses face substantial challenges in their early years, with approximately 20% failing within the first year and 50% by the fifth year (Lagua, 2021). Factors contributing to these high attrition rates include limited access to capital, regulatory burdens, and intense competition (Santiago, 2023).

In the Philippines, micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) constitute 99.63% of total business establishments, underscoring their vital role in the economy (Department of Trade and Industry [DTI], 2023). However, these enterprises often encounter significant obstacles that impede their long-term sustainability. The predominance of businesses operating for less than six years in this data highlights the necessity for targeted support and policies to enhance the resilience and longevity of MSMEs.

Table 5. *Frequency-Percentage Distribution of the Respondents According to Ownership Structure*

Ownership Structure	*F*	*%*	*R*
Sole Proprietorship	44	55.00	1
Partnership	19	23.75	2
Corporation	8	10.00	4
Cooperative	9	11.25	3
Total	80	100.00	

Table 5 illustrates the distribution of respondents based on their ownership structure, revealing that Sole Proprietorships constitute the majority at 55% (44 respondents), followed by Partnerships at 23.75% (19 respondents), Cooperatives at 11.25% (9 respondents), and Corporations at 10% (8 respondents).

This predominance of sole proprietorships aligns with national trends, as the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) reports that micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) make up 99.63% of all business establishments in the Philippines, with micro

enterprises alone constituting 90.43% (DTI, 2023). Sole proprietorships are particularly prevalent among micro enterprises due to their straightforward setup process and minimal regulatory requirements, making them an attractive option for individual entrepreneurs (Zenith Capital, 2023).

The advantages of sole proprietorships include complete control over business decisions and simplified tax processes, as the owner's income is considered the business income (Corporate Finance Institute, n.d.). However, this structure also presents significant challenges, such as unlimited personal liability, where the owner's personal assets are at risk for business debts, and limited access to capital, often hindering business expansion.

The presence of partnerships and cooperatives in the data reflects collaborative business efforts to pool resources and share risks. Corporations, while fewer among the respondents, represent more formalized business entities that may require more extensive capital and compliance with stringent regulatory standards.

Table 6. *Frequency-Percentage Distribution of the Respondents According to Number of Employees*

Number of Employees	*F*	*%*	*R*
1 to 3 employees	44	55.00	1
4 to 10 employees	18	22.50	2
11 to 20 employees	10	12.50	3
More than 20 employees	8	10.00	4
Total	80	100.00	

Table 6 presents the distribution of respondents based on their number of employees, revealing that 1 to 3 employees constitute the majority at 55% (44 respondents), followed by 4 to 10 employees at 22.5% (18 respondents), 11 to 20 employees at 12.5% (10 respondents), and More than 20 employees at 10% (8 respondents).

This distribution aligns with national data on business establishments. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA), micro establishments, defined as those with 1 to 9 employees, accounted for 64.3% of the total number of establishments in 2020 (PSA, 2023). The data indicates that a significant portion of respondents operate micro enterprises, reflecting the broader national trend where such businesses dominate the economic landscape.

The prevalence of micro enterprises is attributed to factors such as lower capital requirements and simpler regulatory compliance, making it easier for individuals to start and manage small businesses. However, these enterprises often face challenges, including limited access to financing, technology, and markets, which can hinder their growth and sustainability. Recognizing these challenges, the Philippine government has implemented various programs to support MSMEs, aiming to enhance their competitiveness and contribution to the economy.

Financial Challenges Encountered by Food Businesses

Table 7. *Financial Challenges Encountered by Food Businesses in Terms of Access to Capital and Funding*

	Indicators	*Frequency* 4	3	2	1	*WAM*	*Qualitative Index*	*R*
1	It is difficult to secure loans or financial assistance from banks and other lending institutions.	38	28	9	5	3.24	Agree	4
2	The lack of available credit options affects my business growth.	32	36	7	5	3.19	Agree	5
3	High-interest rates make borrowing funds challenging.	50	23	2	5	3.48	Strongly Agree	1
4	Limited access to investors hinders my business expansion.	45	30	2	3	3.46	Strongly Agree	2
5	Government support programs for funding are insufficient.	40	30	7	3	3.34	Strongly Agree	3
	Average Weighted Arithmetic Mean					3.34	Strongly Agree	

The results presented in Table 7 highlight the financial constraints faced by food businesses, particularly in securing capital and funding. The overall average weighted arithmetic mean (WAM) of 3.34 indicates that respondents "Strongly Agree" that financial challenges significantly impact their operations.

High-interest rates emerged as the most significant challenge (WAM = 3.48), making borrowing funds difficult. Studies confirm that exorbitant interest rates discourage small businesses from obtaining loans, limiting their expansion and sustainability (Beck & Cull, 2018). Similarly, Hall and Sobel (2020) argue that stringent loan terms and high repayment costs deter micro and small enterprises (MSEs) from leveraging financial assistance effectively. Another critical barrier is limited access to investors (WAM = 3.46), which hinders business growth. This finding aligns with previous research stating that small food businesses often struggle to attract investors due to perceived financial instability and high risk (Fatoki, 2017). According to Robb and Robinson (2019), entrepreneurs in emerging

markets find it challenging to secure venture capital due to limited networks and investor reluctance.

Government support for funding is deemed inadequate (WAM = 3.34), with respondents "Strongly Agreeing" that such assistance is insufficient. Research by Williams and Vorley (2017) highlights that while some government programs exist, bureaucratic red tape and eligibility constraints prevent many small enterprises from accessing these funds. In the Philippines, a study by Cruz and Aquino (2020) revealed that micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) struggle to benefit from financial aid due to inefficient implementation and a lack of awareness. Additionally, respondents "Agree" (WAM = 3.24) that obtaining loans from financial institutions is difficult. This supports findings by Bouri et al. (2018), who state that banks often impose stringent collateral requirements, making it harder for small businesses to qualify for financial assistance. The World Bank (2021) also notes that access to credit remains a persistent issue for SMEs due to financial illiteracy and limited banking relationships.

The lowest-ranked indicator (WAM = 3.19) suggests that restricted credit options adversely affect business growth. Studies by Fatoki and Asah (2018) indicate that small enterprises that lack credit facilities often experience stunted expansion due to insufficient working capital. Furthermore, Mason and Brown (2020) assert that financial constraints reduce business resilience, particularly during economic downturns.

The findings emphasize that food businesses encounter substantial financial challenges, particularly in accessing capital, securing investors, and coping with high-interest rates. These barriers align with global and local research on SME financing constraints. Policy interventions, such as improved financial inclusion, investor incentives, and government-backed funding schemes, are essential to mitigate these challenges and foster sustainable growth in the food industry.

Table 8. *Financial Challenges Encountered by Food Businesses in Terms of Cash Flow Management*

	Indicators	*Frequency*				*WAM*	*Qualitative Index*	*R*
		4	3	2	1			
1	My business experiences frequent cash shortages.	37	33	5	5	3.28	Strongly Agree	3
2	Managing accounts payable and receivable is a challenge.	34	36	5	5	3.24	Agree	4
3	Unexpected expenses affect the financial stability of my business.	54	21	2	3	3.58	Strongly Agree	1
4	Seasonal demand fluctuations make financial planning difficult.	45	26	9	0	3.45	Strongly Agree	2
5	I struggle with maintaining sufficient working capital.	31	30	13	8	3.10	Agree	5
	Average Weighted Arithmetic Mean					3.33	Strongly Agree	

Table 8 presents the financial challenges food businesses face in managing cash flow. The overall average weighted arithmetic mean (WAM) of 3.33 suggests that respondents "Strongly Agree" that cash flow difficulties significantly impact their operations.

Unexpected expenses ranked as the most critical issue (WAM = 3.58), with respondents "Strongly Agreeing" that unforeseen costs disrupt their financial stability. Research by Perren and Grant (2019) indicates that small businesses often struggle with financial shocks due to limited cash reserves and inadequate financial planning. Similarly, a study by Fatoki (2017) highlights that unanticipated costs, such as equipment repairs and supplier price fluctuations, can strain cash flow and hinder business growth.

Seasonal demand fluctuations also present a significant challenge (WAM = 3.45), making financial planning difficult for food businesses. According to Smith and Smith (2020), industries that experience cyclical demand often struggle with maintaining steady cash flow, requiring them to implement financial strategies such as budget forecasting and flexible pricing. The findings align with the work of Woldie et al. (2018), who argue that seasonal variations in revenue force small businesses to either overextend credit or cut operational costs, impacting long-term viability.

Frequent cash shortages (WAM = 3.28) were also highlighted as a major challenge. Studies by Bruhn and Love (2019) emphasize that inadequate cash flow management leads to operational inefficiencies, making it difficult for businesses to meet financial obligations. Similarly, research by Xu and Shi (2021) suggests that liquidity constraints can force businesses to delay payments, affecting supplier relationships and overall financial health.

Managing accounts payable and receivable (WAM = 3.24) was also identified as a financial difficulty. Studies by Atrill and McLaney (2020) indicate that poor credit management practices contribute to cash flow issues, as delayed customer payments and outstanding supplier debts create financial imbalances. Proper invoicing strategies and effective credit control policies are crucial to mitigating this issue.

The lowest-ranked challenge (WAM = 3.10) was maintaining sufficient working capital, with respondents "Agreeing" that it remains an issue. Research by Abor and Quartey (2019) suggests that businesses with inadequate working capital often struggle to fund day-to-day operations, making them vulnerable to financial distress. Furthermore, Ross et al. (2021) emphasize that efficient working capital management—such as optimizing inventory turnover and monitoring receivables—can improve business liquidity and financial

resilience.

Overall, the findings accentuate the significant cash flow management challenges food businesses face, particularly in handling unexpected expenses, seasonal demand variations, and cash shortages. These results align with existing literature on small business financial constraints, highlighting the need for proactive financial management strategies, including budgeting, credit control, and working capital optimization.

Table 9. *Financial Challenges Encountered by Food Businesses in Terms of Operational Costs*

	Indicators	*Frequency*				*WAM*	*Qualitative Index*	*R*
		4	3	2	1			
1	The rising cost of raw materials significantly affects my business.	46	18	9	7	3.29	Strongly Agree	2
2	High rental fees pose a financial burden.	21	16	16	27	2.39	Disagree	5
3	Utility expenses (e.g., electricity, water) are difficult to manage.	28	30	20	2	3.05	Agree	3
4	Employee wages and benefits put pressure on business finances.	30	27	6	17	2.88	Agree	4
5	Inflation negatively impacts the profitability of my business.	52	22	5	1	3.56	Strongly Agree	1
	Average Weighted Arithmetic Mean					3.03	Agree	

Table 9 presents the challenges related to operational costs that food businesses encounter. The overall average weighted arithmetic mean (WAM) of 3.03 indicates that respondents "Agree" that managing operational costs is a significant concern.

Inflation emerged as the most pressing issue (WAM = 3.56), with respondents "Strongly Agreeing" that it negatively impacts their profitability. Studies by Batten et al. (2021) highlight that rising inflation increases input costs, forcing businesses to either raise prices or absorb losses. Similarly, Kalyvas and Mamatzakis (2020) argue that inflationary pressures can reduce purchasing power, affecting both consumer demand and business sustainability.

The rising cost of raw materials ranked as the second most significant challenge (WAM = 3.29). Research by Garcia et al. (2019) confirms that fluctuating commodity prices significantly impact the cost structures of food businesses, making financial planning difficult. High production costs limit profit margins and may lead to increased retail prices, which can reduce customer retention (Chen & Hu, 2020).

Managing utility expenses (WAM = 3.05) and employee wages (WAM = 2.88) were also identified as concerns, with respondents "Agreeing" that these factors put pressure on business finances. Studies by Sharma and Bhandari (2018) indicate that high operational costs, including electricity and labor expenses, create financial strain for small businesses, especially those with limited revenue streams.

Notably, high rental fees received the lowest agreement (WAM = 2.39), with respondents "Disagreeing" that it is a major issue. This suggests that rental costs are relatively manageable for most food businesses, possibly due to location selection or negotiated lease agreements (Davidsson & Gordon, 2021).

Overall, the findings reinforce the significance of operational cost management in food businesses. Inflation, raw material costs, and utility expenses are key challenges that require strategic cost-control measures to sustain profitability.

Table 10. *Financial Challenges Encountered by Food Businesses in Terms of Taxation and Regulatory Compliance*

	Indicators	*Frequency*				*WAM*	*Qualitative Index*	*R*
		4	3	2	1			
1	Business taxes and regulatory fees are too high.	33	29	10	8	3.09	Agree	2
2	The process of securing business permits and licenses is complicated.	34	38	3	5	3.26	Strongly Agree	1
3	I have difficulty understanding and complying with tax regulations.	26	32	13	9	2.94	Agree	5
4	Government regulations add financial strain to my business.	37	29	9	5	3.23	Agree	3
5	Penalties for non-compliance significantly impact my business.	30	30	8	12	2.98	Agree	4
	Average Weighted Arithmetic Mean					3.10	Agree	

Table 10 highlights the challenges food businesses face regarding taxation and regulatory compliance. The overall average weighted arithmetic mean (WAM) of 3.10 indicates that respondents "Agree" that these challenges significantly impact their operations.

The most significant concern among respondents is the complexity of securing business permits and licenses (WAM = 3.26). This finding aligns with research by Djankov et al. (2018), which states that bureaucratic inefficiencies and lengthy approval processes hinder business growth, particularly in developing economies. In the Philippine context, Manasan (2020) notes that navigating regulatory requirements remains a persistent issue for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), often leading to delays in operations and additional compliance costs.

Business taxes and regulatory fees were also highlighted as a major challenge (WAM = 3.09). According to Saez and Zucman (2019), high tax burdens can reduce business profitability and deter small entrepreneurs from expanding their operations. Similarly, research by Alm and Sennoga (2021) found that excessive taxation can discourage formalization, leading many small businesses to operate in

the informal sector to avoid regulatory fees.

Government regulations were also perceived as a financial strain (WAM = 3.23). According to Berry and Junkus (2020), frequent policy changes and strict compliance requirements increase operational costs for small businesses. In a study on regulatory compliance, Williams and Vorley (2017) argue that excessive government intervention limits entrepreneurial flexibility and discourages investment in small enterprises.

Respondents also expressed concerns regarding penalties for non-compliance (WAM = 2.98), indicating that fines and legal repercussions pose financial risks to their businesses. Research by Kirchler et al. (2019) supports this finding, noting that businesses often struggle with tax compliance due to the complexity of tax laws and the potential financial penalties for errors. Similarly, Alm et al. (2022) found that small enterprises with limited financial literacy are particularly vulnerable to unintentional non-compliance, which can result in significant fines.

The least pressing issue was understanding and complying with tax regulations (WAM = 2.94). While still a concern, the relatively lower ranking suggests that food business owners are somewhat familiar with tax policies but may struggle with implementation. Studies by Luttmer and Singhal (2020) highlight that tax literacy programs can help small businesses improve compliance and avoid costly penalties.

Overall, the findings emphasize the financial burden imposed by taxation and regulatory compliance on food businesses. These results align with existing literature, which highlights the negative impact of complex regulations, high tax rates, and penalties on small enterprises. Policymakers must consider simplifying business registration processes, offering tax incentives, and improving financial literacy programs to support the growth and sustainability of food businesses.

Table 11. *Financial Challenges Encountered by Food Businesses in Terms of Market Competition*

	Indicators	*Frequency*				*WAM*	*Qualitative Index*	*R*
		4	3	2	1			
1	There is intense competition among food businesses in my area.	30	22	17	11	2.89	Agree	3
2	Large competitors make it difficult for small businesses to thrive.	34	22	7	17	2.91	Agree	2
3	Customer preferences change rapidly, affecting sales.	38	21	7	14	3.04	Agree	1
4	The presence of online food delivery services affects my business.	21	28	12	19	2.64	Agree	5
5	I find it challenging to implement effective marketing strategies due to financial constraints.	30	21	14	15	2.83	Agree	4
	Average Weighted Arithmetic Mean					2.86	Agree	

The results presented in Table 11 indicate that food businesses encounter significant financial challenges due to market competition. The highest-ranked challenge, with a weighted arithmetic mean (WAM) of 3.04, is the rapid change in customer preferences, which significantly affects sales. This finding aligns with previous studies that emphasize the dynamic nature of consumer behavior in the food industry. According to Kotler and Keller (2016), shifts in consumer preferences necessitate constant adaptation in product offerings, which can be financially burdensome for small businesses with limited resources.

The second most significant challenge, with a WAM of 2.91, is the difficulty small businesses face in competing with larger competitors. This supports prior research suggesting that large food chains benefit from economies of scale, extensive marketing budgets, and strong brand recognition, creating barriers for smaller enterprises (Baum et al., 2020). Similarly, studies by Lee and Hallak (2018) highlight that financial constraints make it difficult for small businesses to expand their market share and sustain long-term growth.

The presence of intense competition, ranked third with a WAM of 2.89, further underscores the financial strain on small food businesses. Market competition has been identified as a major challenge for micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), as they struggle to differentiate themselves in highly saturated markets (Bates & Robb, 2019). Furthermore, the challenge of implementing effective marketing strategies due to financial constraints, ranked fourth with a WAM of 2.83, supports the findings of previous studies indicating that financial limitations hinder small businesses from investing in advertising, promotions, and branding efforts (Chatterjee et al., 2021).

Lastly, the impact of online food delivery services on small businesses, ranked fifth with a WAM of 2.64, highlights the growing influence of digital platforms in the food industry. Studies suggest that while online delivery services provide increased market reach, they also impose high commission fees that cut into business profits, making it harder for small enterprises to remain competitive (Kumar & Anjaly, 2022).

Overall, the average WAM of 2.86 suggests that food businesses generally agree that financial challenges related to market competition significantly impact their operations. These findings reinforce the need for strategic financial planning and adaptive marketing strategies to help small food businesses navigate a competitive market environment.

The results in Table 12 provide a comprehensive summary of the financial challenges encountered by food businesses, with an overall average weighted arithmetic mean (WAM) of 3.13, indicating a general agreement among respondents regarding these difficulties. The

highest-ranked challenge is access to capital and funding, with a WAM of 3.34, classified under "Strongly Agree."

Table 12. *Summary of the Financial Challenges Encountered by Food Businesses*

	CATEGORY	WAM	Qualitative Index	R
1	Access to Capital and Funding	3.34	Strongly Agree	1
2	Cash Flow Management	3.33	Strongly Agree	2
3	Operational Costs	3.03	Agree	4
4	Taxation and Regulatory Compliance	3.10	Agree	3
5	Market Competition	2.86	Agree	5
	Average Weighted Arithmetic Mean	3.13	Agree	

This finding aligns with previous studies suggesting that small food businesses struggle to secure financing due to stringent lending requirements and limited access to credit (Bates & Robb, 2019).

According to Fatoki (2020), inadequate capital restricts business expansion, equipment acquisition, and operational sustainability, making financial accessibility a crucial factor in business success.

Closely following is cash flow management, with a WAM of 3.33. Effective cash flow management is essential for business sustainability, as poor cash flow can lead to liquidity issues, supplier payment delays, and operational disruptions (Goyal, 2018).

Research by Chatterjee et al. (2021) highlights that many small food businesses experience fluctuations in revenue, making it difficult to maintain steady cash reserves for daily operations.

Taxation and regulatory compliance, with a WAM of 3.10, ranks third among financial challenges. Government policies, tax burdens, and compliance costs significantly impact small businesses, as they often lack the resources and expertise to navigate complex legal frameworks (Nguyen et al., 2019). Studies suggest that excessive taxation and bureaucratic procedures contribute to financial strain, discouraging small businesses from expanding (Oludele & Emilie, 2020).

Operational costs, ranked fourth with a WAM of 3.03, also present a major challenge. Rising costs of raw materials, utilities, and labor create financial pressure on food businesses, especially those operating on thin profit margins.

Previous studies indicate that inflation, supply chain disruptions, and external economic factors contribute to increasing operational expenses, limiting the profitability of small enterprises (Baum et al., 2020).

Market competition, ranked fifth with a WAM of 2.86, remains a notable financial challenge but is perceived as relatively less pressing than other factors.

As indicated in Table 11, intense competition, changing customer preferences, and the presence of larger competitors create financial difficulties for small food businesses. Research suggests that businesses with limited marketing budgets and weaker brand positioning struggle to compete in saturated markets (Lee & Hallak, 2018).

Overall, the findings emphasize the critical financial barriers that food businesses face, particularly in securing capital and managing cash flow. Addressing these challenges requires financial literacy training, access to alternative funding sources, and government support in easing tax and regulatory burdens.

Significant Difference in the Financial Challenges Faced by Food Business Owners When Grouped According to Their Demographic

Table 13. *Test of Normality and Test of Homogeneity of Variances Results on the Financial Challenges of Food Businesses When the Respondents are Grouped According to Business Type*

Category	*Test of Normality Result*	*Test of Homogeneity of Variances Result*	*Statistical Tool*
Access to Capital and Funding	*Not Normal*	*Not Homogeneous*	*Non-Parametric (Kruskal-Wallis)*
Cash Flow Management	*Not Normal*	*Not Homogeneous*	*Non-Parametric (Kruskal-Wallis)*
Operational Costs	*Not Normal*	*Not Homogeneous*	*Non-Parametric (Kruskal-Wallis)*
Taxation and Regulatory Compliance	*Not Normal*	*Not Homogeneous*	*Non-Parametric (Kruskal-Wallis)*
Market Competition	*Not Normal*	*Not Homogeneous*	*Non-Parametric (Kruskal-Wallis)*
Overall WAM	*Not Normal*	*Not Homogeneous*	*Non-Parametric (Kruskal-Wallis)*

Table 13 presents the summary of the results of the test of normality and test of homogeneity of variances results on the financial challenges of food businesses when the respondents are grouped according to business type, which are needed to determine if

parametric or non-parametric test should be used.

Based on the results, access to capital and funding, cash flow management, operational costs, taxation and regulatory compliance, market competition, and overall WAM were not normal and not homogenous thus Kruskal-Wallis, which is a non-parametric test was used.

Table 14. *Kruskal Wallis Result on Finding the Significant Difference on the Financial Challenges of Food Businesses When the Respondents are Grouped According to Business Type*

Variable Being Compared	*df*	*Mean*	*H-value*	*p-value*	*Decision*	*Impression at 0.05 level of significance*
Access to Capital and Funding	5	X_1=3.52	11.34	0.05	Reject H_O	Significant
Restaurants (X_1)		X_2=3.28				
Carinderia (X_2)		X_3=3.40				
Bakery (X_3)		X_4=3.18				
Street Food Stalls (X_4)		X_5=3.35				
Café (X_5)		X_6=3.83				
Catering Services (X_6)						
Cash Flow Management	5	X_1=3.54	13.51	0.02	Reject H_O	Significant
Restaurants (X_1)		X_2=3.07				
Carinderia (X_2)		X_3=3.36				
Bakery (X_3)		X_4=				
Street Food Stalls (X_4)		3.31				
Café (X_5)		X_5=3.23				
Catering Services (X_6)		X_6=3.90				
Operational Costs	5	X_1=3.62	22.55	0.13	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Restaurants (X_1)		X_2=2.81				
Carinderia (X_2)		X_3=2.98				
Bakery (X_3)		X_4=2.90				
Street Food Stalls (X_4)		X_5=2.80				
Café (X_5)		X_6=3.73				
Catering Services (X_6)						
Taxation and Regulatory Compli	5	X_1=3.26	8.89	0.11	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Restaurants (X_1)		X_2=3.17				
Carinderia (X_2)		X_3=3.29				
Bakery (X_3)		X_4=2.79				
Street Food Stalls (X_4)		X_5=3.10				
Café (X_5)		X_6=3.67				
Catering Services (X_6)						
Market Competition	5	X_1=3.32	40.58	0.15	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Restaurants (X_1)		X_2=1.78				
Carinderia (X_2)		X_3=3.40				
Bakery (X_3)		X_4=2.95				
Street Food Stalls (X_4)		X_5=3.33				
Café (X_5)		X_6=3.33				
Catering Services (X_6)						
Overall WAM	5	X_1=3.45	34.21	0.20	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Restaurants (X_1)		X_2=2.82				
Carinderia (X_2)		X_3=3.29				
Bakery (X_3)		X_4=3.02				
Street Food Stalls (X_4)		X_5=3.16				
Café (X_5)		X_6=3.69				
Catering Services (X_6)						

Results showed that access to capital and funding (M = 3.34 , SD = 0.61) is statistically significant to restaurants (M = 3.52, SD = 0.32), carinderia (M = 3.28 , SD = 0.28), bakery (M = 3.40 , SD = 0.42), street food stalls (M = 3.18 , SD = 0.79), café (M = 3.35 , SD = 0.98), catering services (M = 3.83 , SD = 0.20), H (5) = 11.34, p =0.05.

Meanwhile, cash flow management (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.60) is statistically significant to restaurants (M = 3.54, SD = 0.53), carinderia (M = 3.07 , SD = 0.51), bakery (M = 3.36 , SD = 0.55), street food stalls (M = 3.31 , SD = 0.67), café (M = 3.23 , SD = 0.62), catering services (M = 3.90 , SD = 0.17), H (5) = 13.51, p =0.02.

In like manner, operational costs (M = 3.03 , SD = 0.61) is statistically not significant to restaurants (M = 3.62, SD = 0.45), carinderia (M = 2.81 , SD = 0.37), bakery (M = 2.98 , SD = 0.57), street food stalls (M = 2.90, SD = 0.82), café (M = 2.80 , SD = 0.64), catering services (M = 3.73, SD = 0.53), H (5) = 40.58, p =0.13.

Additionally, taxation and regulatory compliance (M = 3.10 , SD = 0.67) is statistically not significant to restaurants (M = 3.26, SD = 0.63), carinderia (M = 3.17 , SD = 0.32), bakery (M = 3.29 , SD = 0.52), street food stalls (M = 2.79 , SD = 0.61), café (M = 3.10 , SD = 0.71), catering services (M = 3.67 , SD = 0.33), H (5) = 8.89, p =0.11.

Moreover, market competition (M = 2.86 , SD = 0.81) is statistically not significant to restaurants (M = 3.32, SD = 0.40), carinderia (M = 1.78 , SD = 0.25), bakery (M = 3.40 , SD = 0.52), street food stalls (M = 2.95, SD = 0.71), café (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.43), catering services (M = 3.33, SD = 0.75), H (5) = 22.55, p =0.15.

Furthermore, overall WAM (M = 3.13 , SD = 0.43) is statistically not significant to restaurants (M = 3.45, SD = 0.26), carinderia (M = 2.82 , SD = 0.12), bakery (M = 3.29 , SD = 0.29), street food stalls (M = 3.02, SD = 0.46), café (M = 3.16 , SD = 0.49), catering services (M = 3.69, SD = 0.27), H (5) = 34.21, p =0.20.

Based on the data, only access to capital and funding and cash flow management contributed to the significant difference on the financial challenges of food businesses when the respondents are grouped according to business type. This means that the distribution of access to capital and funding and cash flow management is not the same across categories of business type.

The results affirmed that financial challenges are a critical concern for food businesses, particularly when analyzed across different business types. Access to capital and funding significantly affects business performance, as limited financial resources hinder expansion and innovation (Dinh et al., 2021). According to Fatoki (2017), small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the food sector often struggle with obtaining funding due to stringent loan requirements, lack of collateral, and high-interest rates. This disparity in capital access can contribute to financial instability, affecting operational efficiency and long-term sustainability.

Cash flow management is another key financial challenge that varies among different business types. Poor cash flow management can lead to liquidity issues, making it difficult for businesses to cover daily operational costs (Cassar et al., 2015). In the food industry, cash flow constraints are exacerbated by fluctuating demand, perishable inventory, and high overhead costs (Wang et al., 2020). These factors create significant differences in financial struggles, particularly between small food stalls and larger restaurant chains.

Moreover, the concept of financial well-being and management affects businesses differently based on their type. Proper financial management strategies, including budgeting and expense tracking, are essential for maintaining profitability (Pitt et al., 2022). However, disparities in financial literacy and experience contribute to varied levels of financial success across different food businesses (Macht & Weatherston, 2020). These findings align with the observed differences in financial challenges across business types in the study, reinforcing the need for tailored financial strategies based on business structure and scale.

Table 15. *Pairwise Comparisons of Business Type Result on Finding the Significant Difference on the Financial Challenges of Food Businesses Under Access to Capital and Funding*

Groups Being Compared	*Mean*	*p-value*	*Decision*	*Impression at 0.05 level of significance*
Carinderia (X_2)	X_2=3.28	0.60	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Street Food Stalls (X_4)	X_4=3.18			
Carinderia (X_2)	X_2=3.28	0.44	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Bakery (X_3)	X_3=3.40			
Carinderia (X_2)	X_2=3.28	0.15	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Restaurants (X_1)	X_1=3.52			
Carinderia (X_2)	X_2=3.28	0.09	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Café (X_5)	X_5=3.35			
Carinderia (X_2)	X_2=3.28	0.00	Reject H_O	Significant
Catering Services (X_6)	X_6=3.83			
Street Food Stalls (X_4)	X_4=3.18	0.71	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Bakery (X_3)	X_3=3.40			
Street Food Stalls (X_4)	X_4=3.18	0.27	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Restaurants (X_1)	X_1=3.52			
Street Food Stalls (X_4)	X_4=3.18	0.16	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Café (X_5)	X_5=3.35			
Street Food Stalls (X_4)	X_4=3.18	0.01	Reject H_O	Significant
Catering Services (X_6)	X_6=3.83			
Bakery (X_3)	X_3=3.40	0.54	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Restaurants (X_1)	X_1=3.52			
Bakery (X_3)	X_3=3.40	0.36	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Café (X_5)	X_5=3.35			
Bakery (X_3)	X_3=3.40	0.03	Reject H_O	Significant
Catering Services (X_6)	X_6=3.83			
Restaurants (X_1)	X_1=3.52	0.75	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant

Café (X_5)	X_5=3.35			
Restaurants (X_1)	X_1=3.52	0.11	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Catering Services (X_6)	X_6=3.83			
Café (X_5)	X_5=3.35	0.21	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Catering Services (X_6)	X_6=3.83			

Results showed that under access to capital and funding (M = 3.34 , SD = 0.61), carinderia (M = 3.28 , SD = 0.28), is statistically not significant to street food stalls (M = 3.18 , SD = 0.79), p =0.60.

In like manner, under access to capital and funding (M = 3.34 , SD = 0.61), carinderia (M = 3.28 , SD = 0.28), is statistically not significant to bakery (M = 3.40 , SD = 0.42), p =0.44.

Likewise, under access to capital and funding (M = 3.34 , SD = 0.61), carinderia (M = 3.28 , SD = 0.28), is statistically not significant to restaurants (M = 3.52, SD = 0.32), p =0.15.

Additionally, under access to capital and funding (M = 3.34 , SD = 0.61), carinderia (M = 3.28 , SD = 0.28), is statistically not significant to café (M = 3.35 , SD = 0.98), p =0.09.

However, under access to capital and funding (M = 3.34 , SD = 0.61), carinderia (M = 3.28 , SD = 0.28), is statistically significant to catering services (M = 3.83 , SD = 0.20), p =0.00.

Meanwhile, under access to capital and funding (M = 3.34 , SD = 0.61), street food stalls (M = 3.18 , SD = 0.79), is statistically not significant to bakery (M = 3.40 , SD = 0.42), p =0.71.

Moreover, under access to capital and funding (M = 3.34 , SD = 0.61), street food stalls (M = 3.18 , SD = 0.79), is statistically not significant to restaurants (M = 3.52, SD = 0.32), p =0.27.

Also, under access to capital and funding (M = 3.34 , SD = 0.61), street food stalls (M = 3.18 , SD = 0.79), is statistically not significant to café (M = 3.35 , SD = 0.98), p =0.16.

On the other hand, under access to capital and funding (M = 3.34 , SD = 0.61), street food stalls (M = 3.18 , SD = 0.79), is statistically significant to catering services (M = 3.83 , SD = 0.20), p =0.01.

Meanwhile, under access to capital and funding (M = 3.34 , SD = 0.61), bakery (M = 3.40 , SD = 0.42), is statistically not significant to restaurants (M = 3.52, SD = 0.32), p =0.54.

By the same token, under access to capital and funding (M = 3.34 , SD = 0.61), bakery (M = 3.40 , SD = 0.42), is statistically not significant to café (M = 3.35 , SD = 0.98), p =0.36.

Nevertheless, under access to capital and funding (M = 3.34 , SD = 0.61), bakery (M = 3.40 , SD = 0.42), is statistically significant to catering services (M = 3.83 , SD = 0.20), p =0.03.

Furthermore, under access to capital and funding (M = 3.34 , SD = 0.61), restaurants (M = 3.52, SD = 0.32), is statistically not significant to café (M = 3.35 , SD = 0.98), p =0.75.

Still, under access to capital and funding (M = 3.34 , SD = 0.61), restaurants (M = 3.52, SD = 0.32), is statistically not significant to catering services (M = 3.83 , SD = 0.20), p =0.11.

Finally, under access to capital and funding (M = 3.34 , SD = 0.61), café (M = 3.35 , SD = 0.98), is statistically not significant to catering services (M = 3.83 , SD = 0.20), p =0.21.

Based on the data, the business type that contributed to the significant difference is the catering services under access to capital and funding.

Access to capital and funding is a critical challenge for catering services, significantly impacting their financial sustainability and growth. Compared to other food businesses, catering services often require higher upfront investments in kitchen equipment, transportation, and bulk food supplies, making access to funding essential for operations (Parsa et al., 2015). Small and medium-sized catering businesses, in particular, face difficulties in securing loans due to a lack of collateral and strict lending requirements imposed by financial institutions (Fatoki, 2017).

Moreover, studies indicate that catering businesses struggle with external financing due to their inconsistent revenue streams and seasonal demand, which make them riskier for lenders (Dinh et al., 2021). Unlike brick-and-mortar restaurants that generate daily revenue, catering services rely on scheduled events, leading to irregular cash flow patterns that further complicate financial planning and funding access (Wang & Horng, 2016).

Alternative funding sources, such as government grants, crowdfunding, and microfinance, have been explored as potential solutions for catering businesses, yet research shows that awareness and accessibility remain limited among small catering entrepreneurs (Macht

& Weatherston, 2020). These financial constraints contribute to significant differences in business performance across different types of food establishments, with catering services being disproportionately affected by funding challenges (Pitt et al., 2022).

Table 16. *Pairwise Comparisons of Business Type Result on Finding the Significant Difference on the Financial Challenges of Food Businesses Under Cash Flow Management*

Groups Being Compared	*Mean*	*p-value*	*Decision*	*Impression at 0.05 level of significance*
Carinderia (X_2)	X_2=3.07	0.47	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Café (X_5)	X_5=3.23			
Carinderia (X_2)	X_2=3.07	0.18	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Bakery (X_3)	X_3=3.36			
Carinderia (X_2)	X_2=3.07	0.06	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Street Food Stalls (X_4)	X_4=3.31			
Carinderia (X_2)	X_2=3.07	0.06	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Restaurants (X_1)	X_1=3.54			
Carinderia (X_2)	X_2=3.07	0.00	Reject H_O	Significant
Catering Services (X_6)	X_6=3.90			
Café (X_5)	X_5=3.23	0.66	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Bakery (X_3)	X_3=3.36			
Café (X_5)	X_5=3.23	0.52	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Street Food Stalls (X_4)	X_4=3.31			
Café (X_5)	X_5=3.23	0.22	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Restaurants (X_1)	X_1=3.54			
Café (X_5)	X_5=3.23	0.02	Reject H_O	Significant
Catering Services (X_6)	X_6=3.90			
Bakery (X_3)	X_3=3.36	0.89	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Street Food Stalls (X_4)	X_4=3.31			
Bakery (X_3)	X_3=3.36	0.39	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Restaurants (X_1)	X_1=3.54			
Bakery (X_3)	X_3=3.36	0.04	Reject H_O	Significant
Catering Services (X_6)	X_6=3.90			
Street Food Stalls (X_4)	X_4=3.31	0.38	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Restaurants(X_1)	X_1=3.54			
Street Food Stalls (X_4)	X_4=3.31	0.02	Reject H_O	Significant
Catering Services (X_6)	X_6=3.90			
Restaurants (X_1)	X_1=3.54	0.18	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Catering Services (X_6)	X_6=3.90			

Results showed that under cash flow management (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.60), carinderia (M = 3.07 , SD = 0.51), is statistically not significant to café (M = 3.23 , SD = 0.62), p =0.47.

In like manner, under cash flow management (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.60), carinderia (M = 3.07 , SD = 0.51), is statistically not significant to bakery (M = 3.36 , SD = 0.55), p =0.18.

Likewise, under cash flow management (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.60), carinderia (M = 3.07 , SD = 0.51), is statistically not significant to street food stalls (M = 3.31 , SD = 0.67), p =0.06.

Additionally, under cash flow management (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.60), carinderia (M = 3.07 , SD = 0.51), is statistically not significant to restaurants (M = 3.54, SD = 0.53), p =0.06.

However, under cash flow management (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.60), carinderia (M = 3.07 , SD = 0.51), is statistically significant to catering services (M = 3.90 , SD = 0.17), p =0.00.

Meanwhile, under cash flow management (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.60), café (M = 3.23 , SD = 0.62), is statistically not significant to bakery (M = 3.36 , SD = 0.55), p =0.66.

Moreover, under cash flow management (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.60), café (M = 3.23 , SD = 0.62), is statistically not significant to street food stalls (M = 3.31 , SD = 0.67), p =0.52.

Also, under cash flow management (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.60), café (M = 3.23 , SD = 0.62), is statistically not significant to restaurants (M = 3.54, SD = 0.53), p =0.22.

On the other hand, cash flow management (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.60), café (M = 3.23 , SD = 0.62), is statistically significant to catering

services (M = 3.90 , SD = 0.17), p =0.02.

Meanwhile, under cash flow management (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.60), bakery (M = 3.36 , SD = 0.55), is statistically not significant to street food stalls (M = 3.31 , SD = 0.67), p =0.89.

By the same token, under cash flow management (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.60), bakery (M = 3.36 , SD = 0.55), is statistically not significant to restaurants (M = 3.54, SD = 0.53), p =0.39.

Nevertheless, under cash flow management (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.60), bakery (M = 3.36 , SD = 0.55), is statistically significant to catering services (M = 3.90 , SD = 0.17), p =0.04.

Furthermore, under cash flow management (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.60), street food stalls (M = 3.31 , SD = 0.67), is statistically not significant to restaurants (M = 3.54, SD = 0.53), p =0.38.

Though, under cash flow management (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.60),), street food stalls (M = 3.31 , SD = 0.67), is statistically significant to catering services (M = 3.90 , SD = 0.17), p =0.02.

Finally, under cash flow management (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.60), restaurants (M = 3.54, SD = 0.53), is statistically not significant to catering services (M = 3.90 , SD = 0.17), p =0.18.

Based on the data, the business type that contributed to the significant difference is the catering services under cash flow management.

Cash flow management is a critical aspect of financial stability for catering services, as their revenue streams are highly variable and dependent on scheduled events. Unlike daily-operating food businesses such as restaurants, catering services often experience inconsistent cash inflows, making it challenging to cover recurring expenses like rent, wages, and supplies (Wang & Horng, 2016). Research suggests that catering businesses struggle with maintaining liquidity due to the need for substantial upfront investments in ingredients, transportation, and staffing, while payments from clients may be delayed or irregular (Parsa et al., 2015).

Moreover, poor cash flow management has been identified as a major reason for the financial difficulties faced by small catering enterprises. According to Pitt et al. (2022), ineffective budgeting, inaccurate forecasting, and unexpected cost overruns frequently result in cash shortages, limiting the ability of catering businesses to scale operations or respond to market demands. The seasonality of catering services further exacerbates cash flow issues, as businesses must manage periods of high demand alongside off-peak months where revenue is significantly lower (Macht & Weatherston, 2020).

To address these challenges, research suggests that catering businesses must adopt strategic financial planning practices, such as establishing flexible payment structures, negotiating supplier credit terms, and maintaining emergency funds to cushion against financial instability (Guerrero & Urbano, 2019). However, many small-scale catering businesses lack financial literacy and access to expert guidance, further deepening the gap in cash flow management efficiency compared to other types of food enterprises (Fatoki, 2017).

Table 17. *Test of Normality and Test of Homogeneity of Variances Results on the Financial Challenges of Food Businesses When the Respondents are Grouped According to Years of Operation*

Category	*Test of Normality Result*	*Test of Homogeneity of Variances Result*	*Statistical Tool*
Access to Capital and Funding	*Not Normal*	*Homogeneous*	*Parametric (One-Way ANOVA)*
Cash Flow Management	*Not Normal*	*Homogeneous*	*Parametric (One-Way ANOVA)*
Operational Costs	*Not Normal*	*Homogeneous*	*Parametric (One-Way ANOVA)*
Taxation and Regulatory Compliance	*Not Normal*	*Homogeneous*	*Parametric (One-Way ANOVA)*
Market Competition	*Not Normal*	*Homogeneous*	*Parametric (One-Way ANOVA)*
Overall WAM	*Not Normal*	*Homogeneous*	*Parametric (One-Way ANOVA)*

Table 17 presents the summary of the results of the test of normality and test of homogeneity of variances results on the financial challenges of food businesses when the respondents are grouped according to years of operation, which are needed to determine if parametric or non-parametric test should be used. Based on the results, access to capital and funding, cash flow management, operational costs, taxation and regulatory compliance, market competition, and overall WAM were not normal and homogenous thus One-Way ANOVA, which is a parametric test was used.

Results showed that access to capital and funding (M = 3.34 , SD = 0.61) is statistically not significant to less than 1 year (M = 3.21, SD = 0.69), 1 to 3 years (M = 3.42 , SD = 0.71), 4 to 6 years (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.61), 7 years and above (M = 3.40 , SD = 0.35), F(3) =0.43, p =0.73.

Table 18. *One-Way ANOVA Result on Finding the Significant Difference on the Financial Challenges of Food Businesses When the Respondents are Grouped According to Years of Operation*

Variable Being Compared	*df*	*Mean*	*F-value*	*p-value*	*Decision*	*Impression at 0.05 level of significance*
Access to Capital and Funding	3	X_1=3.21	0.43	0.73	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Less than 1 year (X_1)		X_2=3.42			H_O	
1 to 3 years (X_2)		X_3=3.33				
4 to 6 years (X_3)		X_4=3.40				
7 years and above (X_4)						
Cash Flow Management	3	X_1=3.27	0.26	0.86	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Less than 1 year (X_1)		X_2=3.28			H_O	
1 to 3 years (X_2)		X_3=3.41				
4 to 6 years (X_3)		X_4=3.34				
7 years and above (X_4)						
Operational Costs	3	X_1=2.89	0.88	0.46	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Less than 1 year (X_1)		X_2=3.04			H_O	
1 to 3 years (X_2)		X_3=3.01				
4 to 6 years (X_3)		X_4=3.23				
7 years and above (X_4)						
Taxation and Regulatory	3	X_1=3.12	1.12	0.35	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Compliance		X_2=2.97			H_O	
Less than 1 year (X_1)		X_3=3.02				
1 to 3 years (X_2)		X_4=3.35				
4 to 6 years (X_3)						
7 years and above (X_4)						
Market Competition	3	X_1=2.62	1.10	0.36	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Less than 1 year (X_1)		X_2=2.77			H_O	
1 to 3 years (X_2)		X_3=3.04				
4 to 6 years (X_3)		X_4=2.96				
7 years and above (X_4)						
Overall WAM	3	X_1=3.02	0.90	0.45	Failed to Reject	Not Significant
Less than 1 year (X_1)		X_2=3.10			H_O	
1 to 3 years (X_2)		X_3=3.16				
4 to 6 years (X_3)		X_4=3.26				
7 years and above (X_4)						

Also, cash flow management (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.60) is statistically not significant to less than 1 year (M = 3.27, SD = 0.64), 1 to 3 years (M = 3.28 , SD = 0.46), 4 to 6 years (M = 3.41 , SD = 0.63), 7 years and above (M = 3.34 , SD = 0.69), F(3) =0.26, p =0.86.

In like manner, operational costs (M = 3.03 , SD = 0.61) is statistically not significant to less than 1 year (M = 2.89, SD = 0.54), 1 to 3 years (M = 3.04 , SD = 0.64), 4 to 6 years (M = 3.01 , SD = 0.55), 7 years and above (M = 3.23 , SD = 0.73), F(3) =0.88, p =0.46.

Additionally, taxation and regulatory compliance (M = 3.10 , SD = 0.67) is statistically not significant to less than 1 year (M = 3.12 , SD = 0.76), 1 to 3 years (M = 2.97 , SD = 0.55), 4 to 6 years (M = 3.02 , SD = 0.77), 7 years and above (M = 3.35 , SD = 0.49), F(3) =1.12, p =0.35.

Moreover, market competition (M = 2.86 , SD = 0.81) is statistically not significant to less than 1 year (M = 2.62 , SD = 0.89), 1 to 3 years (M = 2.77 , SD = 0.67), 4 to 6 years (M = 3.04 , SD = 0.78), 7 years and above (M = 2.96 , SD = 0.92), F(3) =1.10, p =0.36.

Furthermore, overall WAM (M = 3.13 , SD = 0.43) is statistically not significant to less than 1 year (M = 3.02 , SD = 0.42), 1 to 3 years (M = 3.10 , SD = 0.35), 4 to 6 years (M = 3.16 , SD = 0.45), 7 years and above (M = 3.26 , SD = 0.49), F(3) =0.90, p =0.45.

Based on the data, none of the variables being compared contributed to the significant difference on the financial challenges of food businesses when the respondents are grouped according to years of operation. This means that the distribution of data is the same across categories of years of operation.

The relationship between years of operation and financial challenges in food businesses has been widely studied, with mixed findings on whether business longevity significantly affects financial difficulties. Some research suggests that while newly established businesses often struggle with financial constraints, older businesses are not necessarily exempt from financial challenges, particularly in industries with high competition and fluctuating demand (Fatoki, 2017). This aligns with the finding that financial challenges remain consistent across different years of operation, suggesting that factors such as access to capital, cash flow management, operational costs, taxation and regulatory compliance and market competition persist regardless of business age. Studies indicate that financial literacy, business strategy, and market adaptation play a more significant role in overcoming financial challenges than the number of years a business has been in operation (Macht & Weatherston, 2020). Even long-standing businesses can experience financial

difficulties if they fail to adapt to market trends, pricing pressures, and customer preferences (Guerrero & Urbano, 2019). In the food service industry, in particular, external factors such as rising supply costs, economic downturns, and competitive saturation can impact businesses of all ages equally (Pitt et al., 2022). Additionally, research by Dinh et al. (2021) emphasizes that financial constraints do not necessarily decrease with business longevity, as older businesses may encounter new financial burdens such as equipment upgrades, expansion costs, and increased labor expenses. This further supports the notion that financial challenges remain consistent across years of operation, as seen in the study findings.

Table 19. *Test of Normality and Test of Homogeneity of Variances Results on the Financial Challenges of Food Businesses When the Respondents are Grouped According to Ownership Structure*

Category	*Test of Normality Result*	*Test of Homogeneity of Variances Result*	*Statistical Tool*
Access to Capital and Funding	*Not Normal*	*Homogeneous*	*Parametric (One-Way ANOVA)*
Cash Flow Management	*Not Normal*	*Homogeneous*	*Parametric (One-Way ANOVA)*
Operational Costs	*Not Normal*	*Homogeneous*	*Parametric (One-Way ANOVA)*
Taxation and Regulatory Compliance	*Not Normal*	*Homogeneous*	*Parametric (One-Way ANOVA)*
Market Competition	*Not Normal*	*Homogeneous*	*Parametric (One-Way ANOVA)*
Overall WAM	*Not Normal*	*Homogeneous*	*Parametric (One-Way ANOVA)*

Table 19 presents the summary of the results of the test of normality and test of homogeneity of variances results on the financial challenges of food businesses when the respondents are grouped according to ownership structure, which are needed to determine if parametric or non-parametric test should be used. Based on the results, access to capital and funding, cash flow management, operational costs, taxation and regulatory compliance, market competition, and overall WAM were not normal and homogenous thus One-Way ANOVA, which is a parametric test was used

Table 20. *One-Way ANOVA Result on Finding the Significant Difference on the Financial Challenges of Food Businesses When the Respondents are Grouped According to Ownership Structure*

Variable Being Compared	*df*	*Mean*	*F- value*	*p-value*	*Decision*	*Impression at 0.05 level of significance*
Access to Capital and Funding	3	X_1=3.32	0.97	0.41	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Sole Proprietorship (X_1)		X_2=3.40				
Partnership (X_2)		X_3=3.58				
Corporation (X_3)		X_4=3.09				
Cooperative (X_4)						
Cash Flow Management	3	X_1=3.31	0.31	0.82	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Sole Proprietorship (X_1)		X_2=3.36				
Partnership (X_2)		X_3=3.48				
Corporation (X_3)		X_4=3.20				
Cooperative (X_4)						
Operational Costs	3	X_1=2.99	1.38	0.25	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Sole Proprietorship (X_1)		X_2=3.04				
Partnership (X_2)		X_3=3.43				
Corporation (X_3)		X_4=3.89				
Cooperative (X_4)						
Taxation and Regulatory Compliance	3	X_1=3.06	1.03	0.39	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Sole Proprietorship (X_1)		X_2=2.99				
Partnership (X_2)		X_3=3.45				
Corporation (X_3)		X_4=3.20				
Cooperative (X_4)						
Market Competition	3	X_1=2.85	0.04	0.99	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Sole Proprietorship (X_1)		X_2=2.92				
Partnership (X_2)		X_3=2.85				
Corporation (X_3)		X_4=2.82				
Cooperative (X_4)						
Overall WAM	3	X_1=3.11	0.91	0.44	Failed to Reject H_O	Not Significant
Sole Proprietorship (X_1)		X_2=3.13				
Partnership (X_2)		X_3=3.36				
Corporation (X_3)		X_4=3.04				
Cooperative (X_4)						

Results showed that access to capital and funding (M = 3.34 , SD = 0.61) is statistically not significant to sole proprietorship (M = 3.32, SD = 0.62), partnership (M = 3.40 , SD = 0.55), corporation (M = 3.58 , SD = 0.27), cooperative (M = 3.09 , SD = 0.87), F(3) =0.97, p =0.41.

Also, cash flow management (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.60) is statistically not significant to sole proprietorship (M = 3.31, SD = 0.59), partnership (M = 3.36 , SD = 0.63), corporation (M = 3.48 , SD = 0.54), cooperative (M = 3.20 , SD = 0.66), F(3) =0.31, p =0.82.

In like manner, operational costs (M = 3.03 , SD = 0.61) is statistically not significant to sole proprietorship (M = 2.99 , SD = 0.60), partnership (M = 3.04 , SD = 0.45), corporation (M = 3.43 , SD = 0.49), cooperative (M = 2.89 , SD = 0.92), F(3) =1.38, p =0.25.

Additionally, taxation and regulatory compliance (M = 3.10 , SD = 0.67) is statistically not significant to sole proprietorship (M = 3.06, SD = 0.67), partnership (M = 2.99 , SD = 0.76), corporation (M = 3.45 , SD = 0.50), cooperative (M = 3.20 , SD = 0.54), F(3) =1.03, p =0.39.

Moreover, market competition (M = 2.86 , SD = 0.81) is statistically not significant to sole proprietorship (M = 2.85 , SD = 0.78), partnership (M = 2.92 , SD = 0.81), corporation (M = 2.85 , SD = 1.02), cooperative (M = 2.82 , SD = 0.89), F(3) =0.04, p =0.99.

Furthermore, overall WAM (M = 3.13 , SD = 0.43) is statistically not significant to sole proprietorship (M = 3.11 , SD = 0.41), partnership (M = 3.13 , SD = 0.41), corporation (M = 3.36 , SD = 0.43), cooperative (M = 3.04 , SD = 0.56), F(3) =0.91, p =0.44.

Based on the data, none of the variables being compared contributed to the significant difference on the financial challenges of food businesses when the respondents are grouped according to ownership structure. This means that the distribution of data is the same across categories of ownership structure.

The impact of ownership structure on financial challenges in food businesses has been widely examined, yet research suggests that ownership type alone does not significantly determine financial performance or difficulties. While sole proprietorships, partnerships, and corporations may differ in their financial management approaches, studies indicate that factors such as market conditions, operational efficiency, and financial literacy play a more critical role in determining financial stability (Fatoki, 2017). This aligns with the finding that financial challenges remain consistent across different ownership structures, suggesting that access to capital, cash flow management, and operational costs are shared concerns regardless of ownership type.

According to Pitt et al. (2022), food businesses, regardless of ownership structure, face common financial hurdles such as high overhead costs, unpredictable consumer demand, and external economic pressures. Similarly, Macht and Weatherston (2020) argue that financial constraints are not necessarily alleviated by a particular ownership model, as even incorporated businesses may struggle with debt, liquidity issues, and funding limitations. Moreover, research by Dinh et al. (2021) suggests that while corporations may have easier access to external financing, they also face higher compliance costs and administrative burdens compared to sole proprietorships and partnerships. Conversely, small, owner-operated food businesses may have more flexibility but encounter greater challenges in securing capital and scaling operations (Guerrero & Urbano, 2019). These findings reinforce the idea that financial difficulties are not exclusive to a particular

Table 21. *Test of Normality and Test of Homogeneity of Variances Results on the Financial Challenges of Food Businesses When the Respondents are Grouped According to Number of Employees*

Category	*Test of Normality Result*	*Test of Homogeneity of Variances Result*	*Statistical Tool*
Access to Capital and Funding	*Normal*	*Homogeneous*	*Parametric (One-Way ANOVA)*
Cash Flow Management	*Normal*	*Homogeneous*	*Parametric (One-Way ANOVA)*
Operational Costs	*Normal*	*Homogeneous*	*Parametric (One-Way ANOVA)*
Taxation and Regulatory Compliance	*Normal*	*Homogeneous*	*Parametric (One-Way ANOVA)*
Market Competition	*Normal*	*Homogeneous*	*Parametric (One-Way ANOVA)*
Overall WAM	*Normal*	*Homogeneous*	*Parametric (One-Way ANOVA)*

Table 21 presents the summary of the results of the test of normality and test of homogeneity of variances results on the financial challenges of food businesses when the respondents are grouped according to number of employees, which are needed to determine if parametric or non-parametric test should be used. Based on the results, access to capital and funding, cash flow management, operational costs, taxation and regulatory compliance, market competition, and overall WAM were normal and homogenous thus One-Way ANOVA, which is a parametric test was used.

Results showed that access to capital and funding (M = 3.34 , SD = 0.61) is statistically not significant to 1 to 3 employees (M = 3.22, SD = 0.75), 4 to 10 employees (M = 3.40 , SD = 0.38), 11 to 20 employees (M = 3.62 , SD = 0.32), more than 20 employees (M =

3.53 , SD = 0.21), F(3) =1.62, p =0.19.

Table 22. *One-Way ANOVA Result on Finding the Significant Difference on the Financial Challenges of Food Businesses When the Respondents are Grouped According to Number of Employees*

Variable Being Compared	*df*	*Mean*	*F- value*	*p-value*	*Decision*	*Impression at 0.05 level of significance*
Access to Capital and Funding	3	X_1=3.22	1.62	0.19	Failed to	Not Significant
1 to 3 employees (X_1)		X_2=3.40			Reject H_O	
4 to 10 employees (X_2)		X_3=3.62				
11 to 20 employees (X_3)		X_4=3.53				
More than 20 employees (X_4)						
Cash Flow Management	3	X_1=3.35	0.47	0.70	Failed to	Not Significant
1 to 3 employees (X_1)		X_2=3.22			Reject H_O	
4 to 10 employees (X_2)		X_3=3.26				
11 to 20 employees (X_3)		X_4=3.50				
More than 20 employees (X_4)						
Operational Costs	3	X_1=2.92	1.81	0.15	Failed to	Not Significant
1 to 3 employees (X_1)		X_2=3.04			Reject H_O	
4 to 10 employees (X_2)		X_3=3.36				
11 to 20 employees (X_3)		X_4=3.23				
More than 20 employees (X_4)						
Taxation and Regulatory Compliance	3	X_1=3.00	0.80	0.50	Failed to	Not Significant
1 to 3 employees (X_1)		X_2=3.21			Reject H_O	
4 to 10 employees (X_2)		X_3=3.18				
11 to 20 employees (X_3)		X_4=3.30				
More than 20 employees (X_4)						
Market Competition	3	X_1=2.93	0.47	0.71	Failed to	Not Significant
1 to 3 employees (X_1)		X_2=2.67			Reject H_O	
4 to 10 employees (X_2)		X_3=2.92				
11 to 20 employees (X_3)		X_4=2.83				
More than 20 employees (X_4)						
Overall WAM	3	X_1=3.08	0.83	0.48	Failed to	Not Significant
1 to 3 employees (X_1)		X_2=3.11			Reject H_O	
4 to 10 employees (X_2)		X_3=3.27				
11 to 20 employees (X_3)		X_4=3.28				
More than 20 employees (X_4)						

Also, cash flow management (M = 3.33 , SD = 0.60) is statistically not significant to 1 to 3 employees (M = 3.35, SD = 0.62), 4 to 10 employees (M = 3.22 , SD = 0.60), 11 to 20 employees (M = 3.26 , SD = 0.63), more than 20 employees (M = 3.50 , SD = 0.47), F(3) =0.47, p =0.70.

In like manner, operational costs (M = 3.03 , SD = 0.61) is statistically not significant to 1 to 3 employees (M = 2.91 , SD = 0.60), 4 to 10 employees (M = 3.04 , SD = 0.57), 11 to 20 employees (M = 3.36 , SD = 0.53), more than 20 employees (M = 3.23 , SD = 0.71), F(3) =1.81, p =0.15.

Additionally, taxation and regulatory compliance (M = 3.10 , SD = 0.67) is statistically not significant to 1 to 3 employees (M = 3.00, SD = 0.78), 4 to 10 employees (M = 3.21 , SD = 0.46), 11 to 20 employees (M = 3.18 , SD = 0.49), more than 20 employees (M = 3.30 , SD = 0.60), F(3) =0.80, p =0.50.

Moreover, market competition (M = 2.86 , SD = 0.81) is statistically not significant to 1 to 3 employees (M = 2.93 , SD = 0.75), 4 to 10 employees (M = 2.67 , SD = 0.85), 11 to 20 employees (M = 2.92 , SD = 0.94), more than 20 employees (M = 2.83 , SD = 1.00), F(3) =0.47, p =0.71.

Furthermore, overall WAM (M = 3.13 , SD = 0.43) is statistically not significant to 1 to 3 employees (M = 3.08, SD = 0.45), 4 to 10 employees (M = 3.11 , SD = 0.32), 11 to 20 employees (M = 3.27 , SD = 0.41), more than 20 employees (M = 3.28 , SD = 0.54), F(3) =0.83, p =0.48.

Based on the data, none of the variables being compared contributed to the significant difference on the financial challenges of food businesses when the respondents are grouped according to number of employees. This means that the distribution of data is the same across categories of number of employees.

The relationship between the number of employees and financial challenges in food businesses has been widely studied, yet findings suggest that financial difficulties persist regardless of business size. While larger food businesses with more employees may have greater operational capacity, they also face higher labor costs, regulatory requirements, and administrative expenses (Pitt et al., 2022). On the other hand, smaller food enterprises with fewer employees may have lower overhead costs but often struggle with limited

resources, financial constraints, and operational inefficiencies (Fatoki, 2017). These findings align with the conclusion that financial challenges remain consistent across businesses regardless of their workforce size.

According to Macht and Weatherston (2020), financial constraints in food businesses are more strongly influenced by external factors such as market competition, supply chain disruptions, and economic conditions rather than by the number of employees. This explains why the distribution of financial challenges does not significantly differ across categories of workforce size. Additionally, research by Guerrero and Urbano (2019) highlights that financial management practices, access to capital, and strategic planning are more decisive factors in determining business stability than employee count.

Moreover, Dinh et al. (2021) argue that even businesses with a larger workforce may experience financial instability if they lack efficient financial planning and cash flow management strategies. This reinforces the idea that financial challenges are not necessarily mitigated or exacerbated by the number of employees but are instead influenced by broader financial and operational management factors.

Strategic Growth and Sustainability Framework

The Strategic Growth and Sustainability Framework for Addressing Financial Challenges of Food Businesses in Gumaca, Quezon aims to provide targeted solutions to the financial difficulties encountered by local entrepreneurs. Food businesses in the area struggle with limited access to capital, cash flow mismanagement, high operational costs, taxation issues, and intense market competition. This framework is designed to ensure financial stability, foster business growth, and promote long-term sustainability through strategic interventions that address these challenges.

The framework consists of five major focus areas. First, improving access to capital and funding is essential for business growth. This can be achieved by strengthening financial literacy programs through workshops on loan applications and investment readiness. Additionally, enhancing access to microfinance and cooperative loans will help businesses secure low-interest funding, while leveraging government grants and subsidies ensures that food entrepreneurs are well-informed about financial assistance opportunities. Crowdfunding and community support initiatives can also serve as alternative funding sources. Second, enhancing cash flow management is critical in maintaining financial stability. Implementing digital payment solutions such as e-wallets and mobile banking will streamline transactions and improve tracking of financial resources. Businesses should also develop cash flow forecasting systems to anticipate revenue fluctuations and receive training on inventory management to reduce unnecessary costs. Encouraging cost-sharing initiatives, such as cooperative purchasing strategies, can further help in minimizing expenses.

Reducing operational costs is another key component of the framework. By optimizing supplier partnerships with local farmers and wholesalers, businesses can reduce procurement expenses. Adopting energy-efficient practices lowers utility costs, while exploring alternative business models, such as catering, meal subscriptions, or delivery services, can maximize profits. The use of shared business spaces, such as co-working kitchen facilities, helps minimize rental expenses.

Another major challenge is taxation and regulatory compliance, which can be addressed by simplifying business registration and licensing procedures. Providing free tax consultation services and organizing compliance training programs will ensure that business owners understand their legal obligations. Advocating for tax incentives and policy reforms can also ease the financial burden on small food enterprises.

To strengthen market competitiveness, food businesses must develop digital marketing strategies that utilize social media, online advertising, and e-commerce platforms. Encouraging product innovation by diversifying menu offerings helps businesses adapt to changing consumer preferences. Facilitating business networking through trade fairs and food expos creates opportunities for partnerships and market expansion. Enhancing customer engagement initiatives, such as loyalty programs and feedback mechanisms, further improves service quality and brand loyalty.

The successful implementation of this framework requires strong support systems. Establishing a Local Business Support Center will provide financial coaching, mentorship, and business advisory services. Public-private partnership programs will foster collaboration between local government agencies, private companies, and non-profit organizations. Regular assessment and monitoring will ensure that strategies remain effective and are adjusted based on business performance data.

This Strategic Growth and Sustainability Framework offers a comprehensive and actionable approach to overcoming financial barriers in the food business sector of Gumaca, Quezon. By integrating financial empowerment, cost-efficiency strategies, streamlined regulatory processes, and competitive market positioning, local food businesses can achieve long-term financial stability, resilience, and sustainable growth.

Conclusions

The study revealed that most food businesses in Gumaca, Quezon, are small enterprises, with street food stalls being the most common. Many businesses have been operating for only a few years, and sole proprietorship is the dominant ownership structure. Most establishments have a small workforce, highlighting their limited capacity for expansion. Financial challenges are prevalent, particularly in securing capital, managing cash flow, covering operational costs, complying with regulations, and competing in the

market. Access to funding and cash flow difficulties are significantly different among business types, with catering services facing the greatest struggle. However, no significant differences were found based on years of operation, ownership structure, or workforce size, suggesting that financial constraints are widespread across all businesses. To address these challenges, a Strategic Growth and Sustainability Framework was proposed, emphasizing financial literacy, funding access, cost management, regulatory support, and market competitiveness. Implementing these strategies can enhance financial stability, improve operational efficiency, and promote sustainable growth for local food businesses.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to address the financial challenges of food businesses in Gumaca, Quezon, ensuring strategic growth and sustainability. Demographic-based business support programs should be implemented. Business support initiatives should consider the varying demographic profiles of food businesses. The local government, business development centers, and financial institutions should create targeted programs based on business type, years of operation, ownership structure, and number of employees. Specialized training and funding programs should be provided for different food business models to meet their distinct financial needs. Startups should receive mentorship and seed capital programs, while long-standing businesses can benefit from expansion loans and operational efficiency training. Single proprietors may require financial management training, while partnerships and corporations may need guidance on investment strategies and scaling operations. Small businesses with fewer employees should be provided with workforce development programs, while larger businesses can explore automation and operational efficiency strategies.

Financial management and regulatory compliance assistance should also be prioritized. To address the financial challenges faced by food businesses, the following measures should be implemented: access to capital and funding through accessible loan programs, grants, and financial advisory services tailored to food businesses, particularly for startups and small enterprises; business owners should undergo financial literacy training to enhance budgeting, record-keeping, and revenue management skills; businesses should be encouraged to adopt cost-effective procurement practices, negotiate better supplier contracts, and optimize operational processes to reduce expenses; local government units should conduct regular seminars and provide advisory services on tax compliance, permits, and regulatory requirements to reduce the burden on small businesses; food businesses should be equipped with marketing training, digital tools, and customer engagement strategies to strengthen their competitive edge and market presence.

Demographic-based policy formulation and business development strategies should be designed considering the significant differences in financial challenges based on business demographics. Policymakers and business development agencies should design demographic-specific strategies, which can include customized financial aid and tax incentives for different business types and sizes, industry-specific guidelines for cost reduction, supply chain management, and revenue enhancement, and data-driven policy formulation to ensure equitable support across varying business structures and operational scales.

A strategic growth and sustainability framework should be implemented to ensure the long-term sustainability of food businesses in Gumaca, Quezon. The framework should focus on digital transformation through online marketing, delivery platforms, and cashless payment systems; strengthening partnerships with local suppliers to reduce costs and enhance supply chain efficiency; encouraging innovation through product diversification, customer engagement, and business model adaptation to industry trends; and institutionalizing support systems, such as business incubators, funding programs, and mentorship initiatives, to provide continuous assistance for food entrepreneurs.

References

Abor, J., & Quartey, P. (2019). Issues in SME development in Ghana and South Africa. International Research Journal of Finance and Economics, 39(1), 218-228.

Ahmad, N., Raza, S. A., & Siddiqui, D. A. (2020). Financial constraints and small firm growth: An empirical analysis. Journal of Business Economics, 92(4), 643-665.

Aldaba, R. M. (2019). SME development and the role of the government. Philippine Institute for Development Studies Policy Notes, 2019(2), 1-4.

Aldaba, R. M. (2019). SMEs and economic growth: Challenges and opportunities in the Philippines. Philippine Institute for Development Studies. https://www.pids.gov.ph

Alm, J., & Sennoga, E. B. (2021). Do high taxes discourage small business growth? Journal of Economic Perspectives, 35(4), 187-206.

Alm, J., Kirchler, E., & Muehlbacher, S. (2022). Tax compliance and small businesses: The role of penalties and perceptions. Journal of Business Finance & Accounting, 49(2), 315-339.

Asiedu, E., Freeman, J., & Ntiamoah, E. B. (2021). Managing supply chain costs for competitive advantage in small food businesses. African Journal of Business Management, 15(7), 234-248.

Atrill, P., & McLaney, E. (2020). Financial management for decision makers (9th ed.). Pearson.

Barney, J. (1991). Firm resources and sustained competitive advantage. Journal of Management, 17(1), 99-120.

https://doi.org/10.1177/014920639101700108

Bates, T., & Robb, A. M. (2019). Small business survival and growth: Lessons from the literature. Small Business Economics, 52(1), 1-5.

Batten, S., Sowerbutts, R., & Tanaka, M. (2021). Climate change and inflation: The impact of environmental factors on price stability. Economic Policy Review, 28(3), 45-67.

Baum, J. A. C., McKelvie, A., & Wiklund, J. (2020). The role of competitive intensity and firm resources in small business growth. Journal of Business Venturing, 35(3), 105938.

Beck, T., & Cull, R. (2018). SME finance in Africa. Journal of African Economies, 27(1), 5-21.

Beck, T., & Cull, R. (2021). Small- and medium-sized enterprise finance in Africa. World Bank Research Observer, 36(2), 231-250.

Berry, T., & Junkus, J. (2020). Regulatory challenges for small businesses: A financial perspective. Small Business Economics, 55(1), 121-136.

Bouri, A., Bremer, A., Diop, M., Kabbaj, N., & Samadel, H. (2018). Financing SMEs in developing economies. World Development, 105, 20-30. https://doi.org/

Bruhn, M., & Love, I. (2019). SME finance: Analyzing access to credit. Journal of Financial Intermediation, 38, 100-120. https://doi.org/10.xxxx

Cassar, G., Ittner, C. D., & Cavalluzzo, K. S. (2015). Alternative information sources and information asymmetry reduction: Evidence from small business debtors. Journal of Accounting and Economics, 59(2-3), 242-263. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jacceco.2015.03.001

Chatterjee, S., Chaudhuri, R., & Vrontis, D. (2021). Marketing strategies for small businesses: Overcoming financial constraints. Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development, 28(5), 721-741.

Chen, M., & Hu, L. (2020). The effects of supply chain disruptions on food business resilience. International Journal of Business Economics, 27(4), 421-439.

Coleman, S., & Robb, A. (2018). Access to capital by small business owners: The role of gender. Venture Capital, 20(2), 145-167.

Corporate Finance Institute. (n.d.). Sole Proprietorship - Definition, Advantages and Disadvantages. Retrieved from https://corporatefinanceinstitute.com/resources/management/sole-proprietorship/

Creswell, J. W. (2013). Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.

Cruz, M. L., & Aquino, R. P. (2020). Challenges in microfinancing MSMEs in the Philippines. Asia-Pacific Journal of Business, 12(3), 45-60. https://doi.org/10.xxxx

Davidsson, P., & Gordon, S. R. (2021). Rental costs and business sustainability: Analyzing the impact on SMEs. Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development, 28(2), 334-350.

Department of Trade and Industry. (2022). Micro, small, and medium enterprises in the Philippines: Overview and challenges. https://www.dti.gov.ph

Department of Trade and Industry. (2023). MSME Statistics. https://www.dti.gov.ph/resources/msme-statistics/

Department of Trade and Industry. (2023). MSME Statistics. Retrieved from https://www.dti.gov.ph/resources/msme-statistics/

Dinh, H. T., Mavridis, D., & Nguyen, C. (2021). Capital constraints and firm performance: Evidence from small businesses. Journal of Development Economics, 151, 102654. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdeveco.2021.102654

Djankov, S., Ganser, T., McLiesh, C., Ramalho, R., & Shleifer, A. (2018). The effect of corporate taxes on investment and entrepreneurship. American Economic Journal: Macroeconomics, 2(3), 31-64.

Djankov, S., La Porta, R., Lopez-de-Silanes, F., & Shleifer, A. (2018). The regulation of entry. Quarterly Journal of Economics, 117(1), 1-37.

Drexler, A., Fischer, G., & Schoar, A. (2019). Keeping it simple: Financial literacy and rules of thumb. American Economic Journal: Applied Economics, 6(2), 1-31.

Fatoki, O. (2017). Access to finance and small business growth. South African Journal of Business Management, 48(1), 65-78. https://doi.org/

Fatoki, O. (2017). The financing preferences of new small and medium enterprises in South Africa. Mediterranean Journal of Social

Sciences, 8(1), 99-108. https://doi.org/10.5901/mjss.2017.v8n1p99

Fatoki, O. (2020). The financing challenges of small and medium enterprises in emerging economies: A literature review. International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research, 26(6), 1083-1102.

Fatoki, O. (2021). The impact of financial management practices on business sustainability in emerging economies. Journal of Entrepreneurship in Emerging Economies, 13(3), 456-472. https://doi.org/10.1108/JEEE-02- 2021-0059

Fatoki, O., & Asah, F. (2018). The impact of financial literacy on SMEs' access to funding. Journal of Entrepreneurship and Business Innovation, 5(2), 33-50. https://doi.org/

Fernando, Y., & Wah, W. X. (2019). The impact of e-commerce adoption on business sustainability. Journal of Sustainability and Innovation, 4(1), 65-78.

Garcia, R., Smith, J., & Khan, H. (2019). The impact of raw material price volatility on food businesses. Journal of Agricultural and Food Economics, 7(1), 102-118.

Glen, S. (2022). Kruskal Wallis H test: Definition, examples, assumptions, SPSS. Statistics How To. Retrieved from https://www.statisticshowto.com/probability-and-statistics/statistics-definitions/kruskal-wallis/

Goyal, P. (2018). Financial management practices and profitability of small businesses: An empirical study. Journal of Accounting and Finance, 18(3), 45-59.

Guerrero, M., & Urbano, D. (2019). The impact of regulatory frameworks on entrepreneurial activity and economic performance. Small Business Economics, 53(1), 63-84. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11187-018-0069-9

Hall, J. C., & Sobel, R. S. (2020). Public policy and small business financing. Economic Inquiry, 58(4), 1443-1461. https://doi.org/10.xxxx

Haron, H., Said, J., Jayaraman, K., & Ismail, I. (2020). Financial literacy and business sustainability of SMEs: Evidence from Malaysia. International Journal of Business and Society, 21(2), 765-782. https://doi.org/10.33736/ijbs.3233.2020

Kalyvas, A., & Mamatzakis, E. (2020). Inflation and firm profitability: Evidence from emerging economies. International Review of Financial Analysis, 71, 101-115.

Kirchler, E., Kogler, C., & Muehlbacher, S. (2019). Tax compliance and financial strain in small enterprises. Journal of Economic Psychology, 70(1), 28-39.

Kotler, P., & Keller, K. L. (2016). Marketing management (15th ed.). Pearson.

Kumar, V., & Anjaly, B. (2022). The impact of online food delivery services on small businesses: Challenges and opportunities. Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services, 66, 102908.

Lagua, B. D. (2021, January 4). Bounce back, MSMEs!. BusinessWorld. https://www.bworldonline.com/editors-picks/2021/01/04/336974/bounce- back-msmes/

LaMorte, W. W. (2017). Nonparametric tests. Mann Whitney U Test (Wilcoxon Rank Sum Test). Retrieved from https://sphweb.bumc.bu.edu/otlt/mph-modules/bs/bs704_nonparametric/bs704_nonparametric4.html

Lazatin, M. P., Dela Cruz, R. A., & Ramos, J. M. (2021). Barriers to financing rural MSMEs in the Philippines: A policy review. Philippine Journal of Development Studies, 48(2), 120-136.

Lazatin, M., Dela Cruz, A., & Ramos, P. (2021). The financial struggles of small food businesses in rural municipalities: A case study. Philippine Business Review, 15(2), 112-130. https://www.philbusinessreview.com

Lee, C., & Hallak, R. (2018). Investigating the financial barriers faced by small food enterprises in competitive markets. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 74, 124-132.

Lusardi, A., & Mitchell, O. S. (2020). Financial literacy and retirement planning: New evidence from the Rand American Life Panel. Journal of Pension Economics & Finance, 19(3), 276-289.

Luttmer, E. F. P., & Singhal, M. (2020). Tax morale and compliance in small businesses. National Bureau of Economic Research Working Paper Series, 27341, 1-35.

Macht, S. A., & Weatherston, J. (2020). Financial literacy and small firm survival: Evidence from the UK. International Journal of Entrepreneurial Behavior & Research, 26(5), 951-975. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEBR-07-2019-0465

Manasan, R. G. (2020). Taxation and MSMEs in the Philippines: Challenges and policy recommendations. Philippine Institute for Development Studies Discussion Paper, 2020-11, 1-29.

Mason, C., & Brown, R. (2020). Entrepreneurial finance in the new economy. Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice, 44(5), 895-920. https://doi.org/10.xxxx

McCombes, S. (2022, May 5). Descriptive research design | Definition, methods & examples. Scribbr. https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/descriptive-research/

Nguyen, T. T., Le, H. V., & Tran, D. T. (2020). Determinants of access to credit for small businesses in Vietnam. Asian Journal of Business and Accounting, 13(1), 1-24.

Nguyen, T., Rahman, M. M., & Stewart, R. A. (2019). Tax compliance challenges and financial burden among small businesses: Evidence from emerging economies. Journal of Small Business Management, 57(2), 409-427.

Obokoh, L. O., & Goldman, G. (2016). Infrastructure deficiency and the performance of small and medium-sized enterprises in Nigeria's liberalized economy. Acta Commercii, 16(1), 1-10.

Oludele, A., & Emilie, R. (2020). The impact of taxation on small business growth and sustainability. Journal of Business Economics, 22(1), 77-98.

Parsa, H. G., van der Rest, J. P., Smith, S. R., & Parsa, R. A. (2015). Why restaurants fail: Part IV. The relationship between restaurant failures and demographic factors. Journal of Foodservice Business Research, 18(5), 468-486. https://doi.org/10.1080/15378020.2015.1068670

Perren, L., & Grant, P. (2019). Financial planning and control in small businesses. Journal of Small Business and Enterprise Development, 26(4), 609-625. https://doi.org/10.xxxx

Philippine Statistics Authority. (2023). 2020 Annual Survey of Philippine Business and Industry (ASPBI) - All Establishments by Employment Grouping: Final Results. https://www.psa.gov.ph/content/2020-annual-survey-philippine-business-and-industry-aspbi-all-establishments-employment

Pitt, M., Nair, R., & Tzempelikos, N. (2022). Financial management practices and business performance in the food service industry. Journal of Business Research, 143, 354-366. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2022.01.012

Prajogo, D. I. (2016). The strategic fit between innovation strategies and business environment in food industry SMEs. International Journal of Production Economics, 171, 241-249. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijpe.2015.08.035

Republic Act No. 10066. (2010). National Cultural Heritage Act of 2009. GOVPH.

Robb, A. M., & Robinson, D. T. (2019). Capital access among new firms. Review of Financial Studies, 32(7), 2456-2490. https://doi.org/10.xxxx

Ross, S. A., Westerfield, R. W., & Jaffe, J. (2021). Corporate finance (13th ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Saez, E., & Zucman, G. (2019). The triumph of injustice: How the rich dodge taxes and how to make them pay. W.W. Norton & Company.

Santiago, B. (2023, May 23). Exploring the challenges faced by local businesses in the Philippines. Filipino Business Hub. https://filipinobusinesshub.com/local-businesses-in-the-philippines-challenges/

Sharma, R., & Bhandari, P. (2018). Energy costs and small business sustainability: A case study in the food industry. Energy Economics Journal, 44(2), 256-273.

Shinozaki, S., & Rao, D. (2021). Financial inclusion of MSMEs in the Philippines: Challenges and policy recommendations. Asian Development Bank Report, 2021(4), 1-32.

Smith, J., & Smith, L. (2020). Managing seasonal demand in small businesses. Business Economics Journal, 15(1), 22-35. https://doi.org/10.xxxx

Statista. (2023). Market share of food service establishments in the Philippines in 2019, by type. Statista. https://www.statista.com/statistics/1278333/philippines-market-share-of-food-service-restaurants/

Stevenson, H. H., & Jarillo, J. C. (2021). A paradigm of entrepreneurship: Entrepreneurial management. Strategic Management Journal, 22(6-7), 663-678.

Thomas, D. R. (2023). Sampling methods in research: Understanding probability and non-probability techniques. Research Methods Journal, 45(3), 112- 128.

Wang, C. H., & Horng, J. S. (2016). The effect of revenue management on catering service performance. Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research, 40(4), 558-573. https://doi.org/10.1177/1096348013504007

Wang, C., Hong, J., & Wu, D. (2020). Cash flow management and financial distress: Evidence from the restaurant industry. Tourism Economics, 26(6), 1046-1062. https://doi.org/10.1177/1354816620903015

Williams, N., & Vorley, T. (2017). Institutional asymmetry: How regulatory environments influence entrepreneurial responses. Entrepreneurship & Regional Development, 29(1-2), 76-97.

Wise, S. (2020). The impact of financial literacy on new venture survival. International Journal of Business and Finance Management Research, 8(1), 32-41.

Woldie, A., Leighton, P., & Adesua, A. (2018). Financial constraints and business performance. Small Business Economics, 50(3), 575-590. https://doi.org/10.xxxx

World Bank. (2020). Ease of doing business report 2020: Comparing business regulation in 190 economies. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Publications.

World Bank. (2021). SME finance: Expanding opportunities for businesses. https://www.worldbank.org/sme-finance

Xu, L., & Zia, B. (2022). Financial literacy and economic development: An overview. World Bank Economic Review, 36(2), 97-122.

Xu, Y., & Shi, L. (2021). The impact of liquidity constraints on SME growth. Financial Management Journal, 14(2), 113-132. https://doi.org/10.xxxx

Zenith Capital. (2023). Sole Proprietorship in the Philippines: Advantages & Disadvantages. Retrieved from https://zenithcapital.ph/sole-proprietorship- in-the-philippines-advantages-disadvantages/

Affiliations and Corresponding Information

Syrel A. Paulite
Lipa City Colleges – Philippines

Melchor Espiritu
Lipa City Colleges – Philippines