**OGBEWELE EHINOMEN**

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**INTERNATIONAL FINANCIAL STATEMENT ANALYSIS**

 Financial statement analysis is a part of business analysis. Business analysis is the evaluation of a company’s business environment, strategies, financial position, and performance to be able to make decisions with respect to that company. Financial statements are an important source of information for conducting business analysis. Financial statement analysis consists of the following:

1. Accounting analysis

Accounting analysis begins with an evaluation of the extent to which a company’s financial statements reflect economic reality. There are three common sources of distortion in financial statements:

1. Accounting standards that are inconsistent with economic reality.
2. Estimation errors made by managers in applying accounting standards.
3. The intentional manipulation of financial statements by managers; often referred to as earnings management.
4. Financial Analysis

Financial Analysis involves the use of adjusted financial statement information to conduct:

1. Cash flow analysis: the analysis of how a company generates and uses cash.
2. Profitability analysis: with a focus on return on invested capital.
3. Risk analysis: including an evaluation of liquidity and solvency to assess a company’s ability to meet its obligations.
4. Prospective Analysis

Prospective Analysisinvolves combining the results of accounting analysis and financial analysis, along with an analysis of the business environment and company strategy, to forecast future financial statement information, especially cash flows and income. Preparing forecasted future financial statements is a very important part of business analysis because decisions made today about a company are based on forecasts of the company’s future prospects.

**Reasons to Analyze Foreign Financial Statements**

1. Foreign Portfolio Investment
2. International Mergers and Acquisitions
3. Making credit decisions about foreign customers.
4. Evaluating the financial health of foreign suppliers.
5. Benchmarking against global competitors.

**Potential Problems in Analyzing Foreign Financial Statements**

Some of the potential problems that may arise in analyzing foreign financial statements include:

1. Data Accessibility
2. Language.
3. Terminology
4. Format
5. Extent of Disclosure
6. Timeliness
7. Differences in Accounting Principles