

OFW Reintegration Program Beneficiaries Towards Economic Sustainability

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Abstract

This research assessed the Overseas Filipino Workers (OFW) reintegration program beneficiaries towards crafting an economic sustainability framework. It sought to profile the OFW reintegration program beneficiaries by age, sex, civil status, educational attainment, last job classification as an OFW, last country they worked in as an OFW, and the number of years spent as an OFW. Further, it pursued to determine to what extent OFWs' economic sustainability in terms of financial capacity, economic sustainability, and social mobility were impacted and influenced by the level of availment of reintegration programs in terms of program relevance, availability and ease of access of the program, and personal intention of OFWs to improve their economic status. Lastly, it aimed to provide recommendations on how to strengthen reintegration programs and craft a reintegration program economic sustainability framework. The results of the study could serve as baseline information and guide for the government and policymakers in looking at how effective reintegration programs are in improving economic status and sustainability of OFWs, and developing further and improving policies, programs, and services that would help OFWs and their families. Additionally, it would also present existing issues and concerns on the current policies based on the experiences of OFWs that could be appropriately addressed by concerned offices.

The study covered OFWs in the National Capital Region who availed of reintegration programs. This study used quantitative research method to examine the reintegration program beneficiaries and the effect of such reintegration program in their economic sustainability. A survey was conducted on a sample of OFWs who availed of the programs to look into the effect of reintegration programs to them, as well as their assessment, experiences, and recommendations for improvement of the program. A survey questionnaire was devised to gather the profile of the sample. Frequency and percentage distribution was used to see the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Multiple regression analysis was employed in determining whether economic sustainability in terms of financial capacity, economic capacity, and social mobility was affected by the level of availment of reintegration program of OFW beneficiaries.

Keywords: Reintegration Program; OFW; Economic Sustainability Framework; Financial Capacity; Social Mobility; Economic Capacity

1. Introduction

Establishing effective and working reintegration policies and programs to help migrant workers who have decided to return to their home country is very important. In fact, this is highlighted in international labour standards and conventions such as the International Labour Organization (ILO) Recommendation No. 86 - Migration for Employment Recommendation, ILO Convention No. 97 – Migration for Employment Convention, and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families, the ASEAN Declaration on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers, and the ASEAN Consensus on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Migrant Workers, to name a few (Wickramasekara, 2019).

However, despite the extensive standards, migrant workers remain in a situation wherein they are confronted with circuitous processes in accessing return and reintegration services. With the National Reintegration Center for OFWs in place, the study aims to evaluate how reintegration programs offered by the Philippine government affect its beneficiaries.

Overseas labor employment and migration are monitored and regulated by the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration and monitored by other concerned offices such as the Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, the Department of Foreign Affairs, Office of the Undersecretary for Migrant Workers Affairs, The Commission on Filipinos Overseas, and Philippine Overseas Labor Offices, among others. These offices are the ones absorbed by the new Department of Migrant workers and they will be working together to protect the rights and promote the welfare of Overseas Filipino Workers and their families through ethical recruitment, obtaining the best possible conditions of work for OFWs, providing timely and responsive services, ensuring OFW participation in policy formulation, and providing mechanisms for skills development and reintegration.

The study particularly covered OFWs who availed of reintegration programs of the Philippine government and their survey responses could serve as baseline information and guide for the afore-cited offices and policymakers in developing policies, programs, and services that would help OFWs and their families.

This study, which talks about return migration and reintegration, is anchored on the macro theories of migration. Two theories under this category explain how migrants decide to return to their country and reintegrate into society of origin. The first theory, the neo-classical theory depicts decision to migrate as based largely on wage differential in the country of destination and return of migrants to their home country is depicted as failure as it means that they were not able to derive the expected higher earnings in the new country (Thomas, 2008). The second theory, on the other hand, the new economics of labour migration theory sees migration as an approach to conquer financial difficulties in the home country (Stark & Stark, 1991). Based on this theory, migrants return to their country of origin when they have successfully achieved their target earnings, hence, considered a success rather than a failure unlike the neo-classical theory. Nisrane (2020) in his dissertation, cites how De Haas et al. (2015) assessed whether return of migrants to their home country is considered a failure based a large survey of Moroccan migrants across Europe or a success as they accomplished their main reason for migration, i.e., financial earnings. They concluded that there is no one theory that can fully explain return of migrants.

Hence, while various theories of migration exist and two macro theories of migration, the neo-classical theory of migration and the new economics of labour migration, are the most relevant theories to explain the scenario of return migration and reintegration, not one of them can fully explain decision of migrants to return and reintegrate back into their country of origin. The scope of this study being workers who were distressed in the country of destination and had to go back to the country may be explained by the neo-classical theory, as being a failure of migration as they did not achieve their targeted higher earnings, hence, were forced to come back. On the other hand, new economics of labour migration theory which considers return as a success could not be used to appropriately describe the case of the return migrant OFWs as their decision to return was not because they were successful in achieving their target earnings, but because they were forced to return due to unfavourable circumstances surrounding their migration. These show that combination of the two theories or maybe even more theories could explain the return of OFWs in the Philippines.

The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration is the primary agency in charge of developing and approving programs for the effective reintegration of OFW returnees. The National Reintegration Center for OFWs (NRCO), on the other hand, an agency under the supervision of OWWA, is the agency tasked to focus on designing reintegration policies and programs for returning OFWs.

The NRCO, through the regional offices, provides different kinds of reintegration assistance, such as job referral to Public Employment Services Offices to facilitate the OFW returnees' employment and reintegration back in the Philippines, rehiring of teachers and former OFWs who wish to come back and work in the Philippines, livelihood assistance by providing training and business starter kits or provision of start-up capital in the form of loans, counseling not only on employment concerns but also value formation and family concerns.

According to Battistella (2018), the limited impact of policies on reintegration programs is mainly because such policies do not consider the various types of return and different needs of returning migrants. Battistella further suggested that policies should incorporate "local economic opportunities, financial literacy programs, entrepreneurship development and trainings, access to credit, investment packages, and cooperative undertaking", and proposed "the adoption of a conceptual framework to accommodate different situations". This means that return migration and reintegration must be considered when crafting location development plans (Asis, 2011). Additionally, Battistella (2018) recommends that government should provide core services, such as labor market information, retraining programs, skills certification, and welfare and rights protection, that are always available to returning migrant workers. With the presence of the aforesaid recommendations, returning migrant workers will be able to reintegrate when they come back in the country.

Part of the issues and challenges in managing return and reintegration program include lack of promotion of reintegration programs, resource constraints, lack of data, stagnant home economic conditions, among others. Based on these concerns, this study will look at how these affect availment of reintegration program of OFW returnees and, in turn, how availment of reintegration programs influence the economic sustainability of OFWs in terms of financial capacity, economic capacity, and social mobility (Wickramasekara, 2019).

This study looks at how availment of reintegration program influence economic sustainability of OFW beneficiaries. Economic sustainability, or practices that support long-term economic growth, has three

pillars, namely, economic viability, environmental protection, and social equity. Other dimensions of economic sustainability could also be represented as such technical feasibility, political legitimacy, and institutional capacity. For the purpose of this study, financial capacity, economic capacity, and financial mobility are the pillars looked into. Financial capacity means the ability to manage financial affairs in a manner consistent with personal self-interest and values (Gardiner, et al., 2015). Economic capacity on the other hand is defined as the limit of financial capacity. Lastly, social mobility, is the movement of people into within or between different social strata or changing social status. These factors will be examined in the study to see how economic sustainability of OFW beneficiaries is affected by the availment of the government's reintegration program.

1.1 Research Objectives:

This study was designed to look into the OFW reintegration program beneficiaries towards crafting an economic sustainability framework. The study intended to assess the experience of OFW reintegration program beneficiaries toward the creation of effective reintegration program economic sustainability framework.

Specifically, the study aimed to determine to what extent OFW who availed of the government's reintegration program were impacted and influenced in terms of the following:

1. What is the profile of the respondents:
 - 1.1. age;
 - 1.2. gender;
 - 1.3. civil status;
 - 1.4. education attainment;
 - 1.5. job classification as an OFW;
 - 1.6. geographical location of last country of destination;
 - 1.7. number of years spent as an OFW;
2. What is the level of availment of OFW respondents of reintegration programs in terms of:
 - 2.1 relevance of the program;
 - 2.2 availability and ease of access of the program,;
 - 2.3 personal intention of the OFWs to improve their economic status;
3. What is the extent of the reintegration program on the economic sustainability of OFW reintegration program beneficiaries?
 - 3.1 financial capacity;
 - 3.2 social mobility;
 - 3.3 economic capacity.
4. Does the level of availment of reintegration program have a significant influence on the economic sustainability of OFW beneficiaries?
5. Based on the findings, what reintegration program economic sustainability framework can be proposed?

1.2 Research Hypothesis

This study tested the following hypotheses:

1. HO: Level of availment of reintegration program does not have a significant influence on the economic sustainability of OFW beneficiaries in terms of financial capacity, social mobility, and economic capacity.
2. H1: Level of availment of reintegration program has a significant influence on the economic sustainability of OFW beneficiaries in terms of financial capacity, social mobility, and economic capacity.

1.3 Conceptual Framework

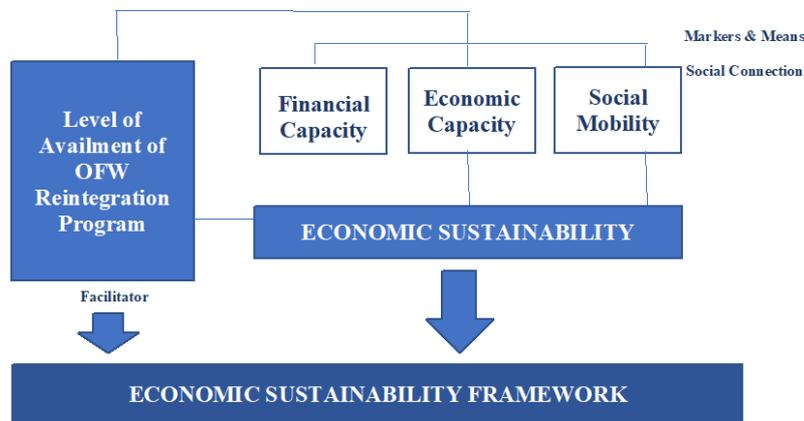


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

The researcher used the conceptual framework in Figure 1 as guide in this study. The framework partly adopted the proposed domains of integration of Ager and Strang (2008, p.5) and modified to fit the objectives of the study. Financial Capacity, Economic Capacity, and Social Mobility are markers and means of Economic Sustainability, while availment of reintegration program is the facilitator of economic sustainability. The framework looks at how economic sustainability of OFWs in terms of their financial capacity, economic capacity, and social mobility, influenced their decision to avail reintegration program and how the reintegration program in turn affected or changed their economic sustainability. The framework builds on the relationships between the variables and hopes to develop an economic sustainability framework that would guide the government, policymakers, and implementers on how to better implement and improve the existing reintegration programs of the government and ensure that such are truly making an impact on the lives of its OFW beneficiaries.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The results of the study could serve as baseline information and guide for the National Reintegration Center for OFWs and policymakers in looking at how effective reintegration programs are in improving economic status and sustainability of OFWs, and developing further and improving policies, programs, and services that would help OFWs and their families. Further, it would also float existing issues and concerns on the current policies based on the experiences of OFWs that could be appropriately addressed by concerned government offices. The change in the economic status of OFWs who availed of the government’s reintegration programs can be a guide for the government to review if the existing policies are still effective, efficient, and are truly conducive to OFWs, and if not, devise new strategies that could adapt to the changing times and new norms while still addressing recurring concerns. The factors affecting decisions to avail of reintegration programs could also guide policymakers on improving reintegration programs and employment policies back home.

2. Methodology

This study used quantitative research method in examining the reintegration program beneficiaries and the effect of such reintegration program in their economic status and sustainability.

A survey was conducted on a sample of one hundred twenty-five (125) OFWs who availed of reintegration programs to look into the effect of reintegration programs to them, as well as their perceptions and experiences with the program. A survey questionnaire was devised to gather the profile of the sample, i.e., their age, work experience in other countries, educational attainment, civil status, job classification, and region of last country of deployment.

For the quantitative data gathered in this study, frequency and percentage distribution was used to clearly see the characteristics of the sample and the impact of the reintegration program on their economic sustainability. Regression analysis was employed in determining the level of availment of reintegration program and economical sustainability in terms of financial capacity, economic capacity, and social mobility.

Below were the rating options used in the questionnaire:

| Numeric Value | Descriptive Rating |
|---------------|--------------------|
| 4 | Strongly Agree |
| 3 | Agree |
| 2 | Disagree |
| 1 | Strongly Disagree |

To interpret the measurement of the level of satisfaction before and after the reintegration programs, the norm that was used was shown below:

| Range | Interpretation |
|-------------|-------------------|
| 3.26 – 4.00 | Strongly Agree |
| 2.51 – 3.25 | Agree |
| 1.76 – 2.50 | Disagree |
| 1.00 – 1.75 | Strongly Disagree |

3. Results and Findings

Based on the survey, the following demographic profile were gathered:

- The survey showed that nearly majority (46.40%) of the respondent-OFW reintegration program beneficiaries are aged 51 and above with a total count of fifty-eight (58). This is followed by those aged 41-50 at forty-three (43) respondents or 34.40%, and aged 31-40 with a frequency count of twenty-four (24) or 19.20% of the survey respondents.
- Out of the 125 respondents, sixty-four (64) or 51.20% were females, while sixty-one (61) or 48.80% were males.
- Result showed that majority of the respondents, seventy-five (75) or 60.00% of the total respondents are married. Twenty-five (25) or 20.00% were separated, eighteen (18) or 14.40% are single, and seven (7) or 5.60% are widow/widower.
- Forty-four (44) respondents or 35.20% are high school graduates, thirty (30) or 24.00% have college level education, twenty (20) or 16.00% have some high school level education, nineteen (19) or 15.20% are college graduates, and twelve (12) or 9.60% are elementary graduates.
- Sixty-two (62) or 49.60% were skilled or semi-skilled workers, fifty-one (51) or 40.80% were domestic workers, and twelve (12) or 9.60% were professionals.
- Sixty-eight (68) respondents or 54.40% were last deployed in Middle-Eastern countries, forty-five (45) or 36.00% were from Asia Pacific, and twelve (12) or 9.60% last worked in Europe and Americas region.
- Sixty-three (63) or 34.40% of the respondents worked as OFWs for 1-10 years, forty-three (43) or 34.40% worked as OFWs for 11-20 years, and nineteen (19) or 15.20% worked as OFWs for 21 years and above.

On the level of availment of OFW returnees on reintegration program in terms of relevance of the program, results showed that:

- Availment of reintegration program due to the livelihood ventures offered being relevant in the market ($M=3.28$, $SD=0.59$) and promising promotion and marketing of the reintegration program ($M=3.38$, $SD=0.55$) are highly evident, while availment in terms of the training offered, learnings and earnings from the program, and availability of monitoring and follow-through activities are also evident. Overall, availment of reintegration program in terms of the relevance of the program to the needs of the OFWs and the situation of the market are evident with an overall mean of 3.09. These results show how the relevance of the reintegration program to the needs of the OFWs and how well these reintegration programs are promoted to reach the awareness of OFW returnees affect the level of availment of these programs. Promotion as part of the marketing mix influences, informs, persuades, and affects the consumers, in this case, the OFWs', behavior towards availing reintegration programs (Uva, 2000). This just shows how a well-planned and-executed promotion and marketing reintegration program well reaches the target beneficiaries and in turn entice them to avail of such program. In fact, OECD (2020), recommends increased visibility of reintegration programs to improve the sustainability of such.

On the level of availment of OFW returnees on reintegration program in terms of availability and ease of access of the program, results showed that:

- Respondents availed the program mainly because it did not involve shelling out money ($M=3.35$, $SD=0.73$). It is also evident that accessibility of the program ($M=3.22$, $SD=0.74$), ease of application procedure and requirements ($M=2.86$, $SD=0.81$), fast release of assistance ($M=2.80$, $SD=0.82$), and training and start-up capital ($M=2.74$, $SD=0.80$) affect level of availment.

On the level of availment of OFW returnees on reintegration program in terms of personal intention to improve economic status, results showed that:

- It is highly evident that respondents availed of reintegration program to provide for their family ($M=3.54$, $SD=0.76$), to have investments and improve their social status ($M=3.51$, $SD=0.75$), and to have/increase their savings ($M=3.27$, $SD=0.61$). It is also evident that respondents availed reintegration program for increased access in social services such as education, healthcare, and finance ($M=3.18$, $SD=0.60$), and for a stable source of income ($M=2.80$, $SD=0.82$).

Overall, respondents agree that their availment of OFW reintegration program is influenced mainly instigated by their personal intention to improve their economic status ($M=3.26$), but is also prompted by the relevance of the reintegration program to their needs ($M=3.09$) and the ready availability and ease of accessing the program ($M=3.00$).

On the Extent of the Reintegration Program on Economic Sustainability in terms of Financial Capacity, results showed that:

- The increase in the monthly income of respondents after availing reintegration program is highly evident ($M=3.38$, $SD=0.55$). Ability to pay bills on time ($M=2.90$, $SD=0.85$), having more than Php10,000 in savings ($M=2.85$, $SD=0.93$), ability to buy things for family ($M=2.82$, $SD=0.96$), and having real estate investment such as house and lot ($M=2.57$, $SD=0.72$) after availing of reintegration program are also evident to a certain extent.

On the Extent of the Reintegration Program on Economic Sustainability in terms of Economic Capacity, results showed that:

- The savings of the OFW respondents remaining intact after ($M=3.28$, $SD=0.59$) and ability to venture into a new business/livelihood after availing reintegration program, are highly evident ($M=3.38$, $SD=0.55$). Enough savings and not having the need to borrow money ($M=2.98$, $SD=0.77$), not needing additional source of job/income ($M=2.92$, $SD=0.78$), and not having to stretch the budget ($M=2.74$, $SD=0.74$) after availing reintegration program are also evident to a certain extent.

On the Extent of the Reintegration Program on Economic Sustainability in terms of Social Mobility, results showed that:

- After availing reintegration program, the ability of OFW respondents to send family members to school or training institutions ($M=3.28$, $SD=0.59$), ability to move to a new house if wanted ($M=3.28$, $SD=0.59$), and being classified as better off in social status in the community ($M=3.28$, $SD=0.59$), were highly evident. The ability to access health facilities such as health centers and hospitals ($M=2.64$, $SD=1.10$) and ability to travel with family for leisure at least once a year ($M=2.62$, $SD=0.89$) were also evident to a certain extent.

Overall, results show that the extent reintegration program of reintegration program on the economic sustainability of OFW reintegration program beneficiaries in terms of financial capacity, economic capacity, and social mobility of the OFW respondents is evident ($M=2.99$). This means that the reintegration program affected the economic sustainability of the OFWs who availed of the program.

A multiple regression was calculated to determine whether the Economic sustainability in terms of Financial Capacity was affected by the Level of Availment of the Reintegration Program of OFW returnees.

Table 1. Multiple Regression Analysis on the Level of Availment of Reintegration program and the Economic Sustainability in terms of Financial Capacity

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sigma |
|---|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | 3.346 | .502 | | 6.660 | .000 |
| Relevance of the Program | -.058 | .133 | -.041 | -.435 | .665 |
| Availability & Ease of Access of the Program | -.100 | .104 | -.095 | -.961 | .338 |
| Personal Intention to Improve Economic Status | .011 | .119 | .009 | .095 | .925 |

R square = 0.012
 F = .481
 df₁ = 3
 df₂ = 121
 p-value = 0.696

Analysis showed a value of R squared ($R^2=0.012$) which denotes that 1.2 % of the increase in the Economic sustainability of the OFW reintegration program beneficiaries in terms of Financial Capacity is attributed to level of availment of reintegration program. The p-value= 0.696 generated from the ANOVA table explains that we have enough evidence to show that the Economic Sustainability of OFW beneficiaries in terms of their Financial Capacity is not significantly affected by Level of Availment of the reintegration program. The respondents also agreed that the Relevance of the Program to their needs and the current market situation ($p=0.665$), Availability and Ease of access of the Program ($p = 0.338$), and Personal Intention to Improve their Economic Status ($p = 0.925$) has no significant influence on the Economic sustainability in terms of Financial Stability of the beneficiaries of the program.

A multiple regression was also calculated to determine whether the Economic Sustainability in terms of Economic Capacity was affected by the Level of Availment of Reintegration Program of OFW returnees.

Table 2. Multiple Regression Analysis on the Level of Availment of Reintegration program and the Economic Sustainability in terms of Economic Capacity

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sigma |
|---|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|-------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | 2.111 | .306 | | 6.900 | .000 |
| Relevance of the Program | .345 | .081 | .370 | 4.268 | .000 |
| Availability & Ease of Access of the Program | .081 | .064 | .116 | 1.274 | .205 |
| Personal Intention to Improve Economic Status | -.111 | .073 | -.138 | -1.528 | .129 |

R square = 0.158
F = 7.562
df₁ = 3
df₂ = 121
p-value = 0.000

The data presented in Table 2 shows the value of R squared (R²=0.158) which denotes that 15.8 % of the increase in the Economic Sustainability in terms of Economic Capacity of OFW reintegration program beneficiaries is attributed to the level of availment of the reintegration program. The p-value= 0.000 generated from the ANOVA table explains that we have enough evidence to show that the Economic Sustainability of OFW reintegration program beneficiaries in terms of Economic Capacity is significantly affected by Level of Availment of the reintegration program. The respondents also agreed that availability and ease of access of the program (p = 0.205) and personal intention to improve their economic status (p = 0.129) has no significant influence on economic sustainability in terms of economic capacity, while the relevance of the program to OFW needs and current market situation (p = 0.000) has a significant influence on the economic sustainability in terms of economic capacity of the beneficiaries of the program. When a reintegration program being offered is relevant to the needs of the OFWs as well as the current situation of the market, OFWs are more surely to avail those programs and if the program fit their necessity, then it follows that it will help them in some way and affect the limit of their financial capacity or what is called economic capacity, thus resulting in improved economic capacity and economic sustainability.

A multiple regression was calculated to determine whether the Economic sustainability in terms of Social Mobility was affected by the Level of Availment on the Reintegration Program for OFW returnees.

Table 3. Multiple Regression Analysis on the Level of Availment of Reintegration program and the Economic Sustainability in terms of Social Mobility

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sigma |
|---|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|--------|-------|
| | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | 1.305 | .377 | | 3.465 | .001 |
| Relevance of the Program | .536 | .100 | .441 | 5.389 | .000 |
| Availability & Ease of Access of the Program | .181 | .078 | .198 | 2.311 | .023 |
| Personal Intention to Improve Economic Status | -.149 | .090 | -.142 | -1.668 | .098 |

R square = 0.251
 F = 13.484
 df₁ = 3
 df₂ = 121
 p-value = 0.000

The data presented in Table 20 shows the value of R squared (R²=0.251) which denotes that 25.1 % of increase in the Economic sustainability of OFW reintegration program beneficiaries in terms of Social Mobility is attributed to level of availment of the reintegration program. The p-value= 0.000 generated from the ANOVA table explains that we have enough evidence to show that the Economic sustainability of OFW reintegration program beneficiaries in terms of Social Mobility is significantly affected by Level of Availment of the reintegration program. The respondents also agreed that the economic sustainability of the reintegration program beneficiaries is not significantly influenced by the personal intention of OFW beneficiaries to improve their economic status (p = 0.098), while relevance of the program to the OFW beneficiaries' needs and the situation of the market (p = 0.000), and availability and ease of access of the program (p = 0.023) has a significant influence to the economic sustainability in terms of social mobility of the beneficiaries of the program.

According to IOM (2017), during the reintegration process of returning migrants, migrant workers require assistance accessing social services such as education, training, safe transportation, health and well-being and access to these social services improve their economic capacity. Consistent with the result of the analysis, indeed availment of reintegration program contribute to the economic sustainability of OFWs in terms of their social mobility or the ability to move into a higher social stratum.

On the significant influence of availability and ease of access of the to the economic sustainability in terms of social mobility of the beneficiaries of the program, AECF (2010) suggests a continuum of activities

to address benefits access which are often too circuitous and complicated hence limiting availment rates. As such, the continuum which involve outreach efforts and systems change is recommended.

4. Conclusion

Based on the hypothesis of the study, it is concluded that level of availment of reintegration program has a significant effect on the economic sustainability of OFW beneficiaries in terms of social mobility, and economic capacity, but has no significant effect in terms of financial capacity.

- Economic Sustainability of OFW beneficiaries in terms of their Financial Capacity is not significantly affected by Level of Availment of the reintegration program. The respondents also agreed that the Relevance of the Program to their needs and the current market situation, Availability and Ease of access of the Program, and Personal Intention to Improve their Economic Status, have no significant influence on the Economic sustainability in terms of Financial Stability of the beneficiaries of the program.
- Economic Sustainability of OFW reintegration program beneficiaries in terms of Economic Capacity is significantly affected by Level of Availment of the reintegration program. The respondents also agreed that availability and ease of access of the program, and personal intention to improve their economic status have no significant influence on economic sustainability in terms of economic capacity, while the relevance of the program to OFW needs and current market situation has a significant influence to the economic sustainability in terms of economic capacity of the beneficiaries of the program.
- Economic sustainability of OFW reintegration program beneficiaries in terms of Social Mobility is significantly affected by Level of Availment of the reintegration program. The respondents also agreed that the economic sustainability of the reintegration program beneficiaries is not significantly influenced by the personal intention of OFW beneficiaries to improve their economic status, while relevance of the program to the OFW beneficiaries' needs and the status of the market, and availability and ease of access of the program has a significant influence to the economic sustainability in terms of social mobility of the beneficiaries of the program.

5. Recommendations

In view of the findings and conclusion, the following are the highly recommended courses of action to further improve the reintegration program of the government:

- Continued re-engineering and restructuring of reintegration programs
- Expanded coverage of the reintegration programs, Intensified partnership with the private sector for reintegration program support
- Intensified partnership with the private sector for reintegration program support
- Strengthened promotion of reintegration programs to OFWs
- Increased funding for reintegration programs.

Other recommendations which may be included in improving the implementation of the reintegration program include:

- Continued implementation of the reintegration programs
- Increased monetary value of the livelihood/business package
- Expanded variety of livelihood/business ventures which can be availed of
- Implementation of follow-through activities to guide beneficiaries in their business ventures and provision of supplementary assistance to beneficiaries, and
- Digital monitoring of OFW beneficiaries.

5.1 Recommended Economic Sustainability Framework

Findings of the study show that the level of availment of reintegration program significantly influenced the economic sustainability of OFW reintegration program beneficiaries in terms of the economic capacity, and social mobility. The relevance of the reintegration program to OFW needs and current market situation has a significant influence on the economic sustainability in terms of economic capacity of the beneficiaries of the program. Availability and ease of access of the program has a significant influence on the economic sustainability in terms of social mobility of the beneficiaries of the program.

Decision to avail of reintegration program was also mainly brought about by their personal intention to improve their economic status but is also prompted to a certain level by the relevance of the reintegration program to their needs, and the ready availability and ease of accessing the program.

With that in mind and to strengthen the government's reintegration program for OFWs who have returned to the Philippines, the researcher proposes the following Reintegration Program Economic Sustainability Framework, where the interplay of the factors of level of availment of reintegration program such as personal intention to improve economic status, program availability and ease of access, and relevance of the program to their needs, and the recommendations to improve the implementation of reintegration program such as continuous reengineering of the program, intensified partnership with the private sector, expanded coverage of the program, strengthened promotion and marketing, and increased funding, are looked into so as to contribute to the economic sustainability of OFW beneficiaries in terms of their financial capacity or the spending ability, their economic capacity or the limit of their financial capacity which include savings and investments, and social mobility or the ability to improve social status and access social services:

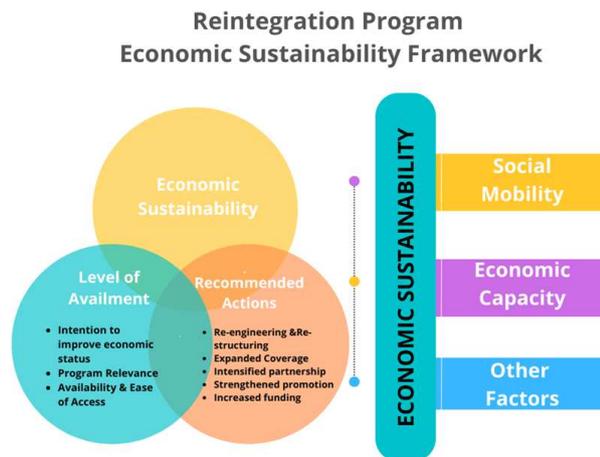


Figure 2. Recommended Reintegration Program Economic Sustainability Framework

Other factors such as the psychosocial dimension or the reinsertion of returnees into their personal support network (friends, relatives, neighbors) and civil society (associations, self-help groups, etc.) may be part of the other factors on economic sustainability in the framework. This is based on IOM's (2017), integrated approach to reintegration. With the above framework in place, the reintegration process will become holistic, less complex, and encompassing.

To achieve economic sustainability of the OFW reintegration program beneficiaries composed mainly of their economic capacity and social mobility, improved level of availment and program implementation are required.

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